Annual Conference Proceedings

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The OBREAU Tripod: A Tool for Finding Gold among the Rubble
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Abstract

This will be a highly interactive session in which participants gain experience in applying three practices - Working from Observation, Attributing Reasonableness, and Speaking with Authenticity (OBREAU) - to support conversations for change on tough issues. We will begin with discussion of a scenario applicable to leadership educators and use the scenario to introduce and illustrate the practices of the OBREAU Tripod. Then, participants will apply the practices to personal leadership-related challenges they face and discuss the results in small groups. Large group discussion will explore implications, opportunities and challenges for leadership action. Participants will gain through exposure to a framework they can utilize for more mindful, creative and deep-reaching engagement with others on virtually any tough issue.

Introduction

While there is some intuitive appeal to leaders that are candid and transparent with their opinions, conversations surrounding a variety of topics seem more polarizing than ever before. Many are advised to avoid topics of religion and politics, because the effort is perceived as pointless or counterproductive. However, if we are to engage in the practice of “prospecting for leadership,” as highlighted in the ALE conference theme, we cannot afford to avoid topics of discussion simply because they are controversial. What we need is a tool or technique that helps us create and maintain the holding environment that Heifetz and colleagues (2009) describe as a “pressure cooker.” If the temperature and pressure are set just right, there is a valuable outcome; but too high of temperature and pressure results in a hot mess. Creating, strengthening, and maintaining a holding environment where people can safely discuss diverse perspectives and ideas is an essential component of prospecting for leadership, allowing us to find gold among the rubble.

This workshop introduces the OBREAU Tripod as a structure for helping work through challenging conversations, particularly those involving contentious, prickly issues, where technical solutions are insufficient. Upon completion of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- Recognize default patterns of interaction that can derail efforts toward shared leadership and productive conversations on tough issues;
- Be able to identify and describe the three practices associated with the OBREAU Tripod: Working from Observation, Attributing Reasonableness, and Speaking with Authenticity;
- Highlight opportunities for application of the OBREAU Tripod in leadership education; and
- Apply the OBREAU Tripod in connection with a personal leadership challenge.
Review of Related Scholarship

While societal and cultural norms often frame leadership success and failure as the result of an individual leader, modern approaches to leadership recognize that “leadership is a process that goes on between all people and that all people can be involved in leadership, almost in spite of their formal position” (Jackson & Parry, 2011, p. 95). With this perspective in mind, Western (2013) has identified an emerging eco-leader discourse, which promotes a systems approach that is adaptive to change. Accordingly, leadership is framed as involving processes of building shared meaning to enable change with tough issues (Dunoon & Langer, 2011). When stakeholders see issues differently, there is a degree of contention involved, and there is no single pathway to resolution. Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky (2009) promote an adaptive leadership approach that involves orchestrating conflict as a discipline. Specifically, they recommend a seven-step approach:

1. Prepare.
2. Establish ground rules.
3. Get each view on the table.
4. Orchestrate the conflict.
5. Encourage accepting and managing losses.
6. Generate and commit to experiments.
7. Institute peer leadership consulting.

Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky (2009) distinguish between leadership work, associated with adaptive challenges “typically grounded in the complexity of values, beliefs and loyalties,” and technical approaches to dealing with issues (p. 70). In a similar manner, Nick Petrie of the Center for Creative Leadership draws a distinction between “vertical” and “horizontal” approaches to leadership development. Horizontal development refers to gaining additional competencies and is akin to the development of technical proficiency. Vertical development, on the other hand, is a matter of individuals expanding their capacity to deal with complexity, to think more systemically, and to appreciate nuance and context (Petrie, 2014).

In the spirit of adaptive leadership and the need to create a holding environment with regulated heat, the OBREAU Tripod is a structure for helping groups and individuals work through challenging conversations, particularly concerning leadership-related issues as distinct from technical problems. "OBREAU" is a composite of the first two letters of three guiding words: Observation, Reasonableness, and Authenticity. According to Dunoon (2014), the tripod is an aid for engaging in conversations with a broad range and depth of intelligence on an issue; it discourages default patterns of reactive thinking, negative judgment, and passive engagement. The first leg of the tripod, Working from Observation, is intended as a counterpoint to the common default behavior of reacting to new information or experience. When we work from what we observe or hear directly, we keep ourselves open to different meanings and minimize the threat associated with talking about difficult issues. The second leg of the tripod, Attributing Reasonableness, requires imagining what the issue might look like from another person’s perspective. We all bring our mindsets to conversations, and having some awareness of these helps achieve a more rounded, holistic appreciation of an issue. The third leg of the tripod, Speaking with Authenticity, means that what we say is true for us also connects with our observations (the first tripod leg) and reflects the assumption that others involved are capable of
reasonableness (the second tripod leg). This third tripod leg helps to overcome a common default behavior of "dancing around": speaking in euphemisms, avoiding or sugar-coating the difficult topics, and holding back on what we would like to say (Dunoon, 2014). The OBREAU structure is also supportive of vertical leadership development. As we gain capability in being able to differentiate what we observe from inferences and interpretations we make, we begin to be able to “step back” and see our interpretations as one set among other possibilities. As we imagine the perspectives of others (the Reasonableness leg), we stand to gain an enlarged sense of the various viewpoints on an issue, rather than objectifying our own. Further, as we think about what is true for us while making connections with observation and keeping open reasonableness (the Authenticity leg), we potentially advance our ability to engage with the complexities of an issue.

**Lesson Plan Description**

The workshop begins with a brief review of the proposition that enacting inclusive leadership implies actions to help build shared meaning to enable change with tough issues. Building shared meaning for change entails conversation. Yet ensuring all voices are heard and valued implies that some common dynamics need to be anticipated and accounted for. The OBREAU Tripod is designed to offset the negative effects of such dynamics, by grounding consideration of a topic in observable data, by maintaining a stance that all stakeholders are reasonable and have something to contribute, and by encouraging participants to speak to what matters to them with an issue, without compromising the first two Tripod legs.

The application of the Tripod structure will be illustrated with a large-group scenario that centers on a controversy of interest to leadership educators. For example, we may highlight the recent incident at Yale University where a faculty member in one of the residential colleges faced a backlash from students for encouraging the community to consider the censoring of Halloween costumes through a dissenting intellectual lens. Some students initially complained about Yale administrators offering heavy-handed advice on what costumes to avoid, and the faculty member responded with challenges to some recent social norms. However, a large number of students protested in response, making national headlines (Stack, 2015). One student said, “it is your job to create a place of comfort and home for the students,” and seems to believe this perspective is at odds with creating an intellectual space (Friedersdorf, 2015). The OBREAU Tripod is a useful tool for holding the space and structure necessary for leadership educators to dialogue about this conflict.

After experiencing the large-group scenario with the Tripod, workshop participants will have an opportunity to apply the structure with a personal leadership challenge. We will invite participants to act, in effect, as “coaches” to one another, helping to frame their personal challenges within the structure of the OBREAU Tripod and identify what others might say in related conversations. This dialogue will be supported through use of a worksheet that reinforces each leg of the Tripod: Observation, Reasonableness, and Authenticity (Appendix A).

Approximate time lengths of the workshop components are as follows:
- Opening remarks and overview – 15 minutes
- Introduction to scenario – 10 minutes
• Working from Observation discussions – 10 minutes
• Attributing Reasonableness discussions – 10 minutes
• Speaking with Authenticity discussions – 10 minutes
• Small group discussions on personal challenges - 15 minutes
• Review and concluding discussion - 20 minutes

Discussion of Outcomes/Results

The authors of this proposal have successfully applied the OBREAU Tripod in a variety of settings, including academic seminars that are characterized by weekly, small group, student-led discussions. The seminars are affiliated with an honors residential community, and the Tripod has been offered as a tool for students to use when they serve as discussion leader and are responsible for guiding conversation for an hour-long meeting. Students have appreciated the empowerment that occurs with the approach. One student wrote, “This has been the best experience I have had with an honors dorm-related class since the beginning of the HRC, and I think a big part of that is how the class was organized.” The OBREAU Tripod appears to be a useful tool for engaging in eco-leadership and a natural fit for structuring student-led conversations within the honors residential community seminars. Benefits include:

• introducing a level of structure to help sort through the messiness of virtually any thorny issue,
• bringing a degree of clarity to what otherwise can seem an intractable problem,
• promoting creativity by enabling new ways to frame an issue,
• reducing the risks and threat of speaking up, and
• strengthening the capacity of users to build shared understandings with others (http://dondunoon.com/the-obreau-tripod).

Workshop Implications

Participants will leave the workshop with everything they need to apply the OBREAU Tripod in both personal and professional settings, including an outline of how the OBREAU Tripod can be applied with student-led seminars (Appendix B).

Some specific ways in which participants could potentially apply the learnings from the workshop include:

• Preparing for and engaging in conversations on tough issues for them personally, whether at work (e.g., with coworkers or manager) or outside. Some participants in similar workshops have spoken of the benefits of applying the OBREAU structure, or aspects of it, in relationship or parenting contexts (e.g., asking children about what they observe that leads them to interpretations they offer).

• Supporting classroom dialogue – whether student- or instructor-led – on controversial topics, to enable students to practice recognizing observations as distinct from interpretation, empathizing with other perspectives, and reflecting on and sharing what is true for them. The resource at Appendix B is one aid to this work, and others will be made available in the workshop.

• Assisting students as individuals to develop their leadership capability by considering how they might engage in conversations – that they might otherwise be tempted to avoid
on tough issues to enable change.

References


Appendices

Appendix A: Applying the OBREAU Tripod
Appendix B: Exploring a challenging issue with the OBREAU Tripod
Applying the **OBREAU Tripod**

Enabling dialogue, engagement with others and challenging conversations

Brief outline of an interpersonal or group / inter-group communications- related issue or challenge currently being faced:
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<th>Observation</th>
<th>Reasonableness</th>
<th>Authenticity</th>
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<td>The work here to identify, and record, a few key elements that are <strong>directly observable</strong>, noticeable – as distinct from inference or conclusion. We’re in effect trying to “peel away” our interpretations and judgments to get to what could be seen / heard directly. We can then potentially hold some of these data out to others for response. Try thinking about what an <strong>invisible observer</strong> could conceivably notice (that might include some of your own actions!). If the issue were an iceberg, what might be <strong>“above the waterline”</strong>? Focus particularly on observations that seem interesting and potentially open to different interpretations.</td>
<td>This aspect requires you to <strong>switch perspectives</strong> and look at the issue from the standpoint of others, allowing that they are <strong>reasonable</strong> in this instance. (This is never about judging others.) Focus first on the individual/group that you most want to engage with. Ask, and make notes about, what this stakeholder, acting reasonably, might be: <strong>Assuming</strong> (taking as given, true) <strong>Interested in</strong> (valuing, wanting to advance or protect) <strong>Feeling</strong> (emotions they might be experiencing) Having relevant <strong>knowledge or experience</strong> in. Then, repeat the process for other stakeholders.</td>
<td>The challenge here is to find words that: are true for you, are consistent with allowing others are reasonable, and make some connection with observation. Remember, you are preparing for a conversation, not writing a script. First, to gain more insight into what is true for you, think about and make notes on your own relevant assumptions, interests, feelings and knowledge. Then, consider and write down what might be: A <strong>neutral introduction</strong> to the topic One or more <strong>observations</strong> you could share Some <strong>questions</strong> you might ask (e.g. to check or explore observations, or to test interpretations allowing reasonableness) <strong>What else you might say</strong> that matters to you – and that is consistent with reasonableness and connects with observations.</td>
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Exploring a challenging issue with the Obreau Tripod

The aim is to help you create a rich and thoughtful exploration of the issue with fellow section members immediately following your seminar presentation (assuming this is up to 15 minutes in duration).

**Materials**: Flip chart paper and pens; sticky notes; students need pen and paper.

**Method**:

1. **Recording observations** (10 minutes)
   - The aim is to ground the group’s consideration of the issue in observations and available data (rather than members reacting or rushing to judgment).
   - Ask each student in turn to offer one observation in connection with the topic – something they have read, heard, or noticed, whether from your presentation or elsewhere, and that they find interesting or surprising.
   - Observations should be offered as far as possible without the student’s analysis or interpretation.
   - Write up each student’s observation – no more than about one sentence – on flip chart paper. Label the sheet/s ‘Observations’. The aim is to just register and record the observations quickly, without discussion at this point.
   - Ask the group to review the statements to ensure they are all expressed as observations – rather than students’ opinions or judgments.

2. **Considering different views on the issue allowing that others are reasonable** (15 minutes)
   - The aim here is to ‘stretch’ group members’ understanding of the issue by imagining different perspectives, allowing that others are reasonable at the time.
   - Think of at least two stakeholders (interested groups or individuals) who would likely see this issue differently. Choose one stakeholder to focus on first. Label a flip chart sheet to identify the stakeholder.
   - Invite suggestions as to what might be real for that stakeholder, allowing that they can be reasonable. Think about what might be implicit, hidden, unspoken, ‘under the waterline of the iceberg’ with this issue for them. (See the image below from *In the Leadership Mode*, p.133)
You might ask the group to identify possible:

- **Assumptions** (what the stakeholder might take as given, true),
- **Interests** (what the stakeholder is likely to hold as important; want to advance or protect),
- **Feelings** (what the stakeholder is likely to be experiencing emotionally), and
- **Knowledge** (what the stakeholder might know or have experience in that they haven’t explicitly spoken to).

- Of course, you can’t know for sure if these possible interpretations are true for the stakeholder. You’re developing hypotheses that, ideally, you’d be able to test with them.
- Review each of the entries you have written up, to check they are consistent with presuming the stakeholder is reasonable. If not, modify the entries as necessary to reflect this value.
- Now, repeat the process for the second stakeholder.

### 3. Speaking with Authenticity: Group members suggest questions and offer their own views (15 minutes)

- Begin here by inviting group members to **suggest questions** they would like to put to particular stakeholders, if the opportunity arose. Ask participants to write their questions on sticky notes. You can then gather up the questions and, if time allows, read them back to the group.
- This is also an opportunity for group members to **express their own views** on the issue. There are only three requirements: What they say needs to be:
  - True for them;
  - In keeping with a presumption that interested others can be reasonable; and
  - Connection with observation, whether recorded earlier or something else that’s directly discernible.
- You might need to ask speakers to be brief in order to give as many as possible an opportunity to speak. (They will have further opportunity to express their views in the online component following the face-to-face meeting.)

### 4. Wrap up and review (5 minutes)

- This is your opportunity as presenter to bring together some highlights and themes emerging from the group’s exploration.
- In particular, seek to draw out any new and significant insights emerging.
- You might acknowledge any shifts in your own thinking that have occurred through this process.
- Be sure to prompt contributions to the online discussion forum.
Prospecting for Feedback in Leadership Education

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**Abstract**

This educator workshop showcases innovative active learning and experiential instructional strategies to facilitate feedback as pedagogy with leadership educators. In this session, experienced leadership educators will expound on feedback as pedagogy in leadership education, introducing the most widely used types of feedback, and providing demonstrations on the applications of specific feedback strategies. Additionally, facilitators will highlight best practices for using feedback in the leadership classroom, the implications of different feedback strategies, and provide opportunities for participants to experiment applying practice- and peer-feedback strategies. The session will close with a focused discussion and debrief. Participants should expect a fun, boisterous, and lighthearted atmosphere and be ready to get involved in the action.

**Introduction**

Feedback is used extensively in leadership education as a form of pedagogy and educative assessment (see Allen & Hartman, 2009; Conger, 1992; Jenkins, 2012). We see it whenever instructors, fellow students, or even people from outside the course look at a student’s performance and offer an evaluation of it. Similar to assessment, feedback is inherently evaluative, providing information about what is good about the work or performance and what could be improved; but, it also helps the learner find ways to improve it. Accordingly, the feedback provider is often put in the role of a coach (Fink, 2013). But, what models of providing feedback are effective for leadership education contexts? The purpose of this session is to demonstrate how feedback—as pedagogy and educative assessment—can be used in leadership education to develop leadership and critical thinking skills.

**Review of Related Scholarship**

Feedback is widely used in leadership education. According to Conger (1992), along with other experiences that foster personal growth and understanding, effective feedback processes offer opportunities to learn about our strengths and weaknesses in a number of leadership skills (p. 50). However, feedback may take many forms such as 360-degree feedback, coaching, mentoring and networking, peer-feedback, self-evaluation, job assignments, and action learning (Day, 2001). And, the actors may vary from mentors or coaches to students and teachers.

**Feedback as Pedagogy**

This session focuses on feedback and its pragmatic uses as pedagogy in leadership courses. To
set the stage, it is important to note the key differences between feedback and assessment. According to Fink (2013), feedback does not become part of the course grade; only assessment does that. Additionally,

Feedback is done in dialogue with the learner, whereas assessment is announced to the learner. The result of the assessment, for example, might be, “You got a 75” (or a “C, depending on the symbols being used). To provide feedback, the teacher needs to share an evaluation of the student’s work, find out what the student thought of the work and what criteria the student was using, share information about the teacher’s criteria and how they were applied, and so on. This dialogue is important because it allows the teacher to be sure the student understands the criteria and how they apply, and it starts the process of helping the student learn how to engage in self-assessment. (p. 106)

As an example approach, Fink (2005) suggests a set of feedback and assessment procedures collectively known as “educative assessment” (see also, Wiggins, 1998). At the heart of this procedure is “Forward-Looking Assessment,” which incorporates exercises, questions, and/or problems that create a real-life context for a given issue, problem, or decision. To construct this kind of question or problem, the instructor has to look forward, beyond the time when the course is over, and ask: In what kind of situation do I expect students to need, or be able to use, this knowledge? Fink (2005) posits that, answering this question makes it easier to create a question or problem that replicates a real-life context. The problem should be relatively open-ended, not totally pre-structured. If necessary, certain assumptions or constraints can be given. At the level of individual courses, the now-popular classroom assessment techniques serve the same purpose: feedback, usually ungraded, is provided frequently so students can enhance the quality of their learning and teachers can assess the effectiveness of different teaching and learning techniques and strategies (Angelo and Cross, 1993). Other examples include peer review, interactive logs with instructor responses, exit slips, one-minute papers, end-of-term survey, and individual reading/writing conferences (Fayne, 2009).

The literature is also abundant with suggestions and approaches for learner-centered feedback. For example, Race (1993) suggests that effective feedback materials need to connect with ways people actually learn and will thus, “create the want to learn, provide abundant opportunities to learn by doing, provide a great deal of useful feedback to learners, and take account of the fact that learning does not happen instantly, but needs time for digestion (p. 63, italics in original). In the leadership and management education literature, feedback is generally considered most effective in multi-source applications. In one such example, the Center for Creative Leadership incorporates feedback-intensive experiences in its programming that are concerned with helping a person to see more clearly significant patterns of behavior, to understand more clearly the attitudes and motivations underlying these patterns, to reassess what makes the person more or less effective relative to the goals he or she wants to attain, and to evaluate alternative ways of meeting these goals (McCauley, Moxley, & Van Velsor, 1998). Larsen (1998) and de Villiers (2013) offer two additional multi-source approaches.

**Multisource Feedback**

According to Larsen (1998), careful use of feedback--the process by which individuals learn
about past actions--is a core leadership competency. However, feedback processes are only effective if individuals understand them and the way successful work includes experience modification. Specifically, Larsen (1998) offers four strategies for instructors who want to help students become more conscious users of feedback and develop feedback-seeking ability: (a) topic knowledge, (b) awareness of the feedback process, (c) cognitive modeling, and (d) practice in feedback-seeking behavior. For example, this proposal offers information about topic knowledge—in this case, feedback. If instructors begin the term with feedback as a subject, students can work on feedback use throughout the term, hence, awareness of the feedback process. With respect to cognitive modeling, if instructors model feedback giving, even drawing attention to their own practices, students become aware of the modeling. Finally, instructors can provide opportunities for students to practice giving and receiving feedback through the use of rubrics, one-on-one discussions, and group debriefs.

de Villiers (2013) suggests two types of feedback for individuals who lead organizations—Organizational and Educational. Organizational feedback refers to the type of honest performance and behavioral feedback that is generally not readily available from the learner’s colleagues since they fear repercussions, lack the skills and are afraid of upsetting their peers or seniors. According to de Villiers (2013), “peers and colleagues hence provide ‘nice’ feedback which may lack in truthfulness, platitudes which lack in specificity or is ambiguous” (p. 67). The “nice” feedback then is not as developmental and deprives the learner of crucial information they need to grow (Boyatzis & Kolb, 1969; Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002). Similarly, Chaleff (2009) suggests that followers must have the courage to challenge leaders by providing critical feedback. However, in order to do so, the follower must prepare leaders for feedback by prefacing feedback with a defusing statement or linking feedback to outcomes the leader desires. Most significant to our proposal is that followers must find a way to give feedback so that the leader will listen. Chaleff (2009) suggests directing negative feedback toward specific behaviors or policy, utilizing “I statements” when possible, or indirectly challenging a leader by posing questions regarding policy or behavior that can create a dialogue with others.

Educational feedback, as conceptualized by Hattie and Timperley (2007, p. 81), is the “information provided by an agent (e.g. teacher, peer, book, parent, self, experience) regarding aspects of one’s performance or understanding.” “It occurs typically after instruction that seeks to provide knowledge and skills or to develop particular attitudes” (Hattie & Timperley, 2007, p. 102). In the educational environment feedback interventions (FI) are all events, including interactions of either inter-person verbal or in written format that provides feedback to the learner. The FI may be formative or summative (Brown, 2004; Race, 2010) and may be provided by lecturers, student peers in collective feedback, by team or group members, interviews with practitioners or experts in the field, or computer-generated feedback in response to on-line assignments, or other means (Brown, Rust, & Gibbs, 1994). According to Sadler:

“formative assessment refers to assessment that is specifically intended to generate feedback on performance to improve and accelerate learning. Summative contrasts with formative assessment in that [the former] is concerned with summing up or summarizing the achievement status of a student, and is geared toward reporting at the end of a course of study especially for purposes of certification. It is essentially passive and does not normally have immediate impact on learning, although it often influences decisions
which may have profound educational and personal consequences for the student.” (1989, p. 120)

In bridging these forms of assessment with feedback, de Villiers offers “seven principles of highly effective feedback (see Figure 1). According to de Villiers (2013), “feedback should be provided in a clear, manageable but meaningful and specific manner” (p. 73). As leadership educators, however, complexity level of feedback may depend on a large number of contextual variables such as learner orientation, developmental readiness, and intrinsic or extrinsic motivation.

**Figure 1. Seven principles of highly effective feedback. From de Villiers, R. (2013). 7 Principles of highly effective managerial feedback: Theory and practice in managerial development interventions. The International Journal of Management Education, 11, p. 69.**

**Feedback from Practice and Peers**

Beyond multi-source feedback, the leadership and management education literature appears to organize feedback into two general categories: (a) practice-feedback; and (b) peer-feedback.

**Peers.** Peer-feedback… In one approach offered by Hafford-letchfield & Bourn (2011), learner-managers were asked to audit their skills in association with colleagues, their line manager, staff they managed and service users. Actively seeking feedback from these enabled them to reflect on their performance and then, in discussion with their line managers and mentors, identify two key areas from the management standards on which to focus their development. The process needed careful preparation and transparent guidance about process so that those giving the feedback understood the purposes and use of feedback given. Learner managers were advised to be mindful of who they approached for feedback, since what is required is constructive feedback. Seeking feedback proactively builds on the premise that one can have more control over getting feedback and being in a position to respond to it by giving up control and allowing others to have a voice. This is a unique consideration in multi-source feedback techniques and the key to
facilitating one’s own learning (Hafford-letchfield & Bourn, 2011).

Another important guideline associated with effective peer-feedback facilitation is structure. Specifically, students must know what they are being evaluated on in order for the feedback “cycle” to be productive. For example, in a study on students’ leadership development as measured by the social change model of leadership, Buschlen (2009) found that:

Often times, group projects may be viewed by students as just another ‘group project’ but, if the task is accomplished by an explanation of how this project can also be an exercise in leadership, more productive outcomes await. Students must realize that the lessons of leadership transcend the final grade and will actually develop the student into a well-rounded citizen. Thus, faculty must push for more peer evaluations as this adds a level of sophistication to grading and forces students to confront each other during projects. This measure of accountability should enhance a student’s leadership and interpersonal skills. This expectation develops the skill of delegation, the skill of conflict negotiation, the skill of evaluation, and the realization of accountability. These were the lessons that transcend the classroom and make an impact in the community as students work and flourish. (p. 151)

**Practice-Feedback.** Experiencing practice and subsequent feedback in the classroom has shown to produce leadership development in undergraduates. For example, Hess (2007) suggests the “classroom practicum approach” to develop leadership skills. In this approach, student learning is enhanced by integrating a greater emphasis on the transfer phase of the learning process and thus, the classroom becomes the setting for each student’s experience. Each student is provided a significant opportunity to lead a two-week-long team project and to receive detailed feedback on his or her effectiveness in that role. The practice opportunity is of complexity and duration sufficient to require the exercise of a broad range of leadership skills, from providing direction and support to managing conflict and achieving consensus. By engaging students in opportunities for extended practice and informed feedback, this approach improves student learning regardless of the class size.

Yet, there are many challenges inherent in ensuring meaningful practice and feedback (Hess, 2007). These include providing feedback to all students and allowing them to practice skills for a duration and complexity efficient to elicit a substantial skill set. In most academic settings, the opportunity for students to practice skills and receive feedback on their performance tends to be limited to involvement in brief role plays or simulations, and to whatever applications students might attempt outside the classroom. This lack of opportunity for significant class-based practice and feedback suggests a potential next step for leadership educators. Specifically, further enhancing course-based leadership skill building exercised through an increased emphasis on learning transfer, that is, by including opportunities for meaningful practice and feedback in the course design and curriculum.

Similarly, Rubin (2006) concluded that to be effective, feedback should be concrete, specific, descriptive, balanced, non-threatening, and constructive. Any course design seeking to achieve enhanced skills development through greater emphasis on learning transfer, then, must ensure quality in terms of both the practice opportunity and the feedback provided. Holmer (2001)
recommends having students prepare for leading in-class teams, has students review rules for giving feedback, and then has them practice framing feedback statements. McEnrue (2002) engages students in role plays and other exercises, each targeting a specific skill area. Students then receive highly structured peer feedback on their performance.

In summary, using students as the primary source of developmental feedback is consistent with Rubin (2006), who cited Falchikov and Goldfinch (2000) and Macpherson (1999) in concluding, that, in general, the preponderance of evidence seems to suggest that with sufficient practice and clear methodology, students can provide peer feedback that is highly congruent with faculty member feedback. The classroom practicum model attempts to enhance students’ leadership skills development by integrating into the course design a greater emphasis on the transfer phase of the learning process. By engaging students in opportunities for focused practice over several sessions and for informed peer feedback on their performance, this approach seeks to better achieve the conditions known to result in improved learning.

**Lesson Plan Description**

Using Feedback as a pedagogical strategy in leadership courses requires intentional planning and execution. This educator workshop session will demonstrate several models of effective, appropriate feedback and involve participants in a series of activities.

Accordingly, facilitators will immerse participants in feedback-focused discourse through the following agenda:

I. Welcome and Introductions
II. Best Workshop / Worst Workshop
   A. Intentionality/Disclosure
III. Differentiating/Distinction between
   A. Development and Content
      1. Our focus here is on using feedback as part of the developmental process, i.e., actions and behaviors, versus evaluating for content mastery.
   B. Feedback and Evaluation
      1. What are some contexts where leadership educators provide feedback on leadership/leader development? Where does feedback happen?
      2. What are some examples of these types of feedback?
         a) What does feedback look like? sound like? feel like?
            1) what is effective/ineffective? (e.g., writing comment from “writing comments on student papers”)
   C. Multisource, Practice, and Peer Feedback Types
IV. Preparing leadership educators and students for feedback
   A. The Feedback Process
   B. What are we giving feedback on/for? “Feedback for What?”
      1. Development: (a) Behavior; (b) Skills; and (c) Traits
         a) Humility: Constructive criticism / critical leadership (idea of listening, accepting, internalizing, acting, etc.)
V. Providing constructive, intentional feedback about leadership learning and
Development
A. Group Techniques: Debriefing as a vehicle for Feedback; Student-peer feedback
B. Individual Techniques: Verbal and written

VI. Reflection and Feedback Activity -- Brief reflection and peer feedback activity (see Appendix A)

VII. New Curriculum Activity: Small group problem-solving challenge with practice feedback (see Appendix B)

VIII. Whole-group feedback session
IX. Discussion and Q&A

Discussion of Outcomes/Results

Outcomes in both authors’ experience with practicing feedback seem to align with Hess’ (2007) conclusion about increased developmental outcomes. For example, one of the authors uses detailed content feedback on written assignments and presentations with her students in a theories of leadership course. In several cases, students approached her after class with positive verbal commentary, such as, “I’ve never received feedback like this before on a paper. It really helped me apply the content to my actions.” This author also uses 360-degree feedback in her classroom environment. For example, she uses the “best class ever” activity, which is used in this proposal, to garner student buy-in and ownership of the course. In addition, the author provides opportunities for “mid-semester check-ins” with students, during which they can choose to meet with her to discuss topics related to class or challenges they are facing as leaders. Students report higher levels of interest in the course and greater facilitation of learning in their end-of-year evaluations. In addition, they specifically provide written comments in these evaluations about the importance of feedback in their classroom learning.

The other author utilizes in-class feedback forms for when students present or facilitate discussion as part of an individual project. In this example, students are enrolled in a blended graduate-level leadership theory course where half of the students attend face-to-face and the other half attends virtually through Adobe Connect--both students are attending the course live and synchronously. One chief assignment requires students to begin facilitating discussion about a leadership or group dynamics article from a peer-reviewed journal. Students summarize the major points and pose no less than three discussion questions to their peers. After a few weeks time on the discussion boards, the student takes the discussion to the classroom for a 20-minute dialogue. During this “discussion facilitation,” the students’ peers are asked to provide structured feedback based on a rubric in real-time on a Google doc in areas such as, “How effectively did the facilitator introduce and draw relevance between the article and our assigned materials?” and “How effective was the facilitator in keeping the discussion going and asking relevant, probing, and follow-up questions?” While the feedback is anonymous, student facilitators reported very positive reactions to receiving quick, detailed feedback from their peers. The instructor then added feedback and provided a course grade.

Workshop Implications

Although Conger (1992) and Hess (2007) suggest that effective feedback provides for important developmental gains and improved student learning, the opportunity for students to practice
leadership skills and receive feedback on their performance tends to be limited many in academic settings. Leadership educators could enhance course-based leadership skill building by including more opportunities for meaningful leadership practice and providing effective feedback on those practices. In addition, leadership educators who can provide effective opportunities for giving and receiving feedback could potentially facilitate better learning environments in online leadership classrooms.

As a result of this participating in this workshop, participants will:

- Develop a better understanding of pedagogical feedback models
- Explore specific feedback models for leadership learning outcomes
- Understand the differences between feedback and evaluation
- Have opportunities to experience applying feedback to specific leadership situations

References


Appendices

Appendix A

Reflection and Feedback Activity

Take a minute to reflect on your conference experience, or other professional development opportunities in leadership education, thus far. How have you applied leadership to your approach?

In this space, provide constructive feedback for the person above.
Appendix B

New Curriculum Activity

Imagine you are a new instructor for a Leadership Theories course. This is a senior-level undergraduate course, and you have been asked to provide an updated curriculum with a final project that helps the students understand the importance of giving and receiving constructive feedback. Use the space below to brainstorm and briefly present this project, based on what you learned from an awesome conference presentation you recently attended. Remember, your activity could be based on multisource, practice, or peer feedback (see back page for brief review of these types of feedback). Please identify which type of feedback you intend to use, provide at least one learning goal/outcome for your activity, and briefly describe the activity/project.
Peer Feedback

- Peer-feedback involves opportunities for students to offer constructive feedback to other students. Careful preparation and transparent guidance about this process is required so those giving feedback understand the purpose and use of the feedback given. Another important guideline associated with effective peer-feedback facilitation is structure. Specifically, students must know what they are being evaluated on in order for the feedback “cycle” to be productive.

Practice Feedback

- These activities should aim to engage students in opportunities for focused practice over several sessions and should be concrete, specific, descriptive, balanced, non-threatening, and constructive.

Multisource Feedback

- This process involves four strategies: (a) topic knowledge, (b) awareness of the feedback process, (c) cognitive modeling, and (d) practice in feedback-seeking behavior. Activities in which multisource feedback take place may include beginning the term with a specific topic as content area to be studied in the class (i.e. topic/content area identified on the syllabus). The instructor may provide a multi-stage project, in which parts of the project are submitted and given feedback throughout the term, which provides an awareness of the feedback process. Cognitive modeling may involve drawing attention to the instructor’s own practices and students becoming aware of the modeling. Finally, instructors could provide opportunities for students to practice feedback through peer reviews/evaluations of the project.
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<th>Comments</th>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did the group identify an activity/project that allowed students to offer and receive feedback?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the activity/project practical?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cohesiveness</strong></td>
<td>/5 points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did the group accurately convey what students should accomplish with this activity/project?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did the group accurately identify the type of feedback they intended to use?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did the group appear to work together effectively in order to accomplish the task?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clarity of Idea</strong></td>
<td>/5 points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the presentation of the activity/project logical and well thought-out?</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is/Are the learning objective(s) clearly tied to the activity/project?</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Connection to Content</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Did the group members, to the best of their ability, present a(n) activity/project that incorporated multisource, practice, or peer feedback?</td>
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Lesson plan for Adaptive Leadership: The Appalachian Trail through Digital Storytelling

Carolynn Nath Komanski & Dr. Nicole Stedman

University of Florida

Abstract

Experiencing adaptive leadership through a simulated digital storytelling provides participants the opportunity to gain understanding and retain knowledge. Utilizing the Appalachian Trail as the foundation of a simulated learning experience participants are immersed into the stories of others and create their own. In the activity participants must plan, strategize and overcoming predetermined challenges where they must apply adaptive leadership. Participant groups will have different outcomes and experiences through the simulation.

Introduction

Adaptive leadership theory provides understanding of the present leadership situation and the ability to make it favorable through an increase of flexibility, planning, consultation, and ability to provide direction (Northouse, 2016). Adaptive leaders also support inexperienced or stressed team members to be effective through challenging situations (Heifetz, 1997). Adaptive leadership requires that the leader anticipate and prepare for the problem, act with confidence while providing direction, and utilize opportunities (Northouse, 2016; Useem, 2010).

Digital storytelling is a tool which provides the opportunity for experiential learning (Fararoei & Weller, 2015). In order to understand how adaptive leadership can be applied in real life, digital story telling is a means to foster experiential learning. Digital story telling can involve audio and visual resources for relaying information. Providing visual references paints a picture for learners to retain information.

By utilizing technology and current resources from the Appalachian Trail Conservation (2015) a story of traveling the Appalachian Trail, over the course of six months, is brought into the classroom. Digital storytelling through videos and photos provide the means of simulation for the Appalachian Trail. Real life trials and tribulations along the way will test and challenge participants to apply adaptive leadership theory.

Review of Related Scholarship

Leadership through storytelling provides an opportunity of connection (Muir, 2007; Mlakova, 2013). This is not a new concept for leadership stories give our live meaning and perspective (Fishers, 1984). Fishers (1984) explains shows that telling a story helps retention of content. Walters (2014) states “90% of information transmitted to our brain is visual” and that we process visual information faster and retain it longer through visual storytelling.

Fararoei & Weller (2015) explain digital storytelling as a short form digital medial production that creates a compelling, engaging and often interactive story. Digital stories include, but are not limited to, audio or visual tools that are used to share a narrative. Digital stories gain our
attention in the age of “info obesity” which is where we are over inundated with information (Fararoei & Weller, 2015).

Compelling digital stories include value in action stories (Walters, 2014). By providing an example of what you value and stand provides the opportunity to have an emotional storyline (Fisher, 1984). There needs to be an emotional connection to the story so stories can create buy in for change by building trust and connection with others (Fararoei and Weller, 2015). Walters (2014) states that this does not tell your population what to believe or think it provides the opportunity for them to decide and then connect with others.

Adaptive leadership

**Lesson Plan Description**

Objectives:
Application of Adaptive Leadership Theory
Team dynamics
Critical thinking and Problem Solving Skills
Communication and Collaboration

Materials Needed:
Computer with Audio and Video
PowerPoint
Internet and access to YouTube
Legal Envelopes or Folders
Playdough or drawing supplies (paper and pencil/ marker/ crayon)
4 page Vertical Map of Appalachian Trail (pdf)
Male & Female Packing Lists (pdf)
Laws & Policy Information (pdf)

Other Resources:
Northouse (2016) and Heifetz (1997)
Articles on Adaptive Leadership (prior to lesson)

Information:
Guided facilitation is needed for this activity
Basic understanding and knowledge of the Appalachian Trail
Strong understanding of Adaptive Leadership

Verification:
Recap slides and facilitation of team reflection
Discussion points after challenge activities
Reflective discussion, lessons learned, and questions post simulation
Notes: Utilizing a pre-designed PowerPoint which includes an Appalachian Trail (A.T.) simulation practical application of adaptive leadership can be experienced. One facilitator is needed. Participants of the simulation should be divided in groups of 4 or more if possible with one leader identified who should embody and mimic adaptive leadership.

The first slide includes an overview of adaptive leadership includes a review of the definition, summary of the theory, review of the challenges, and intent to the theory.

The second slide introduces the A.T. and activity. Facts and statistics of the A.T. are shared. At this time the work packets for groups are distributed. Once they are distributed recite the notes in the slide. Provide time for the participants to review all information. Once this has been done each participant will create their own survival item or leadership item that is not on the list. This can be drawn or created utilizing play dough. Once these are created the group must decide on one item.

Video is then shown to provide an overview of the A.T. and what the experience will be like. After viewing this entire video (2:40) you inform the groups that they will be going to travel the A.T. over the next hour. They will experience various challenges but they have a leader and they will utilize adaptive leadership in order to make decision and achieve the goal of completing the A.T.

The first month’s journey will then being. An overview of the month’s goals are listed and some stats for the weather are included which are important for the journey. A video will then play under the stats. The following slide also has a video you will play the video and stop a min into it. Once stopped you will inform each participant to create their own survival or leadership item which is not on the list. This can be drawn or created utilizing play dough. Once these are created the group must decide on one item. As they begin to create the items you will play the remainder of the video. Once the video is complete they will have to determine their item. Each group should share their item and why it was chosen.

The next slide looks at month three. Additional stats and information are shared along with another video. This video provides a perspective of a female in her mid-20’s who has a husband and child. She has completed the A.T. numerous times. She shares a story of how the A.T. is more than a hike but is a place to be with yourself, reflect and be one with nature. This story is inspiring and humbling. She also shares of a time where she wanted to quit on one of her completions and her husband had to remind her of who she was and why she was chose to start this A.T. journey again. This is an opportunity for the team and individuals to reflect on ways they take time for themselves.

The next two slides provide a challenge activity. Participants are provided a recap of their journey and then are provided a challenge. They have to work as a team to determine how they will overcome the situation utilizing adaptive leadership. There is opportunity for reflection here with the larger group as to how they chose to overcome this obstacle.

Month four provides a check in for the participants. They have to take a few moments and check
on their supplies and plan for the next seven days.

At that time they are approached with another challenge activity in determining what they want to do for food as there is a shortage. This is where different groups choose different paths. Once groups determine their plans they will share with the entire group and their rational. While the decision making is occurring there is another video which can be played which shows the cabin which they could go to in order to eat.

Month six then provides the last month of traveling the A.T. and a video plays which shows highlights of the last part of the trail. The next slide is another challenge activity. This activity usually divides the groups as they have to determine if they are going to finish the trail or they are going to quit or leave someone behind. The energy at this point in the activity definitely erupts at this time. Provide time for the teams to decide and then discuss the decision with the larger group.

The final slide shows the last groups a reward in which they complete the A.T. in Maine. Congratulate the finishers and remind them that they do not get to register as completing the A.T but they should try to hike the A.T.

Time permitting follow up questions include: What were some examples of your leader or your group applying adaptive leadership? Were other forms of leadership demonstrated in this simulation? Was it realistic to be an adaptive leader and why? What are some situations which you have seen adaptive leadership occur?

**Discussion of Outcomes/Results**

The Appalachian Trail Activity for Adaptive Leadership has been utilized in an undergraduate lecture style course and activity lab with over 79 students and a graduate course with over 20 students. In both courses no student had personally completed the entire Appalachian Trail (A.T.). Some students had walked and hiked parts of the A.T. it is important to inquire about participants experiences of this and share if possible. This may also impact the activity and the facilitator may need to assign them a participant role rather than the leader of their group. By providing an introduction and context of what the A.T. is important. It sets the tone and affords the participants an opportunity to set them up for success by providing perspective of how few people have actually completed the entire A.T. This activity utilizes video simulation (from YouTube videos) which is important in order for the participants to hear the sounds and visually see what the trail is like, if they have or have not experienced the A.T. throughout the various terrains and seasonal changes. Participants stated this was a valuable resource to the activity for the reasons noted above.

Videos are embedded into a PowerPoint presentation but are also listed as hyperlinks in the notes section of the slides in case there were technical issues. Videos of the A.T. trail experience are longer than may be needed, so they can be sped up depending on the dialogue and discussion of the groups during activities.

Participants need time to review supplemental documentation and then create their own
personalized survival item. Explaining these steps and stressing the importance to their survival and successfully completing the trail.

Weeks after the A.T. activity the participants in both courses continued to recall the information and activity due to its level of simulation and application of adaptive leadership. This includes in course reviews and dialogue which required recollection of the theory.

**Workshop Plan & Implications**

Introduction of Presenters (2 mins). Presenters will introduce themselves.

Context (8 mins). The workshop will begin with an introduction exploring the of adaptable leadership activities with this chapter being newly added to Northouse (2016). Pedagogical research will be shared in order to create a foundation of why digital storytelling was utilized for this learning tool.

Introduction of Activity (2 mins). A brief introduction of the activity will be shared.

Learning Tool (30 mins). Then the attendees will become participants and we will go through the activity. Participants will be divided into small groups and then proceed through the Appalachian Trail simulation as an active participants. The simulation will include discussion points after each supplemental activity.

Discussion (8 mins). After the simulation has concluded there will be a discussion with the participants on how to utilize this activity can be utilized in a variety of settings.

Videos for the learning tool will be shortened in order to accommodate for the time limit and opportunity for discussion at the end.

**References**


Appendices

Appendix A

Power point slide images which show the general flow and format of the activity.
Appendix B

Appalachian Trail Map which shows the distance traveled during the activity.
Appendix C

Packing List includes the items which participants reference for their trip and what survival items they have access to. Female list shown below.

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APPALACHIAN TRAIL ACTIVITY

**Adaptive Leadership**

**FEMALE Packing List**

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ASSOCIATION OF LEADERSHIP EDUCATORS
Panning for Social Justice: 
An Experiential Approach to Social Justice Education 

Tina Wesanen-Neil, Jessica Hill, & Devon Thomas 
University of Arizona 

Abstract 

Inequalities present in contemporary American society call for educators to provide meaningful social justice education to prompt the development of social justice advocates. In this workshop, participants will understand how to approach facilitating social justice curriculum from Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning model by engaging in various experiential activities. 

Introduction 

Leadership education takes many forms in order to reach and engage students in learning about issues which impact their lived experiences. Such social issues include discussing concepts of privilege, oppression, marginalization, and finding meaningful activities which generate discussion around such issues can be challenging for facilitators. Social justice is an integral factor to include in the leadership process, and as leadership educators we have a responsibility to create safe and effective learning environments for students to explore how they can make a difference. At the same time, teaching about social issues is a delicate balance between meeting students where they are at developmentally, exploring systems as well as individual roles within such systems, and leaving students with the opportunity to reflect and develop agency. The objective of this workshop is to engage participants in understanding and practicing social justice curriculum from an experiential learning approach to teach effective leadership. By moving participants through Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning model, participants will understand various approaches to facilitating and executing social justice curriculum. From there, participants will be able to apply the model to their own social justice curriculum to teach effective leadership.

Review of Related Scholarship 

Experiential Education 

Leadership is a field of research that is constantly growing and shifting. As leadership professionals, we have to find methods to effectively apply this research and experience to leadership program development. Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) stated “we believed that we were in a position to draw a fairly large number of conclusions about the institutional and programmatic factors that facilitate student growth and development” (p. 1). As leadership educators, we know leadership crosses disciplines and is a key part to the student experience. With this call to action, leadership professionals are at the front edge of leadership research and program design which facilitates such student development.

One of these methods that is still at the forefront of leadership research and program
development is experiential education. Engaged learning occurs when students are meaningfully processing the material, focused on the activity in the moment, making connections and drawing conclusions (Schreiner, 2010) and that we have to create the opportunities for students to engage in these type of experiences. Learning should be a process of mental inquiry, not passive reception (Knowles, 1998). Thus, as leadership educators, we also need to be experiential educators, who explore as many methods as possible to create empowered learners who can co-design and customize their learning (Gee, 2007). As demonstrated in the 2005 Documenting Effective Education Practice (DEEP) study, participants, “learn more when they are intensely involved in their education and have opportunities to think about and apply what they are learning in different settings” (Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt & et al., 2005, p.193). As leadership educators who work to prepare students for future challenges, we seek to design learning environments which is centered around this ideal.

One of the most effective methods to apply and utilize the vast amounts of research and experience around experiential education is through application of Kolb’s (1984) Experiential Cycle of Learning, where reflection helps to transform any experience into applied learning. Kolb’s (1984) model uses a Concrete Experience (CE) that then is processed through Reflective Observation (RO) and Abstract Conceptualization (AC) to formulate a new idea or action that is then used in Active Experimentation (AE). Kolb (1984) considered learning as a process when an experience was transformed into new knowledge and the new information could then be applied to future experiences. Because learners come from different learning perspectives, “if academic disciplines are to be accessible to student with diverse learning styles, efforts must be made to provide carried methods of instruction and evaluation” (Evans, N.J., Forney, D.S., & Guido-Dibrito, 1998, p 213). Due to this, leadership is one of these disciplines that needs to be accessible from diverse learning styles. Teaching from an experiential perspective could provide support for many learning styles in leadership programming.

**Social Justice Education**

Social justice education is a critical topic included in many leadership programs. This is because college is a formative time for students to develop and challenge their preconceived notions of diversity and social justice (Broido & Reason, 2005). Through curricular and co-curricular experiences, students are exposed to concepts that influence their understanding of their own identities and the identities of others (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Many colleges and universities include some form of diversity requirement in their general education curriculum, designed to introduce students to perspectives other than their own. Pascarella and Tarenzini (2005) assert that participating in these required courses has significant and positive effects on students’ multicultural competence. Furthermore, the experiences students have outside the classroom when interacting with a group of diverse peers can be essential to the development of a social justice ally identity, as well as participating in diversity-related initiatives such as workshops, even on a campus whose population is fairly homogenous (Milem & Umbach, 2003).

The development of a social justice ally identity is one of the aims of social justice education. Bell (2007) states: “the goal of social justice education is to enable people to develop the critical analytical tools necessary to understand oppression and their own socialization within oppressive systems, and to
develop a sense of agency and capacity to interrupt and change oppressive patterns and behaviors in themselves and in the institution and communities of which they are a part” (p. 2).

Social justice education needs to include both an understanding of the complex systems of oppression at work in our society as well as an individual’s personal experiences operating within those systems. Bishop’s (2002) model of ally development includes a six-step framework that outlines how new allies work through an understanding of both systemic and individual oppression and privilege. Bishop (2002) states that the first step in ally identity development is understanding oppression as a deeply ingrained part of our societal structure. The second step involves understanding how systems of oppression and the experiences of those who are marginalized are similar, different, and interconnected, acknowledging that there is no “hierarchy of oppression” (Bishop, 2002). The third step is taking steps to become conscious of one's role in the cycle of oppression. Social justice allies are then encouraged to “become a worker for your own liberation,” recognizing how oppression individually impacts each person and taking steps to encourage change (Bishop, 2002). The fifth step is gaining the skills and behaviors necessary to be an effective ally by encouraging listening to targeted identities, and then taking actions within their dominant group to educate others about oppressive behaviors and systems. Finally, Bishop (2002) encourages emerging allies to maintain hope and idealism, acknowledging that dismantling systems of oppression is hard work not easily achieved.

Broido’s (2000) model of college student ally development is related to Bishop’s (2002) work, taking into account how college directly impacts the development of a social justice ally. In her model, Broido (2000) makes a direct link to an experiential approach in learning about social justice issues, stating that the allies in her study engaged in discussion, self-reflection, and perspective taking. This allowed students to “not just passively absorb information; they talked about it with others; reflected on their own experiences, thoughts, and feelings; and tried to see the world through others’ eyes” (Broido, 2000, p.22). Experiential learning methods include small-group simulations, structured interactions, and reflective practices, which are powerful pedagogical approaches to take in social justice education (Adams, 2007).

Lesson Plan Description

This workshop will use several methods of experiential education that are used to teach leadership at our university in our leadership courses and leadership development programs.

Learning Outcomes:

- Participants will understand Kolb’s (1984) Experiential Cycle of learning
- Participants will value the importance of understanding how to facilitate social justice curriculum in an engaging and inclusive manner
- Participants will take part in engaged learning exercises designed to demonstrate effective social justice education curriculum
- Participants will understand and be able to apply social justice leadership concepts within the context of experiential education
- Participants will analyze and apply what they have learned to their own leadership education curriculum
An Overview of Experiential Learning (15 minutes)
- The definitions of experiential/engaged learning will be reviewed
- Kolb’s (1984) Experiential Cycle of Learning will be reviewed through examples of participants concrete life events
- A brief discussion of why we teach social justice experientially

A Brief Overview of Our Leadership Program (5 minutes)
- A brief overview of our leadership program to help set the context of how we use these experiential tools

Activities to Demonstrate How to Teach Social Justice Leadership Experientially (60 minutes)
1. Teaching Inclusive Language Activity (15 minutes)
   - Participants will identify the importance of inclusive language through a self-reflection exercise
   - Participants will explore gendered words in our society and what effects those words have on members of society
   - Detailed directions are included in the Lesson Plan in Appendix A
2. Cultural Capital Simulation: Legos (15 minutes)
   - Participants will engage in a simulation to demonstrate how cultural capital connects to privilege and oppression of groups
   - Participants will identify the effects cultural capital can have on groups in our society
   - Detailed directions are included in the Lesson Plan in Appendix A
3. Evaluating Your Privilege in reference to Community Partnerships (10 minutes)
   - Participants will engage in a case scenario related to volunteering with a community partner and reflecting on what privilege perspectives they bring to that experience
   - Participants will identify how their privilege could impact community partnerships
   - Detailed directions are included in the Lesson Plan in Appendix A
4. Sex and Gender Exploration: Gender Reflection and Sexism Web (20 minutes)
   - Participants will engage in a self-reflections about gender roles to understand how gender norms are created
   - Participants will engage in an activity to demonstrate the web of power that sexism creates in our society
   - Detailed directions are included in the Lesson Plan in Appendix A

Wrap-up Discussion (10 minutes)
- Participants will engage in a wrap-up discussion to answer any questions about how to apply experiential education methods when teaching leadership.

Discussion of Outcomes

Our team of presenters have been teaching social justice education and experiential education for over 15 years through leadership courses such as Foundations of Leadership, the Leadership
Challenge, Eco Leadership, Global Leadership, Leadership in the Arts, Social Change Leadership, Critical Perspectives on Leadership and Society, as well as in and out of the classroom settings. Through careful curriculum development, collaboration, and individual reflection, we have learned that students tend to understand concepts regarding privilege, oppression, stratification, and institutionalized racism, sexism, and ableism, amongst other forms of oppression, when approached from an experiential education perspective. They are able to participate in an activity which brings to life these issues, debrief their learning with their peers, and apply what they have learned to opportunities which impact their lived reality. Concepts regarding how systems of oppression overlap and reinforce each other can feel removed from the daily lives of students who hold many privileged identities, and providing real-world examples and actions which they can take away from these activities helps students understand how they can start to work against these systems as leaders on their campus and in their communities. While many of these activities have been facilitated in the classroom, we have continued to expand our social justice curriculum to retreats, workshops, and the team activities which students participate in their first year of our leadership program. We have found ways to incorporate experiential education best practices in teaching about social justice across many programs, which engage students who are at various levels of their personal leadership development. From their first semester on campus to their final year as they prepare to enter the workforce or graduate school.

Recently, our department was tasked with creating leadership educational experiences for our emerging Online community of students, which challenged us to design social justice education in an experiential way but one in which students would not have the instant, real-time feedback from the facilitator. Concerns regarding how to best facilitate such challenging concepts in an online setting, to creating a safe and productive learning environment online were addressed by the facilitators and instructional design team. Ultimately we were able to translate activities to an online setting such as teaching about inclusive language in an interactive, engaging activity in the online classroom which also allowed space for processing and timely feedback from the facilitator.

**Workshop Implications**

As leadership educators, we are always challenged with finding new ways to generate learning in and out of the classroom which will be best received by the learners, while also including them and having them lend their own experience to the process. Even with the new challenges described earlier on the horizon, we believe our team has been able to remain true to the best practices regarding social justice and experiential education while creating positive learning environments for students. We hope the workshop participants are able to learn from our experience and share their own examples with other educators during these activities. Participants will also process each activity with discussion questions to help draw connections between social justice, experiential education, and leadership.

**References**


Appendix A

Lesson Plan: Teaching Social Justice Leadership Experientially

Materials Needed:
- 2 Different Small Colored Slips of Paper (1 per person)
- Three Lego kits (one complete, one with just the box, and one with just the legos)
- 1 Ball of Yarn
- 9 institution signs with sexism statements on back (See Appendix B for an example)

An Overview of Experiential Learning (15 minutes)
- The definitions of experiential/engaged learning will be reviewed
  - Definitions from Schreiner (2010), Knowles (1998), and Kolb (1984)
- Kolb’s (1984) Experiential Cycle of Learning with be reviewed through examples of participants concrete life events
  - Refer to Kolb’s Model using the PowerPoint and review the cycle
  - Ask the participants to take out a piece of paper and think back to their first semester in school. Have them write down an experience where they struggled during the first semester, examples could be a hard test, a fight with a roommate, adjusting to more freedom, partying or not, etc.
    - Then using the model have them reflect on this experience with a partner using the following questions:
      - What (RO)? What happened? Give me some observations.
      - So What (AC)? What did you learn? What does this mean?
      - Now What (AE)? How can you apply this learning in the future?
- A brief discussion of why we teach social justice experientially

A Brief Overview of Our Leadership Program (5 minutes)
- A brief overview of our leadership program to help set the context of how we use these experiential tools

Activities to Demonstrate How to Teach Social Justice Leadership Experientially (60 minutes)
1. Teaching Inclusive Language Activity (15 minutes)
   - Reflection:
     - Hand out two pieces of colored paper to participants.
     - Read 5 inclusive language statements slowly to allow for time to process.
     - As you read, if participants agree (can answer “yes” to having also experienced the statement) they should respond by slightly crumpling one of their papers. This process will continue for each question.
     - Next, repeat the process with a new piece of paper and different statements.
     - After you finish reading, ask the participants straighten their papers out.
       - Process the activity
   - Inclusive Language Family Feud Game:
     - After you explain the rules for Family Feud, start the first round – Gendered
Words

- Using the descriptions of the round in Appendix B, ask the students for x# of answers as described by the sheet. For each answer they get, they will earn 1 point.
  - Debrief at the end of the round

2. Cultural Capital Simulation: Legos (15 minutes)

- Make three equal-sized groups and place groups as far away from each other as possible.
- Tell the participants that each group will be competing to create a form of transportation from the supplies provided to them. The first group to complete the task will win.
- Give each group a brown paper bag:
  - One group is given a bag complete with legos, the building instructions and the box with the completed picture on it.
  - One group is given a bag complete with the legos and just the lego box
  - One group is given a bag with only the legos and no instructions or box.
- After 15 minutes have each group share their construction project
- Debrief - focusing on the differences in resource in each group and the affect that had

3. Evaluating Your Privilege: What to Pack? Activity (10 minutes)

- Scenario: Tell the groups that they have joined a 5 day Spring Break Alternative Trip to a community recently devastated by natural disaster - a hurricane and they are leaving in a week. The community you are going to help is near a famous city and you might have time to visit that city while there. The objective when they get down there is to clean up houses that have been severely damaged by the storm. They will be working with individual home owners that have been assigned to their group by a volunteer action network. Your group will be staying in a volunteer center with shared bathrooms and kitchen area. Basic tools will be provided to your group.
- Have each person in the group decide what they will individually pack for the trip including what type of baggage they will bring and everything they will put in their bag.
  - After everyone makes their list, have them consult with their group to adjust their list and decide on any group supplies to bring. Then have each group present.
- Ask the groups, what they considered when packing for the trip? (priorities, weather, etc)
- Ask the group if they considered the people they would be working with?
- Tell the group an appropriate packing list might include:
  - 1 sleeping bag and pillow; 1 towel; Minimal toiletries (leave the hair dryer and other electrical devices at home); 3 changes of clothes (2 work outfits, 1 for going out); 1 pair of sleeping wear; Journal/book
- Discuss how their privilege perspective might have impacted what they bring

4. Sex and Gender Exploration: Gender Reflection and Sexism Web (20 minutes)

- Social Construction of Gender Reflection:
- Ask everyone to find a partner that they will be discussing prompts with:
  - What gender were you raised as? What were the gendered messages in your home? (For example, girls could…, boys could…, girls couldn’t…, boys couldn’t, etc.)
  - What gender were you raised as? What images were reinforced on television
about your gender role?
  o What gender were you raised as? Were there consequences for not following
gendered expectations? What were they?

• Debrief the activity

• Sexism Web:
• Pass out a card to each participant (see appendix B for an example of the Education
Card). The following institutions will be represented: Education; Government; Business;
Health; Media; Geography; Crime; Societal Norms; Family
• This is a silent activity, except for when someone is a statement.
• Have the participants sit in a circle facing each other.
  o Designate someone to go first and give them the yarn ball. Ask the participant to
read out their institution and 1 statement on their card to the group.
  o After the participant reads the statement, they should wrap a piece of yarn around
their fingers and then roll or lightly throw the yarn ball to someone across the
circle.
  o That person should catch the yarn ball and repeat the process.
• Repeat around each of the institutions until all statements are read.
• Process the activity
  o What are some reactions to the exercise? How are people feeling in three words or
less?
  o Have you heard any of these examples before?
  o Can you think of other examples of sexism not shared in this activity?
  o Why were these examples presented in this format? Why a web? How are the
different statements that were shared connected to each other?
  o How does a web relate to privilege and oppression?
  o Who supports this system?
  o Let’s say one or two of us stop participating (or let go), what happens to the
system?
  o What happens to those who try to break the system?
  o How can we support others who do not “hold up the net” when the net may still be
held up by others?

Wrap-up Discussion (10 minutes)
• Engage the participants in a discussion about how the concepts they learned can apply to
leadership education. Ask the following questions if these concepts don’t come up
naturally.
  • If we just lectured about gendered terms, what might have been the outcome?
  • How does experiencing the learning make it more real?
  • Where else can you apply experiential education?
Appendix B

**Round 1 – Gendered Words**
Read This Statement: Gendered Words are those terms that tend to have a specific gender attached to the actual word, such as PoliceMAN. These are roles, tasks, or ideas that have been previously thought of in society to only be done mainly by men or phrases that have been generalized in a male context.

Name 10 Gendered Words.
*Note: If the team comes up with a term that is not on the list but is legitimate give them a point.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gendered Word/Phrase</th>
<th>Non-Gendered Word/Phrase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Congressman</td>
<td>Congress person, member of Congress, Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Fireman</td>
<td>Firefighter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Mailman</td>
<td>Mail carrier, postal worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Salesman</td>
<td>Salesperson, associate, customer service representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Businessman</td>
<td>Business person, executive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Man a table</td>
<td>Staff a table, work a table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Freshman</td>
<td>First Year Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Chairman</td>
<td>Chairperson, Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Man hours</td>
<td>Work hours, hours, labor, Staff time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Education Card (for Sexism Web)**
Language: In most high schools and colleges, first year students are still referred to as freshmen.
Policies: Alcohol is not allowed in sorority houses but it is permitted in most fraternity houses.
Beliefs: Men perform better than women in academically rigorous fields like science, math, and engineering because they “have the brain for it.”
Toys: If Barbie were a real person, she would have a 39 inch bust, 18 inch waist, and 33 inch hips. To recreate her dimensions, a 125-pound woman would have to be 7’2” tall.¹

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How Can We Best Teach Leadership at the Graduate Level?
An Essential Dialogue for Leadership Educators
Leah C. Georges & Jennifer Moss Breen
Creighton University

Abstract
This interactive session is designed for those currently engaged with or interested in graduate leadership education. Through facilitated presentation, conversation, and group work, the goal of this educator workshop is to explore the future of graduate leadership education and create an action plan for the Association of Leadership Educators to create a community of scholars and practitioners who educate graduate students in leadership studies. Although this new and burgeoning field of graduate leadership education is in its relative infancy, the Association of Leadership Educators has an opportunity to pave the path towards best practice models and curricular advancement to the field. This educator workshop serves as a foundational conversation towards these efforts.

Introduction
This session is designed for those currently engaged with or interested in graduate leadership education. Although the field of undergraduate leadership education is ripe with best practices, curriculum models, and published teaching techniques, the field of graduate leadership education is ripe for a similar discussion. Leadership educators often work across program levels, yet the focus of extant research on leadership education has focused primarily on the undergraduate level.

Although this new and burgeoning field of graduate leadership education is in its relative infancy, the Association of Leadership Educators (ALE) has an opportunity to pave the path towards best practice models and curricular advancement to the field. This workshop serves as a foundational conversation towards these efforts.

The idea for this educator workshop originated from an experience at the 2015 ALE annual conference. As a first time attendee at the conference, I was struck by the breadth and depth of the unique and specific sessions about best practices in undergraduate leadership education. The sessions were clear, well-facilitated, and included beautifully assessed lesson plans and specific projects and assignments geared towards in and out of class experiential and scholarly activities for undergraduate students. However, what struck the author was the lack of specific programming for faculty, administrators, and students in masters and doctoral level leadership programs, particularly adult, online, and scholar practitioner audiences.

Although I gained practical and useful lessons from these sessions, some of the most productive time spent was in conversation with others interested in learning about and from others in the process of growing or creating graduate level programs. Anecdotally, several of us discussed the potential for a more formal conversation about current and innovative best practices in graduate leadership education and how ALE can best facilitate these conversations. This proposed
The educator workshop serves as the first step in the creation of this graduate leadership community. The goal of this educator workshop is to explore the future of graduate leadership education and create an action plan for ALE to create a community of scholars and practitioners who educate graduate students in leadership studies. Specifically, the learning objectives of this interactive educator workshop are as follows:

1. To discuss various models of graduate leadership education
2. To introduce a model of a graduate, online leadership program designed for adult scholar practitioner students
3. To invite discussion about the challenges and areas for innovation in graduate leadership education and the various sources of support for graduate educators and administrators
4. To brainstorm practical solutions to the challenges faculty and administrators of graduate leadership programs face and
5. To create an action plan about how the Association of Leadership Educators can build a community of graduate leadership educators to support the growing number of these programs nationwide.

Review of Related Scholarship

Doctoral education in the United States has experienced a profound shift over the last several decades and one of the results has been a surge in novel graduate program initiatives and a mainstream acceptance of the scholar practitioner model of doctoral study (Boud & Tennant, 2006; Boyer, 1990). Consequently, graduate leadership programs have the opportunity and obligation to train industry leaders how to apply theoretical and academic knowledge to their respective fields of practice. What is less known, however, is how to best train these varied graduate leadership program students and how best practices and education models translate, or do not translate between undergraduate and graduate leadership programs. Fields such as business and nursing have begun the conversation concerning how to best train leaders. It is time for a broader conversation concerning leadership education at the graduate level (Friga, Bettis & Sullivan, 2003; Radzyminski, 2005).

The authors began their literature search on this topic (graduate leadership education) with a general abstract search of the Journal of Leadership Education (JOLE). Specifically, the authors examined the journal’s abstracts for articles primarily about graduate leadership education or studies that utilized a graduate student or faculty sample in their research. We found that while JOLE is rich with empirical and applied articles about undergraduate leadership education and best practices, our search, using the journal’s website search function yielded nine total results when we used the search term ‘graduate,’ as a search term, and only four total results when we used the search terms ‘graduate program.’ Perhaps this signals a great opportunity for discussion and subsequent empirical and applied work about graduate leadership education within the ALE community.

A rich body of knowledge tells us that the adult scholar practitioner graduate student is qualitatively different than the typical undergraduate or nontraditional adult learner (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2015). For this reason, leadership educators must consider how best to inspire and lead these students through a graduate academic program. In the late 1960s, Malcolm
Knowles coined a new theory of education, distinguishing the adult learner from the typical adolescent or young adult learner. Andragogy, or “the art and science of helping adults learn” (Knowles, 1980, p. 43) sought to define and explain the needs of adult learners, distinct from the learning styles and motivations of the traditional student. Knowles defined five underlying concepts of the adult learner, specifically as someone who (1) has a unique and independent self-concept who can direct his or her own learning, (2) has a deep reservoir of life experiences, (3) has learning preferences and needs related to his or her changing social roles, (4) is interested in immediate application of new knowledge, and (5) has an internal rather than external motivation to learn (Knowles, 1980; Merriam, 2001). For example, a class exercise that asks a traditional undergraduate student to apply the theory of servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1970) might look very different in a classroom of adult, scholar practitioner students. Adult students desire exercises that are tailored to tap into the richness of the adults’ lived experiences and reflect on the direct application of servant leadership in their place of work. Similarly, an undergraduate assignment in an introductory leadership course might focus on the definition or distinction between various learning theories. In an introductory course, this might be a very necessary and important assignment and a firm place to begin the conversation about leadership theory. On the other hand, an adult graduate student typically looks for an immediate application of a new concept, shifting from a ‘knowledge for knowledge’s sake’ model to an applied model of leadership theory (Hansman, 2001; Knowles, 1980; Merriam, 2001). In other words, while best practices created with an undergraduate leadership population in mind may work beautifully in a traditional leadership program, they may not cleanly translate to a graduate leadership program model. These examples illustrate the unique nature of graduate leadership education and the need for empirical and applied research about how best to serve these uniquely motivated students.

Further, the practical challenges that graduate students encounter are typically and qualitatively different from those students in undergraduate programs. For example, adult scholar practitioners offer a wide breadth and depth of knowledge and applied skills to the academic community and the students’ respective fields. Although these students have a wealth of applied experience and capacity for graduate education, many scholar practitioner students lack the writing skills necessary for doctoral level scholarly work. As leadership educators, it is our duty and opportunity to train these seasoned professionals to articulate their work through a scholarly style of writing. A rich body of research tells us how to improve undergraduate student writing and research suggests that students need to write frequently and receive constructive feedback about their writing (Beaufort, 2007; Granello, 2001; Harris, 2006). However, what is not yet known is how best to apply these practices to graduate leadership programs to help students write in a scholarly tone (Glassick, Huber, & Maeroff, 1997).

In summary, the above body of literature illustrates the unique and distinct nature of graduate leadership education and the need for empirical and applied research to better understand how to best serve these adult, graduate leadership scholars.

**Lesson Plan Description**

This educator workshop will include a combination of facilitator presented information, facilitated conversation, and group work. The following section includes an outline of the 90-minute workshop:
ANNUAL CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS 2016

- Introduction (10 minutes)
  o Facilitator introduction and overview of the facilitators’ experiences in graduate leadership education
  o Group introduction, including each participant’s experiences or role in graduate leadership education and what tools and information he or she hopes to walk away with today
- Presentation of Current Graduate Leadership Education Landscape (15 minutes)
  o Presentation of data about what we know about graduate leadership education, including what we do not know, based on limited published findings and research about best practices in graduate leadership education
  o Brief Presentation of the Creighton University model of an online Doctoral Program in Interdisciplinary Leadership
    - Creighton University founded the Doctoral Program in Interdisciplinary Leadership in 2011. Based on approximately five years of data, the authors will present a number of best practices and opportunities for conversation we have learned during this time, including insights about:
      - The difference between an interdisciplinary v. multidisciplinary curriculum
      - The cohort model of education
      - On-campus residency opportunities, including writing workshops
      - The Creighton Dissertation in Practice (DIP)
      - University mission integration
      - Initial and ongoing training of full-time and adjunct faculty
- Group Exercise and Debrief (20 minutes)
  o What are the challenges and opportunities for innovation in graduate leadership education? How are undergraduate and graduate leadership programs different?
- Group Discussion (20 minutes)
  o What support do you need from your unique perspective in creating, supporting, or learning in a graduate leadership program?
- Action Plan Creation (20 minutes)
  o Based on our conversation, current best practices and the state of graduate leadership education, we will create an action plan to present to the Association of Leadership Educators about how to create a community of research and support for those interested and engaged in graduate leadership education (i.e., ALE sponsored webinars, pre-conferences, conference track, research collaboration network, etc.)
- Debrief and Conclusion (5 minutes)

Discussion of Outcomes/Results

One of the authors of this educator workshop presented at the 2015 ALE Conference on a topic concentrated around graduate students’ writing challenges and how we can best support these scholar practitioner leaners to write more effectively in a scholarly tone. The author, perhaps naively expected a space full of faculty with various models and tips and insight to share about how to help our graduate students write about leadership more effectively. What occurred, however, resulted in the impetus for this educator workshop proposal. Those who gathered at the
presentation were faculty in need of resources and current graduate students looking for help and mentorship. The conversation that followed was productive and had little to do with scholarly writing but instead, how to best support those of us in the ALE community interested in creating and maintaining exceptional graduate leadership programs.

As noted directly above in the Lesson Plan Description, the authors will present data about the Creighton University Doctoral Program in Interdisciplinary Leadership. Below you will find basic assessment and evaluative data about the program and its students, a discussion about the program’s plan of study, information about candidacy and finally a description about the dissertation process. The authors recognize that this model is not a one-size-fits-all opportunity for every level and type of leadership graduate program. However, we share this model as a place to begin the conversation about graduate leadership education best practices and more specifically, an opportunity to foster a collegial community among the members of ALE to best serve our organization’s graduate leadership program faculty and students.

**Creighton University**  
**Doctoral Program in Interdisciplinary Leadership**

Creighton University’s online Interdisciplinary Doctorate of Education (Ed.D.) Program in Leadership builds on the university’s Jesuit, Catholic tradition of social justice, self-reflection, and service to create leaders with the vision, commitment, and know-how to become agents of transformational change.

The Creighton University Doctoral Program is designed as 60 credit three-year, fully online program with two residency requirements—orientation and the defense of the dissertation in practice (DIP). Students travel through the program’s curriculum (see Appendix A for the Doctoral Program Plan of Study) in a cohort model with approximately 15-20 peers. All courses are eight weeks long and the program runs 12 months per year.

Current students: 320  
Retention rate: 74 percent  
Faculty to student ratio: 17:1

**Candidacy Process**

Students are required to successfully achieve candidacy through the creation and review of an ePortfolio as partial fulfillment of the doctoral Program. Students must show attainment of the program’s nine learning outcomes (see Appendix B) by uploading carefully considered artifacts (e.g., seminal papers, projects, presentations, research assignments, etc.) for each outcome. Students also prepare and submit an essay that reflects on their journey through the Doctoral Program. In line with the mission of the university, students also include a discussion about how, and specifically which of the Ignatian values has most influenced and shaped their journey. Students may submit their ePortfolios for consideration up to two times. The first time pass rate for candidacy is 89%.

**Dissertation in Practice**
The purpose of the Creighton Dissertation in Practice (DIP) is to explore a significant and complex real-world problem based within a student’s professional practice setting and to design an evidence-based solution incorporating leadership theories, reflective practice, and an interdisciplinary focus to contribute to the greater good of the professional practice field. Students are expected to use the principles of applied research in the development of an evidence-based policy or plan with consideration given to how the policy or plan will be constructed and/or implemented.

**Workshop Plan & Implications**

Participants in this session will have the opportunity to dialogue with others who are currently involved in a leadership program at the masters or doctoral level or would like to begin the process of developing one. Through this dialogue, we hope to create an affinity group specifically targeted to improve the practice of teaching leadership at the graduate level and conduct empirical and applied research on the topic. Workshop participants will have also learned about a model program that has experienced vast growth over the last five years. Both workshop facilitators work in a graduate-level doctoral program, and thus can directly share challenges and positive outcomes that have experienced. Should current leadership graduate students attend this session, they can provide great insight into what they have experienced and what they would like to see occur in innovative graduate program education.

During this session, we will collect names and contact information for those who are interested in participating in pedagogical and research areas of graduate leadership education. If the group decides they would like to do so, we will organize regular webinars to keep the group connected and on track to fulfill the workshop’s aim of creating an engaged community of graduate leadership educators. Additionally, we will purposefully encourage the development of empirical and applied proposals for the 2017 ALE conference concerning graduate leadership education.

**References**


Appendix A

*Creighton University EdD Program in Interdisciplinary Leadership Plan of Study*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Year 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring 1</td>
<td>ILD 808: Program Orientation (online)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 1</td>
<td>ILD 801: Leadership Styles &amp; Reflective Practice</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2</td>
<td>ILD 802: Leadership &amp; Applied Ethics</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summer 1</td>
<td>ILD 807: Financial &amp; Legal Leadership Issues</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2</td>
<td>ILD 803: Strategic Planning &amp; Management</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 1</td>
<td>ILD 808: Program Orientation (on campus)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 1</td>
<td>ILD 804: Organizational Theory &amp; Behavior</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fall 2</td>
<td>ILD 805: Administrative &amp; Policy Leadership Issues</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Year One Credits: 20</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Year 2</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2</td>
<td>ILD 812: Research Design and Professional</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 1</td>
<td>Elective or Practicum</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2</td>
<td>ILD 899e: Dissertation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2</td>
<td>ILD 809e: Mid-program Reflection Eligible for Candidacy after completion of 32 hours Elective or Practicum</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 1</td>
<td><strong>Candidacy required to progress</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2</td>
<td>ILD 813: Research Data Collection and Analyses</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Year Two Credits: 18</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Year 3</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 1</td>
<td>Elective or Practicum</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2</td>
<td>ILD 814: Proposal Eligible for Proposal after completion of ILD 814</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 1</td>
<td>Elective or Practicum</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 1</td>
<td>ILD 899: Dissertation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2</td>
<td>Elective or Practicum</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2</td>
<td>ILD 899: Dissertation Proposal required to progress ILD 899: Dissertation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2</td>
<td>ILD 899: Dissertation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2</td>
<td>ILD 810: Dissertation Defense</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Year Three Credits: 22</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Cumulative Credits: 60**
Appendix B
EdD Program in Interdisciplinary Leadership Program Outcomes

Upon completion of the Doctorate in Education Program in Interdisciplinary Leadership, using an interdisciplinary perspective, students will:

1. Develop leadership skills that are rooted in faith, justice, and ethics with a diverse perspective.
2. Apply reflective practices as a means for professional and personal growth, for themselves and those they serve and lead.
4. Integrate leadership theories and models in practice.
5. Implement change theory in practice.
6. Model effective interpersonal and organizational communication.
7. Analyze financial principles in organizations.
8. Appraise legal principles in organizations.
9. Produce research to improve practice
Developing Innovative Behaviors: An Essential Leadership Ability

Paul M. Arsenault, PhD
West Chester University

Introduction

In President Obama’s 2016 State of the Union Address, one of his major questions was: “How do we reignite that spirit of innovation to meet our biggest challenges?” The dilemma to this question is how you reignite this spirit. Many leaders have found this very difficult because developing or teaching innovative behavior has been frustrating, as very little is known on how to be successful. The fallback has been that innovative behavior is innate, leaving leaders to hope that an innovator will come along and save the day. Of course, this fallback has not been very successful. As Dyer, Gregerson and Christensen (2011) state, there is almost complete agreement with the need for more innovation. The problem lies with how to accomplish this or to find actionable answers.

This workshop will focus on developing innovative behavior that has been implemented through MBA residency programs, undergraduate and graduate classes and workshops. The theoretical background is based on Dyer, Gregerson and Christensen’s The Innovator’s DNA (2011). The assessment is from the authors’ previous work in 2009.

Review of Related Scholarship

Innovation is today’s equivalent of the Holy Grail. Business people see innovation as the key to survival while governments see it as a way for growth (Schumpeter, 2011). Even churches have become interested in innovation as Duke Divinity’s School publication, Faith and Leadership has published various articles on how churches can become more innovative. Educational and Health Care people have voiced a similar concern about a lack of innovation in their organizations.

Leadership is closely linked to innovation (Silmane, 2015, Girard, 2014, & Crawford, 2003). Silmane (2015) states that innovation is imperative while leadership is integral in motivating people and shaping and providing space to be innovative. Crawford (2003) finds a significant relationship between innovation and transformational leadership with the major connection being the ability to change from the status quo. As Girard (2014) states, “conventional leadership won’t get you to innovate.” In addition, there are close similarities between classic leadership theory and innovative behaviors. Kouzes and Posner’s (1987) exemplary leadership practices of challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision and enabling others to act, are very similar or exactly the same to Dyer, Gregerson and Christensen’s (2009) theory of innovative behaviors. These behaviors are questioning, experimenting idea networking and observation.

Given that there is wide acceptance of the need for innovation and leadership that advocate change, there is a dilemma. In a 2008 survey, Barsh, Capozzi and Davidson of the McKinsey Group found there was a wide gap between the aspiration of executives to innovate and their ability to execute. The major reason was not the organizational structure or processes, but
leadership. Their survey found that the respondents who described their organization as more innovative rated their leadership as “strong” or “very strong”. The reverse was found with respondents who described it as not very innovative. These respondents described their leadership capabilities as significantly lower. This difference has not changed at all as shown in a more recent McKinsey survey (de Jong, Marsten, & Roth, 2015) in which executives (probably leaders of an organization) found that 84% of the respondents claimed that innovation is extremely important, while only 6% were satisfied with their innovation process.

Therefore, the major question remains; how do you reduce this gap so that leadership can become more innovative. Historically, mavericks, radicals and entrepreneurs have been responsible for the majority of innovations that have changed the way people live their lives. These people usually cannot function effectively in organizations where there is a lack of flexibility and of the ability to change. They eventually start their own organization. Therefore, many organizations are starved for innovative thinking and behavior, as they lack the people who can provide this essential skill set. These organizations then tend to have leadership that is focused on the status quo and fail to lead their organizations forward to meet the fast changing trends in the world like globalization and technology.

The Demonstration of Model/Workshop

There are many versions of the model/workshop (named a workshop for this paper), depending on the participants. Over time, participants have included MBA and undergraduate students and professional people within an organization. The workshop presented below will be a MBA one that covers 2 days, but a similar version has been used frequently with undergrads and other graduate students. The first component of the workshop is to challenge participants’ attitudes and knowledge of innovation and innovative behavior. The next part is a team project that requires that participants utilize innovative behavior thinking to derive a solution to a disruptive innovation (usually driverless vehicles) within an industry. The third part is a post-assignment that provides an excellent opportunity for the participants to continue their development of innovative behavior thinking.

First Step - Pre-Assignment

Approximately 2 weeks before the workshop, participants receive a pre-assignment and links to required reading materials. The assignment includes responding and self-scoring the Innovative Behavior Assessment¹ (Dyer, Gregerson, and Christensen, 2009) and reading “Act, Different, Think Different, Make a Difference “(Dyer, Gregerson & Christensen, 2011). The self-scoring of the assessment and the reading orients the participant to the five innovative behaviors of the workshop. In addition, participants receive a True/False assignment (See Table 1) that challenges the participants’ attitudes and knowledge of innovation.

The articles are related to the innovation, being driverless vehicles that are the subject of the workshop. The importance of participants reading these materials is for them to become more

Footnote(s)

¹ The assessment can be accessed at the end of Dyer, Gregerson & Christensen’s (2009) article.
knowledgeable about innovation. Having this knowledge has proven to be beneficial to participants in completing their workshop project.

Table 1

Pre-Assessment

After each statement, please put a T if you think the statement is true or F if you think the statement is false. Then explain your answer below your response. Finally, please write down your definition of innovation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>T or F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Leaders have to be innovative.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Everyone can be innovative.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Innovation is easy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Innovation and creativity are the same.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Organizations have to be innovative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Technology always drives innovation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Define innovation-

Second Step - Discussion of What is Innovation and How to Define Innovation

After reviewing an overview of the goals and procedure of the workshop, the facilitator discusses the pre-assignment. Utilizing the True/False pre-assessment, the facilitator (the author) goes over each statement. Participants openly discuss whether the statement is true of false. After discussion, the facilitator uses power point slides to support the truthfulness or falsehood of the statement.

Participants’ definitions are varied and usually create a lively discussion. The discussion brings forth many good definitions. It focuses on the fact that leaders, and in fact everyone, need to be innovative. In addition, most participants see creativity and innovation as one and the same, missing the major point that innovative thinking also requires the ability to bring the useful ideas to fruition. The author emphasizes this misunderstanding by using 2 definitions. One is McKeown’s (2014) definition that innovation is practical creativity, which makes new ideas useful. The second is a more detailed definition that proposes that innovation is something different that has significant impact and is a three-step process that combines discovering an opportunity, blueprinting an idea and implementing that idea to achieve results (Anthony, 2012). With this definition, the facilitator emphasizes that innovation is a dual way of thinking (Cropley, 2006), which uses both divergent thinking (generating many unique/novel ideas) which is traditionally associated with creativity, and convergent thinking which is combining
these ideas into the best results (Bronson & Merryman, 2010).

A discussion of the Innovative Behavior Assessment follows the discussion of the True/False assignment. The facilitator presents the definitions and examples of each of the four behaviors and then asks the participants their scores after each behavior. As with the True/False assignment, there is a fruitful discussion about these behaviors. Then, the facilitator introduces the fifth behavior; associational thinking. This behavior is the “wow” moment when using all these behaviors comes to fruition, which is the key to innovative behavior. (Table 1 illustrates the key characteristics of the innovative behaviors.)

The final discussion focuses on understanding driverless vehicles. Participants are asked if they have any questions about the innovation. Usually there are various questions, which create a valuable discussion about the impact of the innovation. If needed, there are wonderful videos via YouTube illustrating the Google Car (www.google.com/selfdrivingcar) or Mercedes Benz driverless truck (www.youtube.com/watch?v=XZxZC0lgOlC).

**Third Step - The Project**

The participants are divided into teams. Each team is given a specific industry (if the team’s participants are from a specific industry that would be beneficial) to derive an innovative solution to the impact of driverless vehicles on the given industry. The industries vary but have included the government (i.e., police and the National Transportation Bureau), retail (could be a specific retailer), tourism (i.e., a hotel chain or national or state tourism bureau) but there are many more.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2</th>
<th>The Four Innovative Behaviors and Associational Thinking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Questioning</strong></td>
<td>The key behaviors are to ask “what if or is or why or why not” frequently. The consequences are to challenge the status quo, push the boundaries, go deeper with questions like why don’t we do it this way? And asking questions that people do not like.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Observing</strong></td>
<td>The key to this behavior is to use all senses (listening, seeing, etc.). By using all these senses, the ability to reflect and observe becomes greater. This ability leads to being able to see anomalies, surprises and see the world in different ways.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Experimenting</strong></td>
<td>Generating novel information through mental or physical explorations is essential for experimenting. Completed by hypotheses testing by trying out new experiences, taking apart products, processes and ideas and testing ideas through pilots and prototypes. Trial and error is important.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Idea Networking</strong></td>
<td>Different than the traditional resource networking where you contact people that you already know. Idea networking is contacting people not like them to gain different perspectives. Idea networking leads to learning new and surprising things, testing ideas and bridging the gap or structural hole that exists in many organizations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Associational Thinking</strong></td>
<td>Is where innovation happens. It is the spark that occurs when a combination of novel ideas coalesce into something surprising. Originates from the cross-pollination of ideas and or connecting wildly different ideas, objects, services, etc. Often referred to as The WOW moment!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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2 Recommend not using the automotive industry. This industry tends to drive the participants to convergent thinking too early in the project.

Table 3

QuestionStorming Exercise
1. Break out in teams.
2. Generate one question at a time. Have someone write down the questions before another question is asked.
3. The impact of ___________________. (i.e., driverless vehicles)
4. Ask at least 50 questions.


Before the teams break up, the facilitator explains that this portion of the workshop is to develop divergent thinking skills. The concept of QuestionStorming is to use divergent thinking (Dyer, Gregerson & Christensen, 2011) is presented. This method is different than brainstorming in that the focus is more raising questions than finding a solution, as brainstorming does. Table 3 shows the process.

The teams are then asked to only generate questions and avoid trying to produce answers. They are asked to write down as many questions as possible over the next 30 to 45 minutes. The facilitator observes each team listening to their QuestionStorming to make sure they generate as many questions as possible and not solutions. In addition, team members are encouraged to network (idea networking) and observe other teams. The networking and observation behaviors have been found to be very successful in generating more ideas. After about 90 minutes, teams are asked to reflect on the questions they have raised before breaking for the day. On average, there will be between 75 to 100 questions.

The next day the teams reconvene to continue their project. The facilitator informs each team that they need to focus on the best opportunities and transition to the goal of blueprinting an idea (Anthony, 2012) that combines divergent and convergent thinking. After about one hour, each team meets with MBA alumni who serve as a consultant. The alumni have three tasks: (1) to ask questions intended to get their team to think more about, and possibly alter, their product ideas, (2) to experiment with different ideas by working through the implications of their ideas, and (3) to choose the best idea. Finally, after a few hours with the alumni advisors, teams are given time to prepare for their final presentation.

The final presentation focuses on the typical components of convergent thinking; identifying assumptions, assessing potential (Anthony 2012), and validation (Cropley, 2006). Teams present their product idea to evaluators consisting of MBA program alumni who did not serve as their business advisors. Teams are given up to 30 minutes to present their plan and to respond to evaluators’ questions. The presentation includes introducing their product idea and addressing key issues, such as the market potential and possible problems. They are also asked to explain the innovative process that led the team to the product idea. Each team member must present, and presentation time is expected to be shared equally among all members.

3 It is very helpful to have more than one facilitator for this part of the activity.
Step Four - Post Assignment

The participants receive a post-assignment soon after the workshop is completed. The participants are asked to track their innovative behaviors over two weeks based on the Tracking Your Time Spent (See Table 4). In addition, they are asked to identify both an innovation challenge and how they are to practice innovation behavior. The assignment in due at the end of the second week. The assignment has proven to be very helpful to the participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Today/This Week</th>
<th>2 Weeks Later</th>
<th>Gap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Questioning</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimenting</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observing</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idea Networking</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What is your innovation challenge?

What is the biggest gap? Why?

What has been your biggest/best improvement?

Source: Dyer, Gregerson & Christensen (2011)

Results/Outcomes

The workshop projects have been very interesting. Some projects have been great examples of innovative thinking. Examples include new agencies for the physically and mentally disabled, a new police force, and innovative travel agencies. The post-assignment feedback has indicated that participants are using more innovative behavior. This is very promising.

Overall, the projects and participants’ feedback show prove this exercise to be an overwhelmingly positive experience. While participants have indicated that the innovative
behavior exercise is challenging in terms of time pressure, they point to applying innovative behaviors both in the workshop and at work/home as being highly beneficial.

**Workshop Implications**

The urgency of being innovative is shared by all of us. Ample research indicates that innovation is the single most important leadership competency to meet the complex demands of any organization today (Horth & Vehar, 2015). Being innovative is not just for a select band of employees like scientists or engineers but for all employees (Birkinshaw, Bouquet & Barsoux, 2011). The major problem is that overall people- more specifically leaders- are not good at being innovative.

The workshop offers a vehicle for people to become innovative. The behaviors, type of thinking and process used in this workshop are time tested and show that there is a way to become better at innovation. For any leader, this should be of the highest priority.

**References**


Volunteer Leader Training: Training Volunteers to Lead Nonprofit Organizations to Increase Positive Social Change

Carley Calico & Dr. Laura Lemons
Mississippi State University

Abstract

Volunteer leaders are an often underutilized resource in nonprofit organizations. However, as volunteer administrators are stretched to their capacity, others in the organization must provide leadership to volunteers. One way for nonprofit organizations to increase their capacity is to develop the leadership skills and ability of identified volunteers. This workshop describes a Delphi study conducted with volunteer administrators to identify the necessary leadership competencies for volunteer leaders. A workshop was developed and delivered, in addition to an evaluation instrument to assess volunteer leaders on the identified competencies. This session will present the content of the volunteer leader workshop and challenge participants to develop their own teaching activities to incorporate in a similar workshop.

Introduction

Administrators in volunteer-based nonprofit organizations wear multiple hats. Often times, leading volunteers is not the sole, nor even the primary responsibility of a volunteer administrator in these organizations (Fisher & Cole, 1993). Fisher and Cole (1993) suggest that one developmental opportunity for volunteers is education and training that prepares them to accept leadership responsibility within the organization. However, research indicates that volunteer leadership remains underutilized in nonprofit organizations (Cooperation, 2007b).

Volunteer Starkville is an organization that provides professional development and educational support to local nonprofit organizations. During the fall, 2015 semester, a Delphi study was conducted to determine the competencies that should be included in a workshop for potential volunteer leaders. Through the Delphi study, experts in volunteer administration reached consensus on 42 competencies. These competencies were incorporated into a workshop delivered to potential volunteer leaders during the spring, 2016. A corresponding volunteer leader assessment was developed to evaluate the development of workshop participants on the taught leadership competencies.

The purpose of this workshop will be to share the methodology used to identify the 42 competencies, the structure and content of the resulting workshop, and the corresponding volunteer leader assessment. Participants will engage in examples of the teaching activities implemented in the workshop. Finally, workshop participants will be asked to develop their own ideas for teaching and learning activities for a volunteer leader workshop.

Learning objectives include:
1. Examine the volunteer leader competencies identified by volunteer administrators.
2. Evaluate the volunteer leader workshop developed to teach the identified competencies.
3. Generate teaching activities to incorporate in a volunteer leader development workshop.
Literature Review

Nonprofit volunteers and for-profit employees differ in their reasoning and motivation for engaging in their respective jobs (Boezeman & Ellemers, 2014; Cnaan & Cascio, 1999; Pearce, 1993). For this reason, leadership styles directed at for-profit organizations are not appropriate for nonprofit organizations (Farmer & Fedor, 2001). Moreover, the traditional single leader model is becoming less effective as the demands of nonprofit organizations increase. Small (2007) suggests

“Traditionally, leadership theories have focused on vertical leadership, in which a person who has been appointed to a position of authority exerts downward influence on subordinates. However, appointed leaders are not the only ones who can demonstrate leadership behavior. In team situations, team members can exert influence on each other and share the leadership process.” (p. 5)

The transition toward team work structures, particularly in capacity-limited nonprofit organizations, can present a challenge in providing the leadership necessary to achieve organizational success. Volunteer-based organizations must identify ways to provide the requisite leadership for their volunteers to accomplish personal and organizational goals. One way to do this is to develop leaders within the volunteer ranks.

“Volunteer leadership remains a vast untapped resource for nonprofits not only to expand capacity for service and volunteering but also to provide a strategy for addressing the retention challenge facing volunteer managers…In addition, these leadership roles, if properly supported, cultivate the consciousness, capabilities, and commitment in volunteers, and create lifelong advocates for causes and the change that citizens seek to make in their communities.” (Cooperation, 2007b, p. 15).

Building volunteer leaders provides benefits beyond increased capacity for the nonprofit organization and relief for the volunteer administrator. Programs led by volunteers have a greater impact on communities (Texas AgriLife, n.d.). Nonprofit organizations provide opportunities for individuals to give back to their community. However, retaining those volunteers is a challenge faced by nonprofit organizations across the globe. At times the volunteer can be less invested in the mission of organization than the paid staff, causing the volunteer to leave rather than return to work towards a common goal (Cooperation, 2007b). According to the Cooperation of National and Community Service (2007a) “one out of three volunteers who volunteer in one year do not volunteer the next year” (p. 1). Moreover, 65.4 million individuals volunteered in 2005, with only 44.5 returning in 2006 (Cooperation, 2007a). However, Fisher and Cole (1993) indicate that providing volunteers with a means to “advance” in the organization provides an incentive to continue their service.

Northouse (2013) describes leadership as “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (p. 5). Boyd (2003) revealed numerous competencies and skills leaders of nonprofit organizations should possess to effectively facilitate the operation of
the organization. Some of these competencies include: organizational leadership, systems leadership, organizational culture, personal skills, and management skills (Boyd, 2003). However, this study focused on paid nonprofit administrators and directors as the leaders of the nonprofit organization.

Volunteer leaders differ from the paid nonprofit administrators or directors in that a volunteer leader is a non-paid individual with a formally defined role within the organization. A volunteer leader takes charge and ownership in coordinating projects and programs that build community assets, meet community needs, and provide volunteers with a positive experience so that they continue their journey of service while helping to carry out the mission of the non-profit organization (Jamey Bachman, personal communication, February 9, 2016).

As demands on nonprofit organizations continue to increase, volunteer leaders will have to step-up and assume more responsibility to ease the workload of the paid directors and administrators. In an effort to assist local nonprofit organizations, the researchers/workshop presenters worked with Volunteer Starkville to produce professional develop efforts to help the nonprofit organizations build their leadership capacity within their volunteer ranks. A Delphi study was conducted to identify competencies to include in a workshop for volunteer leaders. 42 competencies were identified, a workshop was developed and administered. Additionally, a skills assessment was developed to evaluate workshop participants on the identified competencies.

Lesson Plan Description

Title: Volunteer Leader Training: Training Volunteers to Lead Nonprofit Organizations to Increase Positive Social Change

Time: 90 minutes

Purpose: To describe a role volunteer leaders can play in a nonprofit organization and provide the background and foundation of a volunteer leader training workshop. Participants will leave the educator workshop with the resources to develop a volunteer leader workshop for their organization or community.

Objectives:
1. Describe the importance of volunteer leadership in nonprofit organizations
2. Explain Delphi Study and findings
3. Describe the development and facilitation of volunteer leader training
4. Discuss the assessment and evaluation methods nonprofit directors can use to evaluate the leadership ability of volunteer leaders in the organization

Teaching methods:
I. Introduction – 5 min
   a. Introduce ourselves, Mississippi State University and, Volunteer Starkville
   b. State the objectives of the educator workshop

II. Describe the importance of volunteer leadership in nonprofit organizations – 5 min
a. Utilize the PowerPoint to review relevant literature regarding nonprofit leadership and utilizing volunteer leaders in nonprofit volunteer groups.

III. Explain Delphi Study and findings – 10 min
   a. Utilize the PowerPoint to explain Delphi study and identified volunteer leadership competencies and skills.

IV. Describe the development and facilitation of volunteer leader training – 40 min
   a. Describe the facilitators and participants who attended the training.
   b. Introduce key components and delivery of the training.
      i. Competency and skills families
      ii. Four types of volunteers
   c. Participants work in small groups to complete sample activities included in training.
      i. Activity 1: Participants work in small groups to define volunteer leader.
      ii. Activity 2: In small groups, participants are assigned a competency or skill from the first family of competencies or skills. Groups discuss why their assigned competency is important when interacting with each of the four volunteer types. Facilitators provide example of how volunteer leaders can effectively recruit, mentor, and identify strengths of volunteers who call in each of the four types. Small groups share their answers to the larger group.
   d. In small groups, participants are assigned competency and skills families B through F. Each group works to develop an activity to teach the competencies and skills included in the family they were assigned. Small groups share their activity idea with the larger group.

V. Discuss the assessment and evaluation methods nonprofit directors can use to evaluate the leadership ability of volunteer leaders in the organization – 5 min.
   a. Utilize the PowerPoint to discuss assessment and evaluation methods identified by the Delphi study.

VI. Conclusion – 5 min
   a. Facilitator contact information
   b. Question and answer period

PowerPoint slides and activity sheet are included in the Appendix.

Discussion of Outcomes/Results

The Delphi technique coupled with a review of literature was used to define specific competencies and skills desired in a volunteer leader by a nonprofit administrator. The Delphi method builds consensus among the opinions of experts in the discipline through multiple rounds of survey instrumentation (Linstone & Turoff, 1975). This methodology allows individual experts to compare and refine their responses with other experts participating in the study (Adler & Ziglio, 1996). Additionally, the Delphi method was selected for this study due to the
geographical dispersion of experts. Since a Delphi can be administered electronically, geographical location of respondents is not a barrier.

A snowball sample of nonprofit administrators was used for this study. The first round began with a list of 20 nonprofit administrators provided by Volunteer Starkville. At the conclusion of the first round, the initial participants were asked to provide a list of additional nonprofit administrators to participate in the second and third rounds of the Delphi (Hsu & Sandford, 2007; Ludwig, 1994). Sixteen participants completed the second round and twenty completed the third round. Each round was comprised of repeat and new participants from Mississippi representatives of national and international volunteer organizations.

Participants’ contributions were compiled over three rounds of iteration using surveys with open ended and rank order questions developed using Qualtrics, online survey software. The first round survey included the following open-ended questions:

1. In a volunteer organization, what are the most important leadership competencies a volunteer leader should possess?
2. In a volunteer organization, how should volunteer leaders be assessed on these leadership competencies?

In addition to the two open-ended questions above, participants were asked to provide their name, organization, and job titles. Finally, respondents were asked to provide the name and email address for additional nonprofit administrators from other volunteer organizations, as they were able.

Participants were given one week to respond to the first round instruments. An email reminder was sent out one week after the initial distribution of surveys to increase participation (Dillman, 2011). Results from the first round survey were analyzed three weeks after first contact was made. A list of leadership competencies and skills was gathered from the participant’s responses, with similar terminology combined into a single term (Schmidt, 1997).

Second round instrumentation was developed from the responses on the first round and distributed to the initial respondents plus the contacts provided on the first survey. Competencies and skills were listed in descending order with the most common terms listed first and the least common listed last. Participants were asked to indicate the importance of each leadership competency and assessment technique on a 5 point Likert-type scale from very unimportant to very important. Following the Likert-type section, participants were also asked to list any additional competencies or skills as open-ended question. Again, participants were asked to provide their name, organization, and job titles, in addition to, the names and email addresses for additional nonprofit administrators from other volunteer organizations, as they were able.

Similar to the first round, second round participants were given one week to respond to the questionnaire. A reminder email was sent one week after distribution and data were analyzed three weeks after contact. For this round, consensus on a competency was defined as at least 70% of all participants rating 3 or higher on a 5-point scale, with a median value of 3.25 or higher (Hsu & Sandford, 2007). The same procedure and data analysis methods were used for round
three of the Delphi study to develop a final list of competencies and skills.

At the conclusion of three rounds of iteration, respondents reached consensus on 42 competencies and skills volunteer leaders should possess. The 42 competencies were then grouped into five overarching families. Table 1 displays the competencies as they are grouped into their respective families.
Table 1  
*Nonprofit volunteer leaders competencies and skills*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>% rated 3 or greater</th>
<th>Mdn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family A</td>
<td>Identify Strengths of Other Volunteers</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recruit and Mentor other Volunteers</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ability to Network with Others</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Delegate and Support Team</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Activities to Achieve Organizational Goals</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family B</td>
<td>Ability to Teach</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ability to Motivate</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>87.4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ability to Encourage</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lead by Example</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Service-oriented Attitude</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Willingness to Serve</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Willingness to Give Oneself</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Facilitate Participation by Local Internal and External Stakeholders</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family C</td>
<td>Dependable</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Punctual</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Possess Integrity</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organized</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Resiliency</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scheduling and Related Documents</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Willingness to go Above and Beyond</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>87.4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Driven</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Must have Back-up Plans and Incentives for Those who Volunteer</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family D</td>
<td>Respect to Others</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Good Listener</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conflict Resolution</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consideration</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kindness</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Compassion</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Patience</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>87.4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personality</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive Attitude</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>87.4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enthusiastic</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>87.4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Confident</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>89.4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Families A through D include the majority of the competencies and skills identified by the panel of experts. Competencies and skills grouped in Family A include skills volunteer leaders should have to build and increase capacity within the nonprofit organization. These competencies include demonstrating leadership; networking; recruiting, identifying strengths, and mentoring volunteers; and delegating and supporting volunteer teams to achieve organizational goals. Family B includes the ability to teach, motivate, and encourage volunteers, as well as the ability to facilitate participation by local internal and external stakeholders. Dependability, punctuality, dedication, integrity, resiliency, and drive are among the competencies and skills included in family C. While Family D includes respect to others, listening skills, patience, and positive attitude to name a few. The final two families are made up by the ability to work with minimal guidance and supervision, resourcefulness, initiative (family E); and critical thinking skills and assessment and evaluation knowledge (family F).

The panel of experts reached consensus, in the third round of iteration on 10 assessment criteria for evaluating the leadership competencies and skills of nonprofit volunteer leaders. The assessment criteria can be found in Table 2.

Table 2

Assessment criteria for evaluating volunteer leadership competencies and skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Criteria</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>% rated 3 or greater</th>
<th>Mdn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How well they communicate with general volunteer population</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence in skills taught</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction with other volunteers</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow-through</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback from general volunteer population</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsiveness of general volunteer population to react to leader's call to action</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to obtain quality volunteers</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return rate of volunteers</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback from the general volunteer population</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Workshop Implications
This workshop will benefit educators and program directors interested in training volunteer leaders within their organizations. Participants will discuss volunteer leadership competencies and skills identified by a panel of experts in the field utilizing Delphi methodology. In addition, participants will discuss the components of a volunteer leader training workshop.

Participants will work in groups to define volunteer leader and the roles volunteer leaders play in organizations to better understand their value. Presenters will describe the components of a volunteer leader training and specific aspects to consider when developing and facilitating a training on your own. Participants will work together to complete an example activity developed by the facilitators to teach volunteer leaders the competencies and skills included in family A. Participants will then work in small groups to develop activities for the remaining five competency and skill families, and share their activities with the group. Furthermore, participants will be encouraged to ask questions and engage in discussion about similar programs or ideas in their respective areas.

Participants will be provided with reference material from the existing volunteer leader training. These materials will provide a starting point for participants who wish to develop a volunteer leader training to meet the needs of their volunteers.

References


Texas AgriLife Extension. Empowering volunteers to lead extension educational programs [PowerPoint slides]. Retrieved from odfiles.tamu.edu/odfiles/volunteer/.../empowering_volunteers.pptx
Appendix

Competencies & Skills Nonprofit Administrators desire to Possess

*For the purpose of this training, we have grouped these competencies into families.

**Family A ~ Competencies & Skills**
Identify Strengths of Other Volunteers • Recruit & Mentor Other Volunteers
Leadership • Ability to Network with Others
Delegate & Support Team Activities to Achieve Organizational Goals

**Family B ~ Competencies & Skills**
Ability to Teach • Ability to Motivate • Ability to Encourage • Lead by Example
Service Oriented Attitude • Willingness to Serve • Willingness to Give of Oneself
Facilitate Participation by Local Internal & External Stakeholders

**Family C ~ Competencies & Skills**
Dependable • Punctual • Dedication • Possess Integrity • Organized • Resiliency
Scheduling & Related Documents • Willingness to go Above & Beyond
Driven • Commitment • Must Have Backup Plans

**Family D ~ Competencies & Skills**
Respect to Others • Good Listener • Communication • Conflict Resolution
Consideration • Kindness • Compassion • Patience • Personality
Positive Attitudes • Enthusiastic • Confident

**Family E ~ Competencies & Skills**
Able to work with Minimal Guidance & Supervision • Resourceful • Initiative

**Family F ~ Competencies & Skills**
Critical Thinking • Assessment & Evaluation

4 Volunteer Types

**Ideal Ian** – Skilled and motivated to work within the guidelines and structure of the organization

**Trainable Tina** – Motivated and willing to work within the guidelines and structure of the organization, but lacks skills

**Disruptive Dan** – Has skills but not willing to work within the guidelines and structure of the organization

**Freeloading Freddy** – Disinterested and does not have skills
Great Ideas Teach & Share Forum

Daniel Jenkins
University of Southern Maine

David Rosch
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Abstract

Share your great idea, and leave with many more! This highly interactive forum is for those interested in expanding teaching practices and their pedagogical toolboxes. Participants will give, receive, discuss, and see in action great ideas for teaching leadership.

Introduction

This workshop model has been very popular with leadership education participants at Association of Leadership Educators (ALE) conferences in the late 2000’s and more recently at the International Leadership Association (ILA) Global Conferences in 2009 – 2011 and 2013 – 2015, allowing conference attendees to share ideas, meet, and network with one another. Specifically, the “Great Ideas Teach & Share Forum” is a structured workshop in which both experienced and novice leadership educators come together to share their “best practices” in small interactive groups.

Literature Review

According to Jenkins (2012), “there ought to be workshops on best practices in leadership education” (p. 18). Furthermore, “workshops that emphasize best practices, including the design of these activities, what high quality work looks like, and how to assess their effectiveness could prove extremely beneficial in the discipline” (Jenkins, 2012, p. 19). At the 2013 ALE Conference, Dr. Kerry Priest and Dr. Dan Jenkins facilitated a roundtable discussion titled, “Creating Teacher Resiliency: A Dialogue on Professional Development for Leadership Educators” (Jenkins & Priest, 2013). During the roundtable, participants were provided with questionnaires, asking them to rank order needs in areas of professional development and provide specific examples. These questionnaires were collected and compiled for analysis. “Teaching & Learning: knowledge of the theory and practice of teaching; knowledge about theory and practice of student learning and student development; the implementation of student-centered strategies” was ranked as the most desired area of professional development. Specifically, participants noted that professional development sessions at leadership education conferences should focus more often on teaching and learning strategies. The purpose of the “Great Ideas Teach & Share” is to provide such an experience.

Lesson Plan Description

Facilitators will need a room with roundtables as well as flip charts with markers set up for an interactive session. After a brief introduction, facilitators will prime attendees with questions,
provide an “open space” type setting, and pose the following using preprinted cards:

Tell us your great ideas about teaching:

- leadership theory
- leadership attitudes/ styles
- experiential learning and leadership practice

Then, facilitators will take participants through the following steps:

**Step One:**

Create One—Teaching case/activity: Write up your idea for teaching a specific leadership concept.

Facilitators will provide a handout with process and notes to distribute for participants. Table members will then use template for activity write-up.

Template
Leadership topic:
Objective/Purpose of lesson:
Theoretical Base:
Materials Needed:
Activity:

**Step Two:**

Do One—Reciprocal teaching: After writing up the created activity, share around a table the ideas for teaching. (Need sheets of paper.)

**Step Three:**

Teach One—Shift groups. Again, share ideas with the new group.

**Step Four:**

Ask volunteers from each group to briefly show this activity in action—they can engage some members of the group in the activity so people can have a visual of the activity or lesson in action.

**Final Step:**

Evaluate Process. Share in large group the lessons learned from this process; if attendees want to pursue writing, sharing ideas beyond the conference; if this workshop should continue next year; how to change, make the workshop different and/or better. Participants will be asked to turn in their idea with their name and email. Ideas will be compiled and distributed via the listserv to
ALE members and to workshop participants.

**Outcomes/Results/Implications**

Recent compilations from prior ALE and ILA Conferences can be found here: http://www ila-net.org/Communities/MIGs/GreatIdeasTeach&Learn.pdf

Participants will leave the workshop with myriad ideas for teaching leadership. Further, participants will have had opportunities not only to discuss specific pedagogies with their peers, but also to view demonstrations of activities in action with other leadership educators. Arguably, this is precisely the type of experience Jenkins (2012) had in mind.

**References**


Appendices

Great Ideas Share and Teach Forum
Expand your Pedagogical Toolbox!

Join your colleagues to discuss great ideas for teaching a variety of leadership topics and issues.
Share your great idea, leave with many ideas! Fill in this card and bring it with you.

What are your favorite, sure-fire activities for teaching? Name: ____________________________

- leadership theories, concepts, or models
- leadership styles, competencies, or behaviors
- leadership development or leadership identity

E-mail address: ____________________________

1. Create One: Write up your idea for teaching a specific leadership topic. Complete this card and bring it to the session.
(Feel free to continue on back of card as needed)

Leadership topic:
Objective/Purpose of lesson:
Materials Needed:
Activity Explanation:

2. Share All: Reciprocal teaching: Share your great idea with others, and learn about their great teaching ideas!

3. Demonstrate One: After you share around the table, choose one activity that would be best demonstrated to the large group.

Please return this card with your name. Ideas will be compiled and distributed through the Leadership Education MIG.

Thanks for sharing your great ideas!!
Tying It All Together: My Journey into Project Based Learning (and You Can Too!)

Mark R. Regensburger
Learningmark

Abstract

Project-based learning (PBL) strategies give learners the opportunity to design and carry out a project over the duration of a program or course. This serves as a unifying element to ‘tie it all together’ in a contextual real-life application, motivating learners week to week, month to month. The growing use of PBL in higher education, K-12, and workplace learning provides a rich cross-disciplinary base of practices. This workshop will present some of these practices, then share a PBL case from a single college course. Participants will have opportunity to explore examples of project-based learning from each other’s practice, and work through a framework for including PBL in their own education practice.

Introduction

Students in higher education participate simultaneously in multiple courses, each with a succession of learning units presenting related concepts and learning activities. These learning modules each compress a number of ideas and applications into a short period of time, presenting them once before moving on to the next unit. Learning units follow one after another, content ‘brain-dumped’ after the test or learning activity is completed to make room for the next unit, with little long-term transfer of learning. This cyclic repetition of intense engagement, evaluation, and disengagement, can lead to fatigue for both students and faculty after repeated iterations. Project-based learning offers a unifying scaffold to involve individual learners as partners in creating their own learning. The same strategies can be used in long-term student leadership programs, community leadership development programs, or workplace management development, tying it all together into a holistic learning experience.

This is the story of one faculty member’s journey into project-based learning—followed by a participative workshop where educators can together reflect on previous practice, share applications of PBL in differing contexts, and walk through a framework for creating PBL strategies in their own educational practice.

Review of Related Scholarship

Neuroscience of Workplace Learning

This journey began when I attended a conference session (Davis, 2014) on the neuroscience of learning at the international conference of world’s largest organization for workplace learning. This session was published in expanded form (Davis, Balda, Rock, McGinniss, & Davichi, 2014), an update of earlier work (Davachi, Kiefer, Rock, & Rock, 2010), all by the same research team at the NeuroLeadership Institute, describing the four factor AGES model of organizational learning—attention, generation, emotion, and spacing—rooted in recent neuroscience research. Both Davachi et al (2010) and Davis et al (2014) explained that one
region of the brain, the hippocampus, is responsible for registering experiences to be remembered, and reactivating appropriate brain regions to recall memories of those experiences.

**Attention.** Focused attention allows the hippocampus to encode memories, limiting attention to those parts of the experience to be retained. Focused attention is limited to around 20 minutes, is negatively affected by attempts to multitask, and by complex material presented in multiple modalities. Strategies to support attention are to limit multitasking activities; to build in mental breaks in content with frequent review and by changing from lecture to discussion to participative activities; and to use only simple visuals to support verbal content, or simple instructions to highlight visual demonstrations. Attention is enhanced through social learning activities like storytelling, creating unified narrative experiences which are more easily encoded into memory.

**Generation.** Allowing learners to create and share connections between presented material and their own ideas leads to their generation of mental connections across the brain; the more connections, the easier recall is at a later date. Generation is the act of the individual learner creating meaning from the interaction of specific content and their own unique knowledge and experiences. This individual creative act provides a base from which to apply new knowledge in each person’s unique context. Social learning activities also enhance generation by allowing learners to think of themselves in a broader social context.

**Emotions.** Research into cognitive processes has consistently shown that emotions are mediating force in individual memories. Emotion states activate the amygdala, adjacent to the hippocampus, alerting the hippocampus to focus attention on the experience. Emotional events produce more vivid memories, which are more easily recalled. Stimulating negative emotions is easy, but can be counterproductive by reducing creativity and generation. Positive emotions require more work, but have a strong impact on social connectedness with other learners, enhancing the social aspects of learning.

**Spacing.** Neuroscientists have known for nearly forty years that learning distributed into multiple sessions over time is more effective than attempting to compress learning into single longer sessions. By actively engaging the hippocampus with repeated access of the same memory connections, spacing allows learners to generate more connections with context each time the revisit the material. Research shows that repeated testing is more effective than one-shot, high stakes testing in evaluating transfer of learning. Repeated iterative grading of learning activities engages the learner in repeated acts of generation, leading to improves performance in the workplace. Social learning strategies, such as peer feedback as part of iterative grading, further strengthen the effect of spacing.

**Project-Based Learning in Education**

At about the same time I was delving into the neuroscience of learning and the AGES model, I encountered *Edutopia* (2015), an online community for K-12 educators, operated by the George Lucas Educational Foundation (2016). This website is a clearinghouse for evidence-based innovation to improve learning in primary and secondary education. PBL is one of the core learning strategies featured on the site, including many resources for planning and implementing
PBL. Thomas’ (2000) literature review of PBL research identified a number of key features, that projects: focus on key knowledge (including standards-based content and skills); present a challenging problem or question; require a sustained inquiry, finding resources and applying knowledge; feature authentic real-world context; allow student choice of what is created and how; require student and teacher reflection; incorporate opportunities for critique and revision; an produce some public product for display or presentation. These features are presented as the standard of essential elements for quality PBL.

I also investigated PBL in higher education. Several studies published in the Journal of Leadership Education point to the effectiveness of PBL in leadership education. Wisniewski (2010) noted that Millennials are looking for a leadership educational experience that is hands on, involves active problem solving, and focuses on real-life competencies—PBL provides such experiences. Weeks and Kelsey (2007) found group projects to be an ideal means for students to practice applying team leadership competencies learned in leadership education programs. Coers, Lorenson, and Anderson (2009) researched student participation in a course-long team project. Students expressed positive perceptions of the longer project over shorter projects in other classes, and emphasized the real-life value of taking an extended project from start to successful completion.

Lesson Plan: Case Study – My Journey into Project-Based Learning

ArmyTown Technical Community College (ATCC) is a public associate-degree granting institution, the fourth largest in the 58-member Statewide Community College System, with a large and diverse student population. In 2014-2015, there were 17,882 students in curriculum (accredited degree or certificate) programs, plus an additional 21,017 in continuing education programs. Curriculum students were 41% African-American, 37% white, 24% Hispanic; 54% were between the ages of 25 and 44, and a further 11% older than this. ATCC is an open-enrollment institution; any resident with a high school diploma or graduate-equivalency degree may enroll in one of more than 200 degree and certificate programs. Of 1,580 associates degrees awarded, 159 were in the Business Programs Division. ATCC’s service area includes the U.S. Army’s largest installation. Active duty military, military family members, and veterans make up a sizeable portion of the student body.

In the Fall 2015 Semester, business division offered a course in Training & Development in a full 17-week hybrid section, combining one hour-and-a-half weekly classroom session with online work in the college LMS. This course had previously been offered online only in a compressed 8-week format. I was tasked with creating this new section; additionally, I was asked to reduce reliance on the textbook and organize the course based on current industry standards.

In creating the course, I first considered the challenges of our student population. Many are first-generation college students, and prior formal learning experiences may not have been positive. Nearly 2/3 of students are over 25, including many military and veterans, and bring significant—and often successful—work and life experience to the classroom. They definitely typify the learners described in andragogical approaches to adult learning (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2011). To address these learners’ needs, and to reinforce workforce competencies of our business programs, I treat my students as ‘manager trainees’, and draw heavily on their workplace
experiences in planning learning activities.

The content of the course was based on the Association for Talent Development’s (2014) *ATD Competency Model*, which combines traditional training instructional design, delivery, and evaluation with such newer talent development competencies as performance support, change management, knowledge management, coaching and mentoring. I also needed to cover common types of workplace training, from new employee onboarding to compliance training, soft skills to leadership development, based on feedback from training professionals in our local business community. Pulling this diverse content together in a meaningful way, while keeping learners engaged over the longer 17-week course, would require a unifying element.

I decided to incorporate PBL in this hybrid course to ‘tie it all together’. The project had each student to choose a type of training that they had previous workplace experience in, and to present a proposal and justification to a fictional boss demonstrating the need for training and their planned activities. They would not create a training session, but rather prove what training would do. The project had interim deadlines throughout the term. A key element was that each would share a draft of their presentation in class for critique and revision. Critiques included both self- and peer-evaluation as well as instructor feedback. The final project was submitted as a PowerPoint file utilizing both slides and notes sections. A schedule showing the content of each week with concurrent project task deadlines appears below (Table 1).

Table 1
Course Schedule Showing Weekly Content and Project Tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Project Tasks Deadlines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Welcome, New Managers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>What is Training &amp; Development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Analyze – Causes of Performance Gaps</td>
<td>Submit subject for approval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Evaluate – Measuring Outcomes</td>
<td>Schedule Draft Presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Design – Selecting Methods</td>
<td>Training Outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Develop – Selecting Learning Activities</td>
<td>Create PowerPoint file</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>New Employee Onboarding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Compliance – Preventing Harassment</td>
<td>Draft Presentations for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Compliance – Safety &amp; Legal Issues</td>
<td>Critique and Revision (2 per week)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Soft Skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Leadership Development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Mentoring &amp; Coaching</td>
<td>Draft Presentations for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Performance Support</td>
<td>Critique and Revision (2 per week)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Knowledge Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>(No class – individual help available)</td>
<td>Final Project submission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Change Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Final Frontier – Future of TD

Discussion of Outcomes/Results

The hybrid 17-week section of Training and Development (BUS-234) was conducted using the PBL design in Fall 2014 with eight students, and again in Fall 2015 with twelve students. The first semester had 100% successful completion; the second, one student withdrew for personal reasons, and one completed the term but failed (primarily due to work not submitted). This is a significantly higher retention rate than the 8-week fully online sections that were offered the same term, which averaged 70% – 75% successful completers, the median success rate for the business division as a whole.

All students reacted positively to the learning experience, particularly to the project (even the student who failed). The draft presentations were at the start of those week’s class sessions, and set a collaborative tone for the session that followed. Each of these weeks, the end of class review discussion allowed students to make intentional connections between the projects presented, their own project-in-progress, and the week’s content.

Workshop Plan & Implications

Following presentation of relevant scholarship and the case study, workshop participants will be invited to reflect on and share prior experiences with PBL from own practice, and then explore possible applications of PBL in future practice.

Sharing Prior Experiences with PBL

Participants will breakout into smaller groups (sized dependent on overall attendance). One participant will be asked to volunteer as recorder/presenter, and provided a worksheet to guide sharing and recording of participants’ prior experience with PBL. After a period of sharing in group, the volunteer recorder/presenter will be asked to share a sampling of their group’s prior experiences. Worksheets will be collected, collated, and summarized, to be made available to participants later in the conference.

Planning Your Own PBL

Participants will again breakout into their smaller groups to work together on developing ideas for PBL rooted in their own courses or student leadership programs. A planning worksheet will aid moving from course/program key outcomes to projects which integrate with content to ‘tie it all together.’

Resources

Session materials, worksheets, shared experiences summary, references, and additional resources will be made available to participants via a shared online folder, with link to be provided at the session.
References


Framing Experiential Learning:  
Leadership Learning within the Summer Orientation Counselor Experience

Dr. Michael Gleason, Lauren Edelman, McKinlaye Harkavy  
Washburn University

Abstract

This workshop will explore how one institution brought together a leadership academic unit, Summer Orientation Counselor program, and a Transformational Experience program to create a 3-credit experience for students to explore leadership concepts, apply what they had learned, and reflect on their personal growth and the change they were able to implement. The session will offer examples of in-class activities that can be coupled with the five practices of *The Student Leadership Challenge: Five Practices for Becoming an Exemplary Leader* (Kouzes & Posner, 2014) to reinforce learning and encourage reflection. Finally, the workshop will discuss implications for practitioners and encourage participants to consider areas on their own campuses that offer exciting opportunities for student learning by utilizing a leadership theory framework. Practitioners in both student affairs and academic affairs would benefit by attending this session as it illustrates how we might better integrate leadership experiences in both.

Introduction

Reflection is critical to gleaning the most learning from experiential learning opportunities. White and Guthrie (2015) have found that reducing barriers to reflection and incorporating multiple modes through which to reflect are important to the leadership experience. Integrating intentional leadership development practices with training structures can facilitate a deeper understanding of the role of a student leader and how this role impacts the individual, the position, and the greater campus community.

Within this presentation, participants will learn how theory and practice have been embedded within the training and reflection of the experience of serving as a Summer Orientation Counselor. The leadership foundation discussed in Kouzes and Posner’s (2014) *The Student Leadership Challenge: Five Practices for Becoming an Exemplary Leader* provide an excellent, accessible and applicable framework to use with orientation leaders. Coupled with additional assignments, reflections, and self-assessments, a credit-bearing training course can be established to enhance the student leadership experience in the context of orientation.

Review of Related Scholarship

Experiential Education

David Kolb’s text *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development* (Evans, 1998) has had extraordinary impact on the work of educators within the university setting. Kolb identified a four-stage cycle of learning that provided a clear framework for those wanting to fully leverage the learning students can glean from practical experiences. These stages, which include concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract
conceptualization, and active experimentation have provided a foundation upon which the Leadership/Summer Orientation Counselor course was created (Evans, 1998, pp. 208-211).

More recently, and specifically related to leadership education, Moore and Bruce (2015) utilized the experiential learning framework of Pine and Gillmore (1998) to inform leadership education pedagogy. Moore and Bruce (2015) highlighted the critical role of creativity in developing experiences that recruit and retain students. They presented the following challenge to leadership educators: “We challenge all instructors, ourselves included, to try out this model of framing experiences for their class” (Moore & Bruce, 2015, p. 113).

**Reflection**

Reflection is a critical component of meaningful experiential education. Guthrie and Jones (2012) discussed three important opportunities for reflection - written reflection, reflective discussion, and utilization of case studies. All three reflection techniques are utilized within this course framework. The authors indicated “Educators can provide intentional learning opportunities through connecting each of these leadership experiences with reflective learning. These developmental opportunities create the necessary tension needed to encourage growth-producing encounters that add to an individual students’ total life experience” (p. 62). A more recent work by White and Guthrie (2015) found that leadership educators ought to build reflection into courses, that reflection should go beyond writing, and that instructors ought to reduce barriers, such as lack of time, from preventing reflection on experiences (pp. 70-71).

In his study of exemplary leadership programs, Stewart Grunwell (2015) found seven key themes of leadership development programs. Several of these themes relate to the experience developed for this program. Three of these themes were: A culture of learning support, created through the peer nature of this course, The importance of practise and practical application, reflected in the focus on providing and receiving critical feedback within this course, and Reflection and self-directed learning (Grunwell, 2015, pp. 88-90).

**Conceptual Frameworks**

This course utilizes the well-known text by Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner (2014) *The Student Leadership Challenge* in providing students a framework in which to process their experiences during the first phase of the course. Perhaps most critical to this course is the idea that “Everyone has the capacity to lead whether or not they are in a formal position of authority or even part of an organized group” (p. 6). The five practices of Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act and Encourage the Heart are discussed in class, and students are required to reflect upon their experience (both on the individual and group levels) within this framework. Students take the Leadership Practices Inventory, based off of these five practices, and throughout their entire experience focus on both results and growth in the five practices.

Additionally, adaptive leadership is explored in the spring semester of the program. Students utilize the *Kansas Leadership Center Field Guide: An evolving resource for effective civic leadership* (2009) to understand the underlying adaptive issues within their change projects as a
part of the course. This provides the students the opportunity to process their experiences in an even deeper way during the fall semester after their change projects have been fully implemented.

**Lesson Plan Description**

**Introduction of the Leadership Institute (LI) and Summer Orientation Counselor (SOC) Programs (20 minutes)**

The workshop will begin with an overview of the Leadership Institute and Summer Orientation Counselor (SOC) programs in order help session attendees understand the unique opportunity for collaboration this course structure provides. This introduction will also discuss the additional credential that students who complete this experience will earn along with upper-level course credit. Each area’s contributions to this collaborative process are as follows:

Leadership Institute:
- Ensure programs incorporate an appropriate mix of learning mechanisms, balanced between classroom and experiential processes
- Teach students as participants, empower students as leaders and incorporate action-based learning throughout the cycle with a focus on an evolution from participation to leadership involvement
- Strive to provide leadership opportunities so students can learn by leading

SOC Program:
- Value the SOC position and its contributions to the success of the University
- Understand basic university policies and procedures
- Identify and pursue multiple learning opportunities related to the University
- Exemplify the academic and student leader expectations of University students

Transformational Experience Program:
- Improve self-understanding derived from practical experience and examination of inspirational examples of selfless leadership service
- Graduate from the University as citizens who recognize the abundance of leadership opportunities and are ready to accept the mantle of responsibility that comes with these opportunities

**Overview of SOC/TE Course and Important Elements (20 minutes)**

Once participants have an understanding of how the three units collaborate on this initiative, presenters will provide an overview of the course components, breaking down each 1-credit hour course section (spring, summer and fall) and the course components and assignments required for each section.

Key learning outcomes and projects/assignments for each section are outlined below. Please see the chart in Appendix A which links program learning outcomes to specific assignments. In addition to the assignments and projects, students participate in a weekly class in which they
discuss leadership concepts within the texts, updates on their projects, and their learning through the experience.

**Spring: 1-Credit Hour**

The initial course in the 3-part sequence is designed to introduce students to *The Student Leadership Challenge* text in order to encourage them to enhance their own performance in the five practices of leadership identified in the text throughout their Summer Orientation Counselor (SOC) experience.

Assignments and Projects:

- In one of the first sessions, students take the Leadership Practices Inventory which assesses a student’s current practice related to the five practices.
- *The Student Leadership Challenge* Class Facilitation: Every student in the course will be asked to facilitate a conversation about one of the five practices (and the two associated commitments).
- Blog posts: Several times throughout the semester students in the course will be asked to respond to prompts related to their development as SOCs, the five practices of leadership, and their change projects.
- NSO/Welcome Week Change Projects: A major component of this course is the implementation of a New Student Orientation/Welcome Week Change Project. This project, in combination with completion of the course will earn a student the Transformational Experience (TE).
- Team Contracts/Project Definitions: Given the importance of teamwork in both leadership and your experience as a SOC, students in this course will be involved with two practices that can assist in effective teamwork – team contracts and project definitions.
- Project File Goals/Outcomes: Students in this course will be asked to chronicle the development and implementation of their change project throughout the first two semesters (spring and summer). This will include documenting each stage of the project, from inception to implementation, including challenges experienced and recommendations for future SOCs participating in similar experiences.

**Summer: 1 Credit-Hour**

Throughout the summer session of the course, students actually facilitate their roles as SOCs during scheduled orientation sessions. After each orientation program, students will submit a variety of assignments that document their application of concepts from *The Student Leadership Challenge*.

Assignments and Projects:

- Journal Entries: Several times throughout the semester students in the course will be asked to reflect on their experiences throughout the NSO sessions. These reflections should touch on their development as SOCs, the five practices of leadership, and their change projects.
- Leadership Reflection Paper: A major component of this course is the student’s
individual understanding that he/she has grown in certain areas of leadership through practice – specifically the SOC experience and participating in New Student Orientation (NSO) sessions. In order to articulate that development, students are required to write a 3-5 page reflection paper cataloging their individual growth throughout the duration of the entire NSO season. This reflection should include specific instances in which the student experienced challenges during any NSO session, and how those challenges were faced and overcome.

- Project File: Given the importance of teamwork in both leadership and your experience as a SOC, students in this course will be asked to chronicle the development and implementation of their change project. This will include documenting each stage of the project, from inception to implementation, including challenges experienced and recommendations for future SOCs participating in similar experiences.

- Peer Evaluation: As dependability and collaboration are important components of leadership, peer evaluation will contribute to the overall grade in this course. Each student will be asked to evaluate all other class participants as it pertains to their participation as members of the SOC team and upholding SOC expectations throughout each NSO session. Additionally, each class participant will also submit a self-evaluation that will provide a comparison between how one views his/her self and how the team interprets his/her contributions.

Fall: 1 Credit-Hour

The final section of the course requires students to reflect on the application of the five practices from *The Student Leadership Challenge* throughout their term as SOCs and adds to the conversation an exploration of adaptive leadership. This final section of the 3-part course builds on the five practices and engages students in a conversation about adaptive leadership. By learning to navigate adaptive challenges, students will build on the five practices by studying core competencies of adaptive leadership critical to facilitating community change.

Assignments and Projects:

- Final Writing Assignment: Throughout the SOC experience students have participated in a leadership challenge of their very own. Early on in the experience, students were asked to complete the Leadership Practices Inventory and as the experience has progressed, the students have had multiple opportunities to reflect on the five practices of exemplary leadership. The final paper will ask you to address several prompts related to one of the five practices.

- WTE Poster Presentation: Students will be required to develop a professional poster to be presented at the fall TE Day of Transformation. These posters will be developed within their change project groups, but will require some individual reflection as well.

The Student Leadership Challenge Facilitation and Supplemental Activities (40 minutes)

Following an overview of the program and the different elements of the 3-credit course sequence, the facilitators will simulate a classroom environment in order to give participants examples of in-class activities and discussion questions that can supplement readings from *The Student Leadership Challenge* text. For the purpose of this workshop, the presenters will
facilitate activities related to the practice of Challenge the Process. Facilitators will provide an overview of the practice, and provide interactive activities relating to the two commitments as outlined in the text.

**Practice: Challenge the Process**

**Group Activity:** *Jet Fighter* – groups of 5 or 6 will be seated in specific order and given a task to complete. Each person has a certain job, but s/he can only communicate with certain members of the group and in certain ways. The goal is to accomplish the task successfully in 15 minutes or less while following all of the rules given.

The most important part of this activity is the processing and the constant challenge of completing the task successfully. The students must be completely quiet throughout the duration of the activity, and each group member must only communicate to the appropriate teammate.

**Commitment #1: Search for Opportunities**

[Leadership is] also the study of how people actively seek to change the status quo and inspire others to new possibilities,” (Kouzes and Posner, 2014, p. 117).

The following discussion questions are examples of questions we ask our students after completing the *Jet Fighter* activity. For the purpose of this activity, in small groups answer these questions as you consider your own role at your institution. Each small group will then summarize some of what they discussed to the larger group.

Discussion Questions:
- What was challenging about this process?
- Why did you/didn’t you complete the task successfully?
- What could each of you done differently to achieve a different outcome? How would you have encouraged your teammates to follow your lead or try something new with the limited communication restrictions?
- Do your responsibilities for challenging the process end once you have achieved the desired outcome?

**Commitment #2: Experiment and Take Risks**

Change can overwhelm, frighten, and immobilize some people. Exemplary leaders, however, view change as a challenge that can be successfully overcome. They believe, and get others to believe, that every individual can influence outcomes and control their own lives. They make sure that the meaning and purpose of change is clearly understood, and they create a strong sense of commitment to the mission. (Kouzes and Posner, 2014, p. 157)

Continuing with the previous conversation, return to your groups and discuss the following questions:
- Did you at any point feel like you were taking a risk during the activity? Why or why not?
- What drives you to take risks, both during this activity and in your position at your institution?
• How do you convince others that risks are worth taking?

Wrap-up/Final Questions (10 minutes)

Discussion of Outcomes/Results

As we have recently fully implemented for the first time the experience for students, we are currently working to acquire quantitative data related to the program’s success in achieving the learning outcomes established. While that information is still being collected (will likely have at the time of the conference presentation), qualitative evidence of program success can be found in excerpts from students reflections. Several excerpts from student final papers appear below:

Student 1: I think that I noticed that challenging the process was really important when I was writing my third blog where I stated, “I basically went through the motions for the day like I did last year and at the end of the day I asked a few returners how they felt about the day, some responded that it just seemed like it wasn’t as exciting as the first one as last.” I realized at that moment that I needed to change the way I was working with the process because I was not engaging myself in the way that I felt I needed to.

Student 2: This experience has taught me how crucial it is to strengthen others’ self-determination and the will for success will follow. Enabling others to act starts with the way we as leaders treat others because the respect that we give will reflect off of the willingness they give others. For future leadership endeavors, I want to focus more on others’ success and how I will enable them to act.

Student 3: Before I had heard of the Student Leadership Challenge, I did not realize the aspects in encouraging the heart were so important to being a successful leader. As mentioned previously, while I realized these traits were things I needed to work on, I did not heavily attribute them to my leadership capabilities. I believe I first started strengthening this practice after taking the LPI since it was not one of my highest scores. Even though encouraging the heart was not one of the practices I was most focused on strengthening, I believe I became more aware of my actions in this practice.

Student 4: Challenging the process is a difficult leadership ability that I had not continually looked for before. While challenging the process, you continuously look for new ways to lead, show skills, and improve what you are doing. This is difficult for leaders because some are not good with change or accept criticism well. Often times, especially with New Student Orientation, it is hard to relay change throughout the board. Continuously learning from your experience and building off of what you learned can help create a better strength of leadership.

In addition to enhanced student learning because of the implementation of this framework, positive outcomes were also found in the quality of the programs associated with the change projects. Students had focused on improving several skits related to student success and safety on campus, the campus traditions night, and the perfect party, where additional safety conversations occur. The Director of New Student Orientation found that the additional attention the students provided to ensuring the programs were of a high quality, greatly improved the product and
created a better experience for new students.

**Workshop Implications**

Participants who attend this workshop will gain valuable insight in regards to creating and implementing a leadership theory-based course for student leaders, as well as combining the course with practical application. This session will give participants the tools to identify resources on their campus that can be utilized to create such a course, and provide sample activities and assignments that align with the learning outcomes of a course.

Through participation in this course, attendees will:
- Utilize the structure of the University SOC Leadership TE program as an example through which to consider additional opportunities to embed leadership learning
- Learn how they might enhance reflection as a part of leadership development experiences on their own campuses
- Explore frameworks of leadership education that might be applied to leadership experiences on their own campuses
- Discuss experiences on their own campuses that might benefit through framing with leadership theory
- Consider how these experiences can be marketed to students and administration at their own universities

**References**


## Appendix A

### Student Learning Outcomes and Associated Assignments

| The ability to think critically and analytically about the essence of leadership | • *Student Leadership Challenge* Facilitation and Presentation  
| | • *Student Leadership Challenge* Reflection Blogs  
| | • TE Poster Presentation |
| Experience in converting leadership theory into action | • Change Project  
| | • SOC Reflection Journals |
| The capacity to evaluate and observe leadership in a variety of contexts | • Team Contract  
| | • Change Project File  
| | • TE Poster Project |
| An understanding and appreciation of diversity | • Team Contract  
| | • Peer Evaluations |
| The ability to identify personal strengths and weaknesses and areas for personal growth | • Leadership Reflection Paper  
| | • SOC Reflection Journals  
| | • LPI Reflection Paper  
| | • Peer Evaluations |
Appendix B

Jet Fighter Activity

Objective: The Pilot (A) figures out the symbols of all passengers (team members) in 15 minutes or less.

Rules:
- All communication must be in writing - NO TALKING!
- All communication must go through the Flight Attendant

Communication Format

MEMO
TO:
FROM:
MESSAGE:
Appendix C

Sample Assignments Sheet

The Student Leadership Challenge Class Facilitation - Every student in the course will be asked to facilitate a conversation about one of the five practices (and the two associated commitments). Class participants should have read the assigned chapter prior to the class facilitation and so more time should be spent on creatively processing the content and making connections to the SOC experience, as opposed to simply summarizing the content. The class instructors will provide additional activities for the course session to integrate the practice and commitments further.

Blog posts and Journal Entries - Several times throughout the semester students in the course will be asked to respond to several prompts related to their development as SOCs, the five practices of leadership, and their change projects.

NSO/Welcome Week Change Projects - A major component of this course is the implementation of a New Student Orientation/Welcome Week Change Project.

Leadership Reflection Paper - A major component of this course is the student’s individual understanding that he/she has grown in certain areas of leadership through practice – the practice being the SOC experience and participating in NSO sessions. In order to articulate that development, students are required to write a 3-5 page reflection paper cataloging their individual growth throughout the duration of the entire NSO season. This reflection should include specific instances in which the student experienced challenges during any NSO session, and how those challenges were faced and overcome.

Project File - Given the importance of teamwork in both leadership and your experience as a SOC, students in this course will be asked to chronicle the development and implementation of their change project. This will include documenting each stage of the project, from inception to implementation, including challenges experienced and recommendations for future SOCs participating in similar experiences.

Peer Evaluation - As dependability and collaboration are important components of leadership, peer evaluation will contribute to the overall grade in this course. Each student will be asked to evaluate all other class participants as it pertains to their participation as members of the SOC team and upholding SOC expectations throughout each NSO session. Additionally, each class participant will also submit a self-evaluation that will provide a comparison between how one views his/her self and how the team interprets his/her contributions.
Evaluate, Expand, Replicate: An Innovative, Theory-Based Approach to Experiential Youth Leadership Programming

Kayla Sherman, Gloria Gonzales, Erin Kostina-Ritchey, PhD, & Sara L. Dodd, PhD
Texas Tech University

Abstract

Scholars in the fields of developmental science and intervention programming have initiated a shift in perspective from deficit-based models to a focus on youth strengths, assets and positive qualities (Lerner, Phelps, Forman, & Bowers, 2009). This workshop highlights a youth leadership program with a theoretical foundation of Positive Youth Development (PYD) (Lerner, 2004). The programing mission is to develop foundational leadership qualities, accomplished via long-term program involvement, service, mentoring and relationship building. Workshop components demonstrate the multidisciplinary applicability of theory-based practices within an innovative model for curriculum development, program expansion, evaluation and replication. This workshop serves as an introduction/training to theory driven programming. Participants are provided with the opportunity to access the leadership curriculum as a supplement and/or enhancement to ongoing youth programming.

Introduction

The proposed educator workshop resulted from the innovative approach of a community outreach program sponsored by a partnership between a public research university, local business and foundation. This program develops young leaders who positively impact the individual, peer and social culture of their community through ongoing participation. Through the development of foundational qualities, such as civility, ethics and leadership, the program empowers youth to lead self and others through service, mentoring and relationship building.

The youth leadership program was originally designed in 2007 as an experiential after school program, facilitated by university staff members at select host campus sites. As the program grew in awareness among community based non-profit organizations, youth development organizations and school districts, program directors recognized a need among educational practitioners for supplemental resources which could serve as an enhancement to current program initiatives and curriculum. In order to meet this need and expand the reach of this innovative educational program, program directors created the “10-Session Leadership Curriculum for Adolescents” (the 10-Session Curriculum), in 2013. The curriculum was designed as a universally applicable resource for classroom and community-based educational settings. This curriculum and supplemental materials was developed using theoretically-based educational practices, with particular considerations related to the demanding schedules and needs for support among educational practitioners in various settings. Among other objectives, this interactive educator workshop will serve as a discussion point for the importance of theoretical grounding in after school settings and as an introductory training for participants interested in utilizing the 10-Session Curriculum to support their respective work with youth in various educational environments.
The following objectives will be achieved through the proposed educational workshop:

- Discuss and analyze various theoretical frameworks associated with youth programming and youth leadership development;
- Apply theory-based concepts to participants’ respective populations, organizations and leadership education settings;
- Receive in-depth, experiential training of the 10-Session Curriculum for the purpose of replication and implementation;
- Gain practical competencies related to curriculum development/implementation, facilitator training, program expansion/replication, and evaluation based on the model of an innovative youth leadership program.

Review of Related Scholarship

The program associated with the proposed educator workshop utilizes the asset-based perspective of Positive Youth Development (PYD) as the theoretical foundation for all components, curricula and programming among youth populations (Lerner, 2004). As opposed to the negative, deficit-based models common within the fields of developmental science, intervention programming and other related areas of study, PYD promotes an initiative to focus on the strengths, positive qualities and outcomes of youth (Lerner, Phelps, Forman, & Bowers, 2009). From this alternative perspective, educational practitioners are encouraged to recognize and enhance the strengths of youth by involving them in contexts that support their ability to contribute to various environments, including self, family, community, and civil society (Phelps, Zimmerman, Warren, Jelicic, Von Eye, & Lerner, 2009). Through these positive contributions, PYD has the potential to directly benefit the growth of youth and society as a whole, and thus holds great importance for the development of theory-driven practices among community-based programs (Phelps, et al., 2009).

The theoretical foundation of PYD and concept of strengths-based programming lends itself to youth development programs focused on the promotion of leadership knowledge and competencies (Crooks, Chiodo, Thomas, & Hughes, 2010), which are the core missions of the highlighted youth development program. Additionally, evidence supports the power of youth to create solutions to social issues and impact change in their communities, while furthering their own development of leadership, responsibility and other critical skills through active involvement in community-based programs (Detzler, Van Liew, Dorward, Jenkins & Teslicko, 2007). In forming mutually beneficial partnerships between university outreach programs and community organizations with the additional aspect of allowing students to become actively involved in decision-making processes, practitioners may be able to positively contribute to the physical, intellectual, psychological and social development of youth (e.g., Anyon & Fernandez, 2007). The proposed educator workshop will include application-based activities and discussion related to the development of an innovated youth leadership program, as well as the opportunities and best-practices associated with expansion and replication of youth programs through the formation of community partnerships.

The pedagogical approach utilized by the program associated with the proposed workshop aligns with the concepts of Vygotsky’s Zone of Proximal Development. From this perspective, student
learning is promoted by providing foundational knowledge appropriate for a student’s developmental level, while offering opportunities for students to be challenged to apply leadership concepts to everyday, real-world interactions. This application of leadership competencies among self and others promotes the expansion of learning beyond a student’s actual developmental state to his/her dynamic developmental state or zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1997). Although the proposed 10-Session Curriculum is intended to be universally applicable to learners within various age groups (the lessons have been piloted with students in grades 5, 6, 11, and 12), program directors promote adaptation of lesson concepts and discussion to align with the child’s developmental level (Vygotsky, 2002). This educator workshop will include interactive components that encourage participant learning and application of concepts as a means of demonstrating the presenters’ pedagogical philosophy and use of experiential, youth-driven programming.

Lesson Plan Description

To begin the interactive educator workshop, presenters will review the history of the youth development program, as well as the theoretical framework (PYD) that serves as the foundation for the 10-Session Curriculum. In addition, other replication resources for community partners will be made available. This information will aid workshop participants in understanding the importance of utilizing theory-based practices to support their respective work associated with youth development and youth leadership education.

Upon discussing the theoretical framework of the highlighted youth development program, presenters will continue to build participants’ foundational knowledge of best-practices for developing youth development programs and resources for the purpose of replication in various academic environments. Presenters will discuss the specific processes followed by the program directors throughout the development and implementation of the 10-Session Curriculum. Based on the experiences of the highlighted youth development program directors, many educational practitioners have the ability and resources to develop products and curriculum for their own program participants, however the knowledge and approach to replication of such innovative practices can be limited. Presenters will share how the 10-Session Curriculum was developed based on the original themes of the experiential after school program provided by the curriculum developers (see Table 1). In order to increase the universal applicability and attractiveness of the curriculum, each session includes descriptive, 35-minute lesson plans, as well as all supplemental handouts and materials needed for implementation to simplify the planning and preparation processes for busy educational practitioners.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership Themes</th>
<th>Theme Definitions</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical Safety</td>
<td>I am safe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Security</td>
<td>I know my feelings and I honor them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity</td>
<td>How I see myself and how others see me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belonging</td>
<td>I belong.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission and Purpose</td>
<td>I have direction and purpose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competence</td>
<td>I have abilities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Service   I help others expecting nothing in return.
Civility   I treat others the way I want them to treat me.
Ethics    I do the right thing when no one is looking.
Leadership I bring out the best in myself and others.

In addition to processes for development of replication curriculum based on an ongoing project or program, workshop participants will gain knowledge of how such programs can evolve to meet the diverse needs of potential partners. Presenters will speak to the following aspects of youth development program replication, based on their processes and lessons learned from the field:

- Methods of piloting lessons with various demographics
- Processes of developing pilot program evaluations for lesson improvement and adaptation
- Promotion among practitioners with shared need of additional resources (e.g. Cooperative Extension Service and school counselors)
- Developing online training and evaluation options for long-distance partners
- Continuously providing new options and resources for long-term partners

Following the previously stated in-depth discussion of theory-based practices and process for developing an innovative replication curriculum and program, presenters will lead workshop participants in two interactive lesson demonstrations from the 10-Session Curriculum. This aspect of the workshop will allow participants the opportunity to apply their leadership knowledge to real-life challenges while engaging in small group problem-solving. Participants will be encouraged to engage in the activities as if they were students in an educational setting, ultimately allowing them exposure to the benefits of experiential learning. The directions for each interactive lesson are included below. Refer to Appendices 1 and 2 for example handouts and activity materials. After completing each lesson, participants will engage in a large group discussion regarding the applicability of lessons for their respective groups, as well as the components included in a model descriptive lesson plan utilized by the highlighted youth development program, which will also be provided to workshop participants.

Interactive Components

“Step-Up to Safety”: An introduction to the concept of physical safety

Step-Up to Safety allows youth the opportunity to practice methods of establishing a healthy sense of physical safety within various environments and situations. In this interactive lesson demonstration, workshop participants will develop a four-step plan to carefully evaluate the environment, organize thoughts, and plan actions when faced with a situation that may compromise their (or their youth participants’) sense of safety. This four-step process includes:

1. “Feeling” - A natural, physiological reaction to a potentially dangerous situation
2. “Facts” – Observing and gathering information about one’s environment
3. “Choice” – Making the decision to remain or remove oneself from a situation
4. “Communicate” – Based on the decision to stay or leave, communicating with others and taking action to increase one’s level of physical safety
Using a graphic organizer, participants will record definitions, examples and key behaviors related to each of the four steps of the physical safety decision-making process. Refer to Appendices 1A and 1B for example. The interactive group discussion and assistance of the graphic organizer contributes to participants’ ability to quickly devise a plan of action to improve their level of physical safety in real-life situations.

After completing the graphic organizer, participants will be given the opportunity to practice and apply the four-step process by working collaboratively in a small group setting. Using a set of example scenarios, ranging from dangerous inclement weather to suspicious persons, each small group will describe their feelings and actions using the “Step-Up to Safety” process. Participants may also personalize the activity by developing example scenarios they believe the youth participants in their respective programs may experience.

In closing, presenters will remind participants that, while all safety situations cannot be anticipated, it is important for practitioners to provide youth with the knowledge and skills to adapt to these situations and react accordingly to increase their level of physical safety and the safety of others.

“Tool Time”: An interactive thematic review

The “Tool Time” activity provides a natural transition to the additional advanced curriculum for long-term partners by providing an interactive review of all leadership themes addressed in the original 10-Session Curriculum. As the advanced curriculum will require a greater level of application to the real-world environment, this activity serves as both a review and challenge of application for previously learned knowledge.

Participants will be divided into four small groups. Each group will be given a “tool box/belt”, labeled “tool theme” pictures, a job site description card and a marker. Participants will be asked to rotate through stations in five-minute intervals to solve specific leadership challenges (see Table 2). After completing the challenge at each station, participants will discuss and collectively select one “tool” or leadership theme, which best addresses the issue. A written justification will be developed by the group and documented on the job site description card. This quick and systematic process allows presenters the opportunity for ongoing assessment of comprehension based on the application and analysis of discussion and written justification.

When all small groups have visited each station, each will share the tools they assigned and their justification with the group, promoting active discussion related to the diverse applicability of each leadership theme.
Table 2
“Tool Time” Stations and Leadership Solutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Station</th>
<th>Description of Station Challenge</th>
<th>Possible Leadership “Tool” Solutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mirrors</td>
<td>Two mirrors are present at the station (one carnival mirror and one regular full-length mirror). Participants describe their reflection in each mirror and assign a name/label for each. Participants will select a tool to “reflect” their experience.</td>
<td>• <strong>Identity</strong> – Normal mirror represents my authentic self, while the carnival mirror represents when I am not being true to who I am.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Emotional Security</strong> – Normal mirror represents times when I practice “positive self-talk”, while the carnival mirror represents when I think or say bad things about myself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Song</td>
<td>Participants listen to the first verse and chorus, while reading the song lyrics. Participants will select a tool that corresponds with the message of the song lyrics.</td>
<td>• <strong>Mission &amp; Purpose</strong> – Song describes the importance of goal-setting and having direction in one’s life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movie Clip</td>
<td>Participants will watch a short movie clip from Disney’s “Finding Nemo”. Participants will select a tool that represents the actions or feelings of the main character, Nemo, in the movie clip.</td>
<td>• <strong>Competence</strong> – Song describes abilities a person may have or try to improve upon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Physical Safety</strong> – The main character was not being safe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenarios</td>
<td>Two scenarios describing real-life situations, including a new student at school and a park littered with trash, will be present at the station. Participants will read each scenario and select a tool that could be used to help the characters or resolve the issue in the scenario.</td>
<td>• <strong>Ethics</strong> – The main character initially tried to tell his friends that their plan wasn’t safe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Belonging</strong> – The main character was trying to make friends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Service</strong> – The leaders in one scenario could complete an act of service at the park.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Leadership</strong> – The leader could use their leadership skills to bring out the best in the new student at school.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example Lesson Demonstration Processing Questions:

- How could you use these activities within your respective educational settings?
- How would these activities, and other interactive lessons, help your students better explore their leadership competencies?
- How can you, as an educational practitioner, utilize these lessons and/or the 10-Session Curriculum to support your current program needs and mission?

The final aspect of the proposed educator workshop will include brief information about the next steps workshop participants may take to explore their interest in partnering with the highlighted youth development program in order to utilize the 10-Session Curriculum as an additional resource within their respective programs.
Discussion of Outcomes/Results

Since the completion of the 10-Session Curriculum in 2013, several educational practitioners have received formal training and successfully integrated the curriculum in a variety of settings, including community-based programs and those within the school environment. Refer to Chart 1 for specific information regarding the growth of replication partnerships for the 10-Session Curriculum and impact among youth in various communities.

Chart 1: Replication Curriculum Outcomes and Growth

With each additional partner and promotional presentation, the program directors gain more information, which greatly contributes to the ongoing improvement of the replication resources provided by the highlighted youth development program. Program directors continue to evaluate, adapt and develop new resources to meet the needs of replication partners. An example of this ongoing evaluation includes the initial barrier to long-distance replication, which was inherent in the need for partners to receive face-to-face training prior to gaining access to the curriculum and other resources. In order to address this need, program directors developed an online training in 2015, accessible through the youth development program website, for partners that are not able to travel to the university. Although the online training modules are still being piloted by community partners, program directors are receiving positive feedback. An unexpected benefit has also been reported among partners who attend face-to-face trainings with program directors, who are using the online training modules to supplement their planning and preparation processes prior to implementation with their youth participants.

Additionally, program directors developed online evaluation surveys, using Qualtrics (Qualtrics, Provo, UT) software, for partners to evaluate the online training modules and each session of the curriculum after it has been implemented. These short, easy-access surveys allow program directors to remain connected to replication partners as they progress throughout the curriculum.
and provide feedback when necessary to ensure optimal implementation. Program directors are currently preparing an official proposal to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the university in order to analyze research data from adult educational practitioners using these evaluation surveys.

Finally, program directors are currently working towards developing an additional advanced curriculum to meet the needs of long-term community partners, who intend to implement leadership lessons with groups of students that have already received the original 10-Session Curriculum. The “Tool Time” activity included as an interactive component to the proposed educator workshop is one of the lessons intended for this new replication curriculum. With successful progression along the proposed timeline for development, program directors intend to have this curriculum completed by June 2016, allowing this additional resource to be presented to interested participants in the event the proposed workshop is accepted.

**Workshop Plan & Implications**

The proposed educator workshop will include a combination of brief lecture, collaborative discussion, interactive lesson demonstrations and cumulative group processing. Presenters will facilitate two interactive lesson demonstrations to model the experiential nature of activities included in the 10-Session Curriculum. As mentioned previously, participants will be encouraged to actively engage in each component of the “Step-Up to Safety” and “Tool Time” lessons, while working collaboratively with fellow participants to apply their learning to real-world scenarios and challenges. A brief outline of the workshop plan is included below. For detailed information related to each aspect of the workshop, refer to the “Lesson Plan Description” section of this proposal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approximate Time</th>
<th>Workshop Activity</th>
<th>Activity Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>Youth development and leadership theoretical framework; history of proposed program</td>
<td>Lecture/Discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Best-practices and processes for youth program expansion and replication curriculum development</td>
<td>Lecture/Discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 minutes</td>
<td>Step-Up to Safety</td>
<td>Interactive Lesson Demonstration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 minutes</td>
<td>Tool Time</td>
<td>Interactive Lesson Demonstration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>Group Processing</td>
<td>Collaborative, whole group discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Summary of evaluation in a youth leadership program; becoming a replication partner; application of the 10-Session Curriculum to various settings</td>
<td>Take-Away</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proposed educator workshop includes many foreseeable benefits to participants related to their increased knowledge of concepts and best practices for youth development programming and program replication development, as well as innovative resources that are broadly
applicable to various educational environments. After attending the workshop, participants will:

- Receive exposure to a theoretical basis for developing youth programs;
- Receive knowledge related to concepts in youth development, youth leadership, program development, expansion, evaluation and replication processes;
- Complete basic, introductory training by program directors for potential partnerships;
- Become eligible to utilize the 10-Session Curriculum and other program resources to enhance and/or supplement current curriculum and programming activities with respective youth audiences.

References


Appendix 1A

“Step-Up to Safety” – Graphic Organizer
Appendix 1B

“Step-Up to Safety” – Graphic Organizer

3.) Choice
You have the power to make 2 choices in the situation.
   1. Stay in that situation
   2. Remove yourself

What can help you decide the right choice for you in that situation?

4.) Communicate
Depending on your choice in step 3:
   • You may need to tell the people you are with what you need to improve your physical safety in that situation
   • Explain to them why you must leave
   • Communicate to others why you need help and how they can help you.

Questions to consider?
   • What could be some of your responses if you decide to stay?
   • What would you say to your friends if you decide to leave?
   • Who would you call for help and how would you explain to them why you need to leave the situation?
   • How could you get out of a situation if you are unable to call someone for help (if you don’t have a cell phone)?

2.) Facts
The feeling in step one causes your senses to be heightened. Take advantage of this by looking at what is happening around you.

Make a mental list of specific facts or things happening in their environment.

Example questions to ask yourself:
   • Who am I with?
   • Do I trust them?
   • Am I breaking any rules?
   • Where am I?
   • What time of day is it?
   • Do I have my cell phone?

1.) Feeling
What specifically happens to your body when you feel you may be in danger?
   • Possible responses include increased heart rate or breathing, heightened awareness of surroundings, sick feeling in your stomach, etc.
   • Your body is preparing to protect you. Listen to it!

What do you think makes us feel that way or what causes that feeling?
   • Possible responses include conscience, morals, things your parents have told you, rules, etc.
Appendix 2

“Step-Up to Safety” Scenarios – Example

Step Up to Safety Scenarios

Directions: Read the scenario below. Using the Step Up to Safety process, brainstorm what you would do at each step to increase your level of physical safety.

Scenario:

You are cooking dinner with your sibling and a grease fire starts on the stove.

Step 1: Feeling

Step 2: Facts

Step 3: Choice

Step 4: Communicate

“Tool Time” – Job Site Card – Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Site:</th>
<th>Reason:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mirrors</td>
<td>The normal mirror represents my authentic self, while the carnival mirror represents when I am not being true to who I am.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IDENTITY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Image of colorful paint buckets]
Creating Inclusive Leadership Learning Environments

Jackie Bruce & Katherine McKee
North Carolina State University

Introduction

Inclusive education is imperative to prepare leaders for the 21st century (Rayner, 2009). Inclusive education removes barriers to learning, enables access to the curriculum, and continually attempts to foster consensus in a community (Rayner, 2009). If, as members of a leadership community, we embrace this belief, it follows then that we must place high value on inclusion, not as an abstract concept, something “out there”, but as a messy human dilemma that we must confront in our own spheres. In order to prepare leaders for a diverse world, leadership educators must model inclusive leadership and intentionally develop inclusive environments as we teach.

In this workshop, participants will:

- Articulate the need for inclusive teaching tools and methods in course structure, communication, instructor’s social location, and assessment.
- Describe tools and methods for inclusive teaching in course structure, communication, instructor’s social location, and assessment.
- Model the use of tools and methods for inclusive teaching in course structure, communication, instructor’s social location, and assessment.

Before we can articulate strategies for course structure, communication, instructor social location, and assessment in an inclusive leadership education classroom, we need to address the concepts of inclusion, inclusive leadership, social location, and identity.

Review of Related Literature

Inclusion

Within the literature, three distinct themes emerged, when searching for a definition for inclusion— a balance between belonging and maintaining one’s uniqueness, recognizing injustices and working to change them, and shared leadership among the members of the community – in order to develop a safe place for the realization of an agreed upon goal or vision and personal goals (Lambert, Walker, Zimmerman, Cooper, Lampert, Gardner, & Slack, 1995; Pelled, Ledford, & Mohrmon, 1999; Kugelmass & Ainscow, 2004; Ryan, 2007; Slee, 2007; Echols, 2009; Cherkowski, 2010; Shore, Randall, Chung, Dean, Ehrhart, & Singh, 2011; Boekhorst, 2015; Wuffli, 2016). Inclusive leaders develop environments in which everyone experiences belongingness and uniqueness as they, and their goals, are integrated into the system in order to achieve greater participation in the pursuit of shared goals (Lambert, Walker, Zimmerman, Cooper, Lampert, Gardner, & Slack, 1995; Pelled, et al., 1999; Kugelmass & Ainscow, 2004; Ryan, 2007; Echols, 2009; Shore, et al., 2011; Boekhorst, 2015). Leaders accomplish this by encouraging all participants to recognize and address forms of injustice honestly and regularly and to take on greater leadership responsibility as they do (Rayner, 2009; Cherkowski, 2010).
Identity & Social Location

An understanding of identity allows each person to understand who he or she is through such dimensions as race, culture, gender, and sexual identity (Day, Harrison, & Haplin, 2009; Jones & Abes, 2013). These understandings lead individuals to orient themselves in groups and communities and to understand what is “self” and “other” (Jones & Abes, 2013). Identity is also a key component of social location.

Notions of gender, race, social class, age, ability, religion, sexual orientation and geographic location all work in concert form an individual's social location (University of Victoria, n.d.). This location then, offers a glimpse into an individual's unique perspective. Acknowledging social location, allows us to acknowledge uniqueness while setting the stage for belonging with our learners. However, it also helps us to understand our own lenses through which we teach.

Leadership Education

Bennis (1999) suggests that leaders must learn and apply a new set of skills that develop the brain power, know-how, and imagination necessary for success in the reality of the 21st Century. Our students are interpreting our behaviors and words in the classroom in addition to the intentional curriculum as they are in the act of becoming types of people (Wortham, 2006). The academic and non-academic signs, materials, and practices enmesh to provide models for identity which allow students to see who they may be becoming and what role or roles they may play in the curriculum (Wortham, 2006). In fact, Wortham (2006) claims that we cannot separate social identity formation from the target academic knowledge. Thus, we must pay attention to the non-curricular components of our classroom environments: how we communicate, course structure, instructor’s social location, and assessment.

Those who teach must model the inclusive leadership they want their students to emulate. Much as inclusive leaders seek to develop shared leadership, inclusive teachers should develop shared responsibility for the class. Teachers must genuinely value everyone’s presence to develop share responsibility (hooks, 1994). Taking risks with participation and course material, choosing ways of speaking that are informed by a recognition of students’ uniqueness, including and respecting works of marginalized groups, and acknowledging differences are essential to transforming the classroom into an inclusive environment (hooks, 1994). Of course, it is necessary for people who teach to have the opportunity to express concerns about this transformation while learning to create ways to develop inclusive learning environments (hooks, 1994).

Lesson Plan Description

Instructors will be modeling many of the tools that we will discuss in the workshop, as well as providing opportunities for the participants to actively engage in the content. The lesson plan will follow four non-curricular components of teaching: communication, course structure, instructor’s social location, and assessment. We recognize that these issues, while necessary to discuss, can be difficult, and so all activities will be approached by the presenters as “challenge by choice”. Activities will include small and large group activities/discussions, pair shares, and
individual work/reflection/writing.

We will start the workshop with a discussion and reflection on the necessity of inclusive classrooms, particularly in leadership education contexts. Participants will get acquainted with some of the relevant terms related to inclusion work including diversity, inclusion, identity, and social location in order to provide a common language from which to work. Once definitions have been provided we will move through each of the four non-curricular components.

**Section One: Communication.** From the way we address our students before a course ever starts, to the introductions on the first day, written and verbal communications between instructor and student often sets the tone for inclusivity. In this section we will share tools for inclusionary communication for prior to a course starting, class introductions, and emails tips.

**Section Two: Course Structure.** How we structure our educational environments is an often overlooked yet key piece to the perception of inclusivity. Included in this section will be language for course syllabi, calendar considerations, late policy thoughts, and reflections on readings.

**Section Three: Instructor’s Social Location.** Here we will help participants acknowledge their own social location as well as discuss considerations for how those locations often define our classroom and office expectations. We’ll move from our expectations to suggestions for adjusting those expectations for greater socio-cultural awareness.

**Section Four: Assessment.** Many instructors are reasonably comfortable adjusting for differences in ability, however, how many intentionally think about adjusting for cultural differences? In this section, we will discuss ways to be flexible for cultural considerations.

We will end the session with some debriefing and reflection. Diversity and inclusion work is often difficult work, so the importance of debriefing in this setting is more important than ever. As part of the debriefing process, we will ask participants to identify how they are already creative inclusive environments, especially those not covered in the session, as well as how they might be able to take what we covered and weave it into their classroom practices.

**Workshop Results**

Each of the tools discussed in the session are being used by the presenters as part of their own journey in creating inclusive learning environments. These presenters have seen positive results because of their implementation, including greater class participation and discussion from all members of a course. It is our hope that participants will be able to find, among all of the tools presented, some things that they will be able to use immediately and others that they will be able to weave into their contexts eventually. While each of these tools will not speak to all students directly each time instructors implement them, it is our belief that their consistent implementation provides a stage for all students to be more aware of the need for inclusion, and in turn, more aware of their own behaviors and the impact those behaviors have on their peers.

**Discussions/Implications**
Imagine having to take an exam after 5 days of fasting. Would your brain be functioning at its most optimal such that you felt like you could be successful? Imagine having an instructor refer to you by a name that you no longer recognize as your own. Would you feel like you were valued as a human being? Imagine never hearing from authors who reflected your own experience. Would you feel like your experiences were valued? Imagine that you couldn’t attend office hours, because culturally it’s inappropriate to be in a room alone with someone of the opposite sex. Would you feel like you were able to get your questions answered? Imagine having to wait for financial aid to come through to purchase textbooks, but that wasn’t until four weeks into the semester. Would you feel like you were already starting out at a deficit?

These are all very real scenarios that students on our campuses face each and every day. As part of a university community, instructors often play the largest role in creating an atmosphere where students feel like they are safe (physically, mentally, emotionally) and can (authentically) be who they are. But if students start out questioning any piece of that safety, how can we expect them to be full participants in their own learning? Being cognizant of the large and small ways that we can create more inclusive, safe environments in our offices, classrooms, and extra-curricular spaces will only become a more critical piece of how we do our jobs as educators.

As our campuses continue to become more diverse, it is imperative that as instructors, we rise up to meet the campus community’s changing needs. By creating an environment of inclusion within our offices and our classrooms, we can (at least in part) remove the barriers for our students, which in turn allows them to focus fully on why they are in our classrooms, to learn.

References


Leveraging the Power of the Holocaust to Build Adaptive Leadership Capacity and Moral Decision-Making in Leadership Learners

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*University of Florida*

JoAnna Wasserman  
*United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*

Nicholas Lennon  
*George Mason University*

Abstract

In 2015, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and the University of Florida created a partnership to develop a more holistic model for moral decision-making within leadership learners. The partnership yielded innovative learning experiences, which were piloted at the University of Florida in 2016 with interdisciplinary undergraduate learners. Students engaged in intentional learning experiences grounded in reflective and agency-oriented behaviors through the intentional use of authentic memorabilia, audio recordings, and videos collected during the Holocaust. Preliminary qualitative findings indicate that the content and methodological processes employed lead to the development of adaptive leadership capacity and Moral Imagination in the population. The resulting foundation aimed at addressing and mitigating the challenges associated with systemic oppression, groupthink, and the social deterioration of moral judgment, creates opportunities for change and social justice in our world.

Introduction

As decision-making becomes more convoluted for leadership learners, due to the overwhelming amount of misinformation, competing priorities, and powerful implications for sustainability in our world, it becomes increasingly important for leadership educators to develop the skills, capacities, and dispositions in learners that will lead to positive decision-making. This challenge is further complicated by a morally complex landscape providing a veritable minefield of potentially damaging options that cut at the morally fragile credibility of organizations (Odom, Andenoro, Sandlin, & Jones, 2015). Learners like individuals in positional authority often make decisions based on narrow mental models of how they view the world (Enlow & Popa, 2008; Werhane, 1999). These factors create a perfect storm for poor practice and morally impermissible decision-making that can erode the foundation of sustainability for our organizations and communities. However, the development of intentional learning experiences rooted in historical perspective, applied practice, and oriented towards the future could prove to be beneficial.

In an effort to address this timely challenge, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the University of Florida, and other key personnel have collaborated to build and deliver intentional learning activities aimed at the development of mental models and behavioral dispositions that promote positive decision-making in leadership learners.
Specifically, an experiential curriculum immersed in the context of the Holocaust and the complexity of its perpetrators was developed and piloted at the University of Florida. The curriculum and accompanying facilitation methods were grounded in two theoretical foundations – Moral Imagination (Werhane, 1999) and Emotionally Engaged Thinking (Stedman & Andenoro, 2015).

“Moral Imagination is the ability to challenge operative mental models in order to discover new ways of framing ethical problems and providing innovative solutions” (Odom, Andenoro, Sandlin, & Jones, 2015, p. 131). Moral Imagination is the critical cognitive link connection between what is and what might be (Enlow & Popa, 2008). It assists the individual in disengaging from a specific process, evaluating the perspectives which are incorporated within it, and thinking more creatively within the constraints of what is morally possible (Werhane, 2002). Through the development of Moral Imagination students have the potential to develop a heightened awareness, understanding, and capacity for action with respect to morally ambiguous situations.

Emotionally Engaged Thinking (EET) promotes a systems thinking approach that incorporates emotions as the catalyst for positive decision-making (Stedman & Andenoro, 2015). EET is applicable for a variety of interdisciplinary contexts creating a powerful facilitation tool for interdisciplinary learners. The process of EET is grounded in the perspective that all individuals involved in decision-making have a variable level of commitment and an associated emotional investment in challenges and problems facing their organization, community, or context. Using the FACE Method, (Foundational awareness, Authentic engagement, Connective analysis, and Empowerment and change) individuals are provided the tools to think through problems, recognizing their emotion, engaging in dialogue, and promoting shared decision-making (Stedman & Andenoro, 2015; Andenoro, 2014).

Together these two theoretical suppositions create an underpinning for the development positive decision-making in leadership learners. This underpinning becomes contextualized and gains an applied nature for leadership learners when it is connected to the historically relevant complexity seen in the Holocaust. The Holocaust allows for complex problems to become real, creates significance for the learning experience, and illustrates the gravity of the decisions learners will make and their implications for the global community. This establishes the basis for enhanced decision-making and positive agency within morally ambiguous and complex situations.

Literature Review

Moral Imagination

Moral Imagination is the ability to comprehend and evaluate possibilities within a particular set of circumstances through questioning and expanding one’s operative mental framework (Odom, Andenoro, Sandlin, & Jones, 2015). When used effectively, it creates a foundation for effective moral decision-making by allowing for the individual to perceive norms, social roles, and relationships intertwined in any situation (Werhane & Moriarty, 2009). This creates an intuitive connection to leadership. By shifting leaders away from prescriptive or habitual ways of
thinking, Moral Imagination prioritizes reframing existing situations, moving beyond constraining mental models, and formulating innovative responses.

The development of Moral Imagination requires a heightened awareness of contextual moral dilemmas. Moral Imagination requires the active engagement of additional perspectives toward these dilemmas to enable leaders to reframe them and discover morally justifiable solutions (Werhane & Moriarty, 2009). It is this projection of self into another’s experience that defines Moral Imagination. Further, Moral Imagination can be distinguished by three main characteristics, 1) beginning not with the use of generalizations but with the use of observing a particular situation, 2) entraining the ability to disengage from one’s primary framework or to extend or adapt that framework in a meaningful way, and 3) dealing not merely with fantasies but with possibilities or ideals that are viable and applicable to complex problems and situations (Odom, Andenoro, Sandlin, & Jones, 2015). These steps create the foundation for empathy and establishes connection with the other.

The Critical Nature of Moral Imagination for Leadership Learners

One of the fundamental obligations of the modern college and university is to influence intentionally the moral thinking and action of the next generation of society’s leaders and citizens” (Whitely, 2002, p. 5). The importance of these values has since been renewed due to recent events and public debate. Scandals within the corporate and political realm have created a distrust and lack of credibility in our leaders. Due to this, the public’s demand for leadership transparency has increased tremendously to ensure that organizations can be trusted to operate with moral and ethical choices. Enlow and Popa note that “poor leadership may in part be described as a lack of imagination – holding too firmly to the world as it is without exploring the world as it might be” (2008, p. 25). "Imagination in a leadership context is a cognitive orientation to the world that emphasizes engaging alternative perspectives and creating new possibilities for action" (Enlow & Popa, 2008, p. 24). The use of Moral Imagination allows leaders to step outside of preconceived or ingrained mental models to develop the novel and innovative (2008).

The need for morality in leadership is evident. However, the question of how to prepare future leaders and active citizens to lead with good moral reasoning is not evident. In an attempt to find an answer this question, there has been significant initiatives designed to cultivate moral and ethical development within college students (Liddell & Cooper, 2012). Further, “there is ample evidence that cognitive aspects of personal and social responsibility—namely moral reasoning—continue to develop during the college years. This evidence suggests that educating personal and social responsibility is needed within higher education” (Swaner, 2004, p. 44). Colleges and universities can utilize the use of Moral Imagination to help students identify ethical events, assess various viewpoints concerning these events, and practice reframing the events using Moral Imagination (Enlow & Popa, 2008).

Emotionally Engaged Thinking

In the last five years there has been a growth in the area of neuroscience and leadership (Rock and Schwartz, 2006; Boyatzis, 2008; Waldman, Balthazard, & Peterson, 2011; Ghadiri,
Habermacher, & Peters, 2013). This research has led to a greater understanding of how the brain works in key areas of leadership, like decision-making, emotional intelligence, but also in important areas like stress and health. Emotionally Engaged Thinking (EET) was developed from research conducted linking critical thinking and emotional intelligence (Stedman & Andenoro, 2007). This link provided the foundation for how people can use emotion to guide logic. In 2013, Stedman and Andenoro launched Emotionally Engaged Thinking after refining this connection. Andenoro identified Emotionally Engaged Thinking as a critical piece of the solution building process during his TED talk (2014). Further he noted that Emotionally Engaged Thinking creates a foundation for solving our world’s greatest challenges including global population growth, international food security, transnational pandemics, and beyond (2014). Emotionally Engaged Thinking approaches decision-making using the foundational work in neuroscience to address the use of emotions in a leader’s ability to think critically.

Emotionally Engaged Thinking (EET) operates when a leader is challenged with a decision evoking a strong emotional response, but which requires a logical reasoned approach. Decision-making has long been understood as one’s ability to identify alternatives for a problem and selecting the alternative, which presents the greatest selected utility. In other words, which alternative will one get the most out of, based on underlying desires, motivations, or preferences. It is easy to imagine that this most basic understanding of decision-making often falls short given the complex nature of people. Decision-making would be easy and consistent if it were just a matter of weighing options and going with the best choice. In fact, Holyoak and Morrison (2005) outline six different ways the brain works against the rational theory of choice model; choice of uncertainty, riskless choice, conflict and reasons, processing of attribute weights and local versus global perspectives. Each of these presents a set of conflicts that the brain has to process in order to complete the decision-making process.

Emotions are central to how many of these principles impact decision-making. From the most basic notion that the loss of something is felt less by an individual in a negative mood versus one in a positive mood to how particular images of recall can influence decision-making. Further, the individual’s current state can influence a decision in the future, which is not directly tied to the current state. Holyoak and Morrison (2005) describe a situation, in which individuals often use current feelings or emotions to project to a future state. This myopic decision-making results in the inability to recognize incidental factors as such. These contextual changes have been found to greatly influence the manner, in which people make decisions.

In recognizing the influence of emotion on decision-making, EET sets out to provide a systematic approach for incorporating them into how decisions are made. The rational self cannot always take into account situations that are influenced by his or her emotional self. Researchers have documented that even the most skilled thinkers often fall victim to biases based upon a dominant thought.

**Lesson Plan Description**

This workshop creates innovative opportunity, as the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) and the University of Florida (UF) demonstrate the fruits of their
collaborative effort to build adaptive leadership capacity and moral decision-making within leadership learners through the lens of the Holocaust.

This interactive workshop demonstrates the power of using authentic memorabilia, videos, and audio recordings for the purposes of shifting perspectives and changing behaviors. Through the purposeful facilitation of the experiential leadership learning, participants will address the complex adaptive challenges associated with the Holocaust, gain perspective for systemic oppression and groupthink, and learn the process for replicating this powerful education opportunity with their learners.

As a result of this workshop participants will:

1) Experience and develop an understanding for the use of powerful historical footage from the Holocaust in moral and ethical leadership learning contexts
2) Understand the theoretical framework and contextual application of psychotherapy as an underpinning for effectively maintaining a challenging and constructive learning environment
3) Identify the role of systemic oppression and groupthink within a decision-making framework
4) Gain perspectives for building adaptive leadership capacity and morally responsible practice in leadership learners and organizational contexts

The power of the learning experience engages two critical approaches, Emotionally Engaged Thinking (Stedman & Andenoro, 2015) and Moral Imagination (Werhane, 2008), in a five-stage approach grounded in psychotherapy and neuroscience. This process is outlined in the following learning stages:

**Stage 1 – Exposure**: The USHMM in coordination with faculty at UF created an opportunity for students in an interdisciplinary upper division undergraduate Leadership Ethics course to view, listen to, and engage with memorabilia, videos, and audio recordings collected from the Holocaust. The narrative of the Holocaust told by the facilitators evokes emotions in the learners and engages them in the authentic nature of the atrocities perpetrated during World War II. Consistent with the work of Litz (2000), the first stage effectively sets the foundation for managing moral decision-making by asking the learners to perceive norms, social roles, and relationships intertwined within the presented context.

**Stage 2 – Foundational Awareness**: This is the first reflection point in establishing EET and setting a foundation for MI. The goal during this phase is for the learner to become aware of his or her emotions related to the moral ambiguous and systemically challenged context. Using basic prompts, individuals are asked to consider personal implications of a problem. During this second stage, individuals develop an authentic relationship with the problem, understand its application to current contexts, and broad societal implications. This leads to application within similar contexts and is integral in socially constructing frameworks, which set the foundation for learners to progress to the next stage. Further, this begins the development of MI by facilitating the process of reproductive imagination (Werhane, 1998). Through this process individuals develop awareness for contextual factors, the schema at play within the context, and what moral conflicts or dilemmas may arise as the schema progresses within the context (1998).
Stage 3 – Authentic Engagement: This idea is grounded in one’s ability to truly empathize with the problem and the individuals affected. Authentic engagement relates to how the learner sees him or herself in the scenario. It connects with the learner with the problem, asking what the learner’s role or obligation is with respect to the problem. This elicits an emotional response based upon the perceived situation and expectations for the situation. In an effort to best decide how to approach the situation, the learner must address how he or she feels about the problem. It provides a level of authenticity by being present in the moment. Key behaviors of authentic engagement include attentive listening, productive dialogue, and reflective thought. Stage 3 furthers the idea of reproductive imagination challenging or confirming the learner’s perspectives and moral schema.

Stage 4 – Connective Analysis: This stages gives holistic meaning to the experience or problem. The individual has now embraced an emotional tie to the problem, has fully engaged with experience, and now must relate this experience to others. Through Connective Analysis, systems thinking reveals how the learner’s perspectives can be synthesized with other contextual perspectives creating a more holistic picture of the situation. During this phase, learners explore counter ideas, emotions, and reactions within the same experience or problem. The systems understanding stemming from this stage provides a connection to others while taking new possibilities into account within the scope of their context. Werhane (1998) identifies this as productive imagination, the second construct within MI. Productive imagination includes “revamping one’s schema to take into account new possibilities within the scope of one’s situation and/or within one’s role” (1998, p.22). The increased perspective allows for a more holistic view of the context and problem, setting the foundation for adaptive solution building and by association, predisposing the learners to practicing adaptive leadership (Heifetz, Grashow, & Linsky, 2009).

Stage 5 – Empowerment & Change: This phase moves participants from the development of progressive attitudes to the accompanying behaviors. Behaviors stemming from this step form the foundation for influencing others and building large-scale organizational and community change. This is also the foundation of sustainable adaptive leadership practice and creative imagination, the third construct of MI. This involves the ability to imagine possibilities outside of the current context, imagine reasonable possibilities based on the context and outside factors, and evaluate the morality of new possibilities (Werhane, 1998). Further, it assists the learner in challenging the status quo and foreseeing potential outcomes if the new possibilities are implemented (Odom, Andenoro, Sandlin, & Jones, 2015).

This innovative approach coupled with this partnership has powerful implications for leadership learners. It validates the fundamental obligations of modern universities to intentionally influence the moral thinking and action of the next generation of leaders and citizens (Whiteley, 2002), has the potential to be a catalyst for enhanced organizational practice and community sustainability (Odom, Andenoro, Sandlin, & Jones, 2015), and creates the impetus for influencing sustainable change and creating solutions for the complex adaptive challenges that exist within our ever-changing world.

Discussion Outcomes & Workshop Implications
To date, findings regarding the impact of EET have indicated that there is tremendous benefit to learners engaging in the FACE Approach (Andenoro, Bigham, & Balser, 2014). Specifically, findings illustrate that learners show elevated levels of adaptive leadership capacity (inclusive of self-awareness, intercultural competence, desire for and understanding of collaboration, effective communication, and internal locus of control), systems thinking, and socially responsible agency (2014). The data supporting the inclusion of Moral Imagination in learning contexts as a powerful tool for developing better decision-making processes in learners is also well documented (Odom, Andenoro, Sandlin, & Jones, 2015; Enlow & Popa, 2008). However, when these are joined within the innovative experiential learning context of the Holocaust, a tremendous educational environment with significant implications for addressing complex problems emerges.

Preliminary qualitative findings collected through informal ethnography and content analyses (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993) and analyzed through cursory constant comparative analyses (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) indicate that interdisciplinary undergraduate learners are demonstrating depth of thought, increased levels of awareness, the ability to foreshadow potential complex consequences of their decisions, and improved agency for addressing and mitigating complex adaptive situations.

Through this innovative approach, leadership educators can go beyond the traditional educational methods of teaching ethics and morality to create critical affective shifts and behavioral changes in leadership learners. The approach serves as a powerful tool, equipping leadership learners with the capacities and dispositions to make decisions that increase sustainability of our organizations, supplement inclusive community development, and create opportunities for a more socially just society. This innovative approach creates the foundation for learners to be the stewards of a better future and create the foundation for the development of morally and ethically just outcomes and leadership solutions that have far reaching implications for our world.

References


Camp Brosius Leadership Development Camp

Allison Plopper, Rachel Swinford, Jay Bradley, & Mark Urtel

*Indiana University – Purdue University Indianapolis*

**Abstract**

Leadership skills are extremely important in any career. The IUPUI Department of Kinesiology utilizes Camp Brosius as a residential learning environment where students learn about leadership and identify their personal leadership style. At Camp Brosius, students are put into small teams in which they lead their peers through a series of challenge and problem solving activities. Student are evaluated using a variety of methods throughout the week-long experience. The purpose of this workshop is to introduce participants to the Camp Brosius Model through hands-on participation. Specific outcomes include identifying personal leadership style and exploring ways in which this model could be applied in other settings.

**Introduction**

Leadership, teamwork, and professionalism are desirable outcomes for all college students. In fact, a survey of employers found both leadership and teamwork skills to be among the top 10 skills that are sought in potential employees (NACE, 2010). As important, 60% of surveyed students currently hold, anticipate holding, or recently held a leadership position while in college yet, only 32.5% of these students have taken a leadership course (Bettis, Christian, and Allen, 2015). In 2011, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) Department of Kinesiology worked with the Military Science Department to adopt and modify the Army ROTC’s Leadership Development Program to align with the Department of Kinesiology’s student learning outcomes. As a graduation requirement, all students in the Department of Kinesiology are required to attend a 1-week residential leadership development camp at Camp Brosius in Elkhart Lake, WI. At this camp students are placed into teams, or as we call it “families”, and work with this team throughout the week. We utilize a series of challenge and problem-solving activities to focus on developing leadership and teamwork skills in students (Panicucci, 2008).

The mission of Camp Brosius is to train students, develop their leadership, and evaluate their potential. We define leadership as influencing people – by providing purpose, direction, and motivation – while working to accomplish a goal and improve the team. **Figure 1** gives a visual illustration of our leadership model. We describe leadership behavior as being a leader, knowing what to do in a leadership position, and actually demonstrating the skills of a leader. These three behaviors are then classified into four categories of leadership: values, presence, intellectual capacity, and core leader competencies. Values and presence are considered to be leadership attributes whereas intellectual capacity can be thought of as leadership skills. Core leader competencies are specific actions one takes during an actual leadership role.
Table 1 shows each of the four categories of leadership and the corresponding dimensions of leadership. Students at Camp Brosius are evaluated on these 20 leadership dimensions using a 360 degree approach. Students receive an overall leadership score as well as individual scores for each of the 20 leadership dimensions. Appendix A contains the self-evaluation tool, and then Appendix B represents the scoring tool that the Leadership Camp Counselor completes on the enrolled students. This assessment approach allows for feedback from three different viewpoints. Additionally, students complete daily journals that allows for qualitative assessment of leadership and personal growth throughout the week-long experience.
Table 1.
Camp Brosius Leadership Categories & Dimensions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership Category</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Values</td>
<td>Reflection of the leader’s sense of obligation to and attitudes about other people and morals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Ethic</td>
<td>A set of values based on the moral virtues of hard work and diligence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>Creating a positive climate and projecting cultural tolerance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical</td>
<td>Conducting one’s self according to the difference between right and wrong.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrity</td>
<td>The leader is truthful and upright at all times.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>Identification with the thoughts, feelings, or attitudes of another.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence</td>
<td>Impression that a leader makes on others contributing to the success in them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically Fit</td>
<td>Having sound health, strength, and endurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confident</td>
<td>Projecting self-confidence and certainty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resilient</td>
<td>Showing a tendency to recover quickly while maintaining focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual Capacity</td>
<td>A leader’s ability to draw on the mental tendencies and resources that shape conceptual abilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Agility</td>
<td>Flexibility of mind, a tendency to anticipate or adapt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound Judgment</td>
<td>The capacity to assess a situation and draw feasible conclusions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovative</td>
<td>Ability to introduce something creative, different, and new</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal Tact</td>
<td>Effectively interacting with others in a respectful manner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Management</td>
<td>Ability to stay on task and accomplish a goal in a timely manner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core Leader</td>
<td>Application of character, presence, intellect and abilities while guiding others toward a common goal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leads Others</td>
<td>Influencing team members in a positive manner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leads by Example</td>
<td>Providing an example that others consider and use in what they do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicates</td>
<td>Conveys a clear understanding of what needs to be done while actively listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core Leader</td>
<td>Providing an environment that fosters teamwork and acceptance of responsibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competencies - Develops</td>
<td>Creates a positive cultural and ethical environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creates a Positive Environment</td>
<td>Self-study, self-development and becoming well-rounded; ensures they are prepared to lead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepares Self</td>
<td>Growing others into competent and confident leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develops Others</td>
<td>Consistently accomplishing goals by providing direction and sound leadership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core Leader</td>
<td>Consistently accomplishing goals by providing direction and sound leadership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competencies - Achieves</td>
<td>Developing and executing plans while providing direction, guidance and clear priorities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to our Camp Brosius Leadership Model, we also introduce students to the Adair Team Leadership Model (see Figure 2) (Adair, 1973). This model aligns well with the Camp Brosius Model in that it includes a lot of the same dimensions of leadership, and is another visual
representation for students.

As stated above, we utilize a series of challenge and problem-solving activities. The specific sequence we follow includes: ice breaker/de-inhibitor activities; trust building activities; cooperation/communication activities; and challenge/problem solving activities. Following this sequence of adventure-based challenge education allows students to build comradery with their fellow teammates, while allowing students to demonstrate leadership skills in a nonthreatening, fun environment. Leadership counselors are trained to debrief activities, which helps students apply the various activities to real-life situations. (Project Adventure, 1995).

In addition to leadership, teamwork is another learning outcome of Camp Brosius. The primary model we use for teamwork is the Drexler/Sibbet Team Performance Model (see Figure 3) (Sibbet & Drexler, 1994). This model aligns well with our leadership model and use of challenge education. At various times throughout the week, we ask teams to identify where they believe their team falls on the model. In addition to this model, we ask students to complete a journal entry utilizing Tuckman’s Group Development Stages (forming, norming, storming, performing, and adjourning/mourning) (Tuckman, 1965).

![Adair Team Leadership Model](image)

*Figure 2. Adair Team Leadership Model*
Leadership and teamwork skills are extremely important in any career, and are desirable outcomes for most 4-year degrees. Camp Brosius is a unique 1-week, residential leadership camp that allows students to explore their personal leadership style and learn more about what makes a good leader and how to create a high-performing team. Specific outcomes of this workshop include:

- Explore various leadership and teamwork models, including the Camp Brosius Model.
- Utilize the 360 degree assessment approach.
- Participate in various hands-on challenge education activities used at Camp Brosius.
- Participants will be able to describe their own personal leadership style.
- Brainstorm ideas on how a similar format could be used in other settings.

Review of Related Scholarship

Taking students to a residential camp allows for a deeper learning experience (Lien & Goldenberg, 2012). Similarly, the use of challenge and problem-solving activities fosters an environment that pushes students beyond their comfort zone into what is called a learning zone (Panicucci, 2008). Camp Brosius Leadership Development Camp is a unique and rewarding experience for students. Students are taken off of the large urban campus and attend Camp Brosius in a rural-residential camp setting. Students are assigned living, family, dining, and committee arrangements. It provides multiple opportunities for growth in the areas of leadership, teamwork, and professionalism. For example, one student wrote the following in one of his daily journal entries: “I was surprised by the Camp Brosius experience. I had dreaded going to this..."
camp the entire time, but it really changed me as a person. It helped me to really get out of my shell and be more confident when approaching new situations and not to be afraid to take risks.” The preceding comment also strongly supports the generally held notions of team work, communication and success as illustrated in Boettcher and Gansemer-Topf (2015). They consistently found that students notice and value how communication and teamwork contribute to the development of leadership skills. And this becomes even more magnified when doing so using outdoor experiences in the “backcountry” or in traditional outdoor situations; not unlike what we are doing at Camp Brosius.

Methods

In the summers of 2011 and 2012 students from the Department of Kinesiology (N=314) attended a 1-week residential leadership development camp. The leadership development camp was adapted from the Army ROTC’s leadership program and focused on a total of 20 leadership dimensions. Students were put into small teams in which they led their peers through a series of challenge and problem solving activities on a daily basis.

Prior to attending the out-of-state Camp Brosius Leadership experience, each enrolled student completes the leadership dimension inventory as a pre-test, with very little orientation or instruction on the test inventory itself or even the essence of the survey. This 6-category and 20-item survey is scored on a 3 point Likert-type scale. More particularly, a 1 equals excellent, a 2 equals satisfactory, and a 3 equals needs improvement. Then, upon completion of the one-week leadership program (on the last day) the students again complete survey.

Lesson Plan Description

Below is an outline that we will follow during our educator workshop.

- Overview of Camp Brosius (PowerPoint) ~7-10 minutes
  - History
  - Transition to leadership camp in 2011
  - Model adapted from Army ROTC
- Introduce the Camp Brosius Leadership Development Model (PowerPoint) ~7-10 minutes
  - Week long sequencing
  - 20 leadership dimensions
- Discuss additional leadership & team building models (PowerPoint) ~7-10 minutes
  - Adair
  - Tuckman’s Group Development Stages
  - Drexler and Sibbet Team Performance Model
- Discuss 360 assessment (PowerPoint and Handouts) ~7-10 minutes
  - Blue (leader), Yellow (self), White (peer)
  - Personal reflection journals
- Hands-on leadership activities – several activities with blue cards & debriefing ~35-45 minutes
  - Each group will be assigned a leadership activity with a self-identified leader
  - Group members will serve as “leadership counselor” using the blue card
assessment tool
• Conclude with overall self-evaluation (yellow card) & discussion questions about how to implement some of this in their classrooms/career. (PowerPoint) ~10-15 minutes
  o What leadership dimensions are important to your team, group, and environment?
  o What are debrief/reflection tactics would you use?
  o What other models of leadership theories would work for your team, group, and environment?

**Discussion of Outcomes/Results**

Paired t-test statistical analysis revealed, overall, a significant change in perception regarding 14 out of the 20 leadership dimensions (p < .001); see table 1. Some of the changes were numerically positive, where the reported scores decreased. While some of the changes were numerically negative, where the reported scores increased. At first glance this seems a bit inconsistent, however upon closer review these changes make sense. For example, the scores that increased all were aligned with attributes of leadership under the categories Values and Presence. For our Kinesiology majors at IUPUI this is unsurprising. First, our campus has a principle of undergraduate learning that features one’s ability to value (difference, diversity, art, cultural, social and environmental) so their experience and exposure to this attribute is strong and consistent. Second, the category of Presence contains attributes such confidence, physical fitness, and resilience; all of which are prominently found in students with an academic and personal interest in the science of movement, exercise, and physical activity. Therefore, due to the camp experience, as the week went by, students felt more competent on these leadership dimensions and could more effectively identify with the values and presence of being a leader.

Regarding the scores that went down, those were aligned with the attributes of leadership under the category of Intellectual Capacity, specifically, the statistically significant elements were Mental Agility and Innovative Thinking. These are fairly novel characteristics in and of themselves, and perhaps imply a level of mental acuity not often considered by college-age students. As such, we believe, based on the camp experience that our students became more aware, each day, of the various elements that consist of being a leader. Moreover, they were able to calibrate themselves against their peers and the leadership counselors and better understood potential areas of improvement in becoming an effective leader.

Further analysis revealed that when various demographic information is controlled for (i.e., major, gender, race) and the large group is sorted into smaller more demographically similar groups, differences in perceived leadership dimensions are greatly reduced from the one-week intensive programming.

According to this information, a 1-week intensive leadership development camp does significantly impact self-reported perceived leadership skills on 14 of the 20 dimensions. Tentatively, this project introduces the thought that heterogeneity in leadership training may be a stark advantage and lead to significant change in leadership dimensions, based on a one-week intensive program. Alternately, homogenous groups may not realize as pronounced differences in leadership dimensions from a similar program. This indicates that group characteristics impact the extent to which changes in leadership dimensions can change. Overall, these findings have
implications in curricular development amongst college students, as leadership and teamwork are two skills sought in entry-level employees. Curriculum should be evaluated to explore the option of adding leadership development courses among a varied student population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership Dimension</th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work Ethic</td>
<td>1.615</td>
<td>.6885</td>
<td>1.462</td>
<td>.5983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>1.594</td>
<td>.6136</td>
<td>1.262</td>
<td>.4617</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical</td>
<td>1.489</td>
<td>.5724</td>
<td>1.313</td>
<td>.4713</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrity</td>
<td>1.615</td>
<td>.6310</td>
<td>1.394</td>
<td>.5454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>1.571</td>
<td>.6066</td>
<td>1.346</td>
<td>.5277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically Fit</td>
<td>1.654</td>
<td>.6228</td>
<td>1.426</td>
<td>.5329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confident</td>
<td>1.885</td>
<td>.6259</td>
<td>1.587</td>
<td>.5884</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resilient</td>
<td>1.642</td>
<td>.5668</td>
<td>1.339</td>
<td>.4941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Agility</td>
<td>1.421</td>
<td>.5385</td>
<td>1.550</td>
<td>.5539</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound Judgment</td>
<td>1.447</td>
<td>.5644</td>
<td>1.505</td>
<td>.5554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovative</td>
<td>1.484</td>
<td>.6118</td>
<td>1.581</td>
<td>.5958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal Tact</td>
<td>1.395</td>
<td>.5519</td>
<td>1.437</td>
<td>.5466</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time Management</td>
<td>1.575</td>
<td>.6539</td>
<td>1.740</td>
<td>.6284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leads Others</td>
<td>1.583</td>
<td>.5735</td>
<td>1.410</td>
<td>.5310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leads by Example</td>
<td>1.545</td>
<td>.5660</td>
<td>1.377</td>
<td>.5051</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicates</td>
<td>1.520</td>
<td>.6016</td>
<td>1.536</td>
<td>.5953</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creates a Positive Environment</td>
<td>1.529</td>
<td>.5555</td>
<td>1.279</td>
<td>.4706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepares Self</td>
<td>1.571</td>
<td>.5804</td>
<td>1.516</td>
<td>.5382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develops Others</td>
<td>1.708</td>
<td>.5978</td>
<td>1.627</td>
<td>.5476</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gets Results</td>
<td>1.545</td>
<td>.5304</td>
<td>1.403</td>
<td>.4978</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Workshop Implications

The purpose of this workshop is to introduce participants to a unique 1-week, residential leadership camp. This experience allows for students to explore their personal leadership style and learn more about what makes a good leader. After participation in this workshop, individuals will gain new insight into innovative practices for leadership development among college students.

In summary, specific outcomes will include introduction to the Camp Brosius model and 360 degree assessment approach, hands-on participant in sample challenge education activities,
identifying personal leadership style, and exploration of ideas on how a similar format could be used in personal work.

References


Appendix A

Overall Self-Evaluation

Name: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

Camp Brosius Pre and Post Leadership Assessment

SUMMARY OF YOUR PERSONAL LEADERSHIP STYLE (Describe your current leadership style).

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

My top three leadership dimensions:

1 2 3

Three leadership dimensions I need to improve:

1 2 3
Please rate your leadership performance on the following leadership dimensions using the Leadership Performance Rubric.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Values:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Ethic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Respect</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethical</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Integrity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presence:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically Fit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confident</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resilient</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intellectual Capacity:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Agility</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sound Judgment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Innovation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Interpersonal Tact</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time Management</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Leads:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Leads Others</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leads by Example</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicates</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Develops:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creates a Positive Environment</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Prepares Self</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develops Other</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Achieves:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gets Results</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OVERALL SELF-ASSESSMENT (circle one)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
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Appendix B

Score Card - Blue card

| Leader’s Name: ___________________ Family: ____________________ |
| LEADERSHIP ASSESSMENT REPORT |
| ☐ Check if Spot Report |
| Name of Activity: ____________________ |

Please rate the leadership performance on the following leadership dimensions using the Leadership Performance Rubric.

**Core Values: Reflection of the leader’s sense of obligation to and attitudes about other people and morals.**

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<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
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<tr>
<td>Work Ethic (WE) – A set of values based on the moral virtues of hard work and diligence</td>
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<td>Respect (RE) – Creating a positive climate and projecting cultural tolerance</td>
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<td>Ethical (ET) – Conducting one’s self according to the difference between right and wrong</td>
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<td>Integrity (IT) – The leader is truthful and upright at all times</td>
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<td>Empathy (EP) – Identification with the thoughts, feelings, or attitudes of another</td>
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**Presence: Impression that a leader makes on others contributing to the success in them.**

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<tr>
<td>Physically Fit (PF) – Having sound health, strength, and endurance</td>
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<td>Confident (CF) – Projecting self-confidence and certainty</td>
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<td>Resilient (RS) – Showing a tendency to recover quickly while maintaining focus</td>
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**Intellectual Capacity: A leader’s ability to draw on the mental tendencies and resources that shape conceptual abilities.**

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<td>Mental Agility (MA) – Flexibility of mind, a tendency to anticipate or adapt</td>
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<td>Sound Judgment (SJ) – The capacity to assess a situation and draw feasible conclusions</td>
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<td>Innovation (IN) – Ability to introduce something creative, different, and new</td>
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<td>Interpersonal Tact (IP) – Effectively interacting with others in a respectful manner</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time Management (TM) – Ability to stay on task and accomplish a goal in a timely manner</td>
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**Leads: Application of character, presence, intellect and abilities while guiding others toward a common goal.**

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<tr>
<td>Leads others (LD) – Influencing team members in a positive manner</td>
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<td>Leads by Example (LE) – Providing an example that others consider and use in what they do</td>
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<td>Communicates (CO) – Conveys a clear understanding of what needs to be done while activity listening</td>
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**Develops: Providing an environment that fosters teamwork and acceptance of responsibility.**

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<td>Creates a positive environment (CP) – Creates a positive cultural and ethical environment</td>
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<td>Prepares Self (PS) – Self-study, self-development to become well-rounded; ensures they are prepared to lead</td>
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<td>Develops Others (DO) – Growing others into competent and confident leaders</td>
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**Achieves: Consistently accomplishing goals by providing direction and sound leadership.**

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<td>Gets Results (GR) – Developing and executing plans while providing direction, guidance and clear priorities</td>
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**OVERALL ASSESSMENT** (circle one)  
Excellent  Satisfactory  Needs Improvement
Leader’s Name: __________________________ Family: __________________________

### Strongest leadership dimensions:

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### Leadership dimensions to focus on improving:

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### SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS:

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### AREAS TO IMPROVE / FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS:

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<th>Leader’s Name:</th>
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INNOVATIVE PRACTICE PAPERS

"Serviceship" for Leadership: Leveraging the Intersection between Service-Learning and Professional Internships to Develop Student and Community Leadership Capacity
Lindsay Hastings, PhD, University of Nebraska - Lincoln
Milan Wall, Heartland Center for Leadership Development

A WiSE Approach: Examining Data from an Extensive Service-learning Project
Amber Manning-Ouellette & Katie Friesen
Iowa State University

The Team Leadership Summit: Culminating the Leadership Experience
Lori L. Moore, Summer F. Odom, PhD, & Barry L. Boyd
Texas A&M University

The Use of Peer Feedback in Leadership Development Programs
Brian Griffith, Vanderbilt University
Sarah Mangia, The Ohio State University

Bridging Theory and Practice in the Leadership Classroom: Intentional Emergence as a Modern Pedagogy
Dr. Linnette Werner, Katherine Kessenich, Jessica Chung, Anna Capeder, David Hellstrom, & Dr. Leonard Taylor
University of Minnesota - Twin Cities

How might MEAs be used in leadership education?
Jenny Daugherty, Purdue University

Shared Leadership: A Primer and Teaching Recommendations for Educators
Angelina Kalinovich & Jennifer Marrone
Seattle University

A Case Study Model for Critical Analysis of Global Leadership
Jera Niewoehner, Dr. Nicole Stedman, & Priscilla Zelaya,
University of Florida

COIL Collaboration
Renee Cooper, Fashion Institute of Technology
Jorge F. Salcedo Mireles, Universidad de Monterrey

Reimagining Discussion Boards in Introductory Leadership Courses
Deborah N. Smith, Kennesaw State University

Real Life Leader in the Mirror: An Online Undergraduate Leadership Course Assignment
Summer F. Odom, PhD, Texas A&M University
Valerie Lynn McKee, Wedgworth Leadership Institute for Agriculture and Natural Resources
Student Perceptions of using Web-based Applications for Engaging with Leadership Learning
Dan Noel, Wright State University

Prospecting for Elusive Communication Skills: The Importance in Undergraduate and Executive Leadership Education
Gregory T. Gifford & Christine H. Shaefer, Federal Executive Institute
Robert L. McKeage, University of Scranton

The Dissertation in Practice: Designing a Meaningful Dissertation for Leadership Students
Gretchen Oltman, JD, PhD, Creighton University

Utilizing the Hardiness Approach in an Undergraduate Leadership Course in Agriculture and Life Sciences
Michele Curts, Dr. Hannah Carter, & Dr. Elio Chiarelli, University of Florida

The Line Leader: A Rare Resource for Early Childhood Educators
Matthew Sowcik, University of Florida
Caroline Jones, Kings College

Mindful Leadership and our Future Leaders: Undergraduate course integration to a University Mindfulness Program
Carolynn Komanski, Jera Niewoehner, Caitlin Bletscher, & Dr. Nicole Stedman, University of Florida

Changing Lives and Building a Better Future
Donnette J. Noble, Roosevelt University
“Serviceship” For Leadership: Leveraging the Intersection between Service-Learning and Professional Internships to Develop Student and Community Leadership Capacity

Lindsay Hastings, PhD
*University of Nebraska - Lincoln*

Milan Wall
*Heartland Center for Leadership Development*

**Abstract**

The United States is predicted to experience the largest transfer of wealth and transfer of leadership opportunities in its history, with a looming question to leadership educators as to how best to prepare young adults for early career roles in socially responsible leadership. Both service-learning and professional internships separately have been identified as vehicles for preparing young adults for leadership roles. The purpose of this Innovative Practice paper is to describe and examine a hybrid of service-learning and professional internships, called “Serviceship,” which employs undergraduate students as interns for a community rather than a company. Now in its fourth year of operation at a Midwestern, four-year land-grant institution, the “Serviceship” program has placed 21 interns in 11 rural communities. Utilizing an asset-based community development framework, undergraduate students are matched with rural communities whose local leaders have self-identified a community development project.

**Introduction**

The United States is poised to experience a predicted $75 trillion transfer of wealth from older generations to younger generations prior to 2060 (Macke, Markley, & Binerer, 2011). Furthermore, the Baby Boomers, one of the largest generations in the United States, are currently between the ages of 50 and 68 and entering the red zone for retirement (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). These individuals currently occupy the vast majority of leadership positions within business and industry as well as the not-for-profit sector, as evidenced by employed individuals aged 45 and over holding approximately 56 percent of all management occupations in the United States (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012). This statistic indicates that over half of all management occupations will be transferred to a younger generation within the next two decades. Therefore, this transfer of wealth issue is not just a wealth issue, but also a leadership issue.

Both service-learning and professional internships have been identified as vehicles for preparing young adults for leadership roles. The Association of American Colleges and Universities identified both service-learning and internship participation as two of 10 high-impact practices for fostering engagement, persistence, and learning among college students (Brownell & Swaner, 2010). Additionally, several recent empirical studies have documented a positive relationship between service participation, internships, and socially responsible leadership (Dugan & Komives, 2010; Kilgo, Sheets, & Pascarella, 2015; Thompson, 2006). The purpose of this Innovative Practice paper is to describe and examine a hybrid of service-learning and professional internships, called “Serviceship.” Now in its fourth year of operation at a
Midwestern, four-year land-grant institution, the “Serviceship” program employs undergraduate students as interns for a community rather than a company. Designed using an asset-based community development approach, students engage in service-learning pedagogy in a professional internship alongside rural community leaders who have a self-identified community development project.

**Review of Relevant Literature**

Considering the sizeable upcoming transfers of wealth and leadership, young adults will likely be tapped for leadership roles early in their career and socially responsible leadership will be expected of them in these early leadership roles. Young adult leaders will need to demonstrate their contribution to, not just consumption of, this $75 trillion wealth transfer. Thus, collegiate leadership education serves as perhaps the most important preparatory training device for socially responsible leadership. Separately, service-learning and professional internships have been identified as vehicles for preparing young adults for leadership roles. Thompson (2006), for example, examined the relationship between internships, volunteer service, and leadership aptitudes and beliefs among (N = 453) upperclassmen students at a private liberal arts institution. MANOVA results revealed a positive association between internships and leadership aptitudes and beliefs as well as between volunteer service and leadership aptitudes and beliefs. Brownell and Swaner (2010), on behalf of the Association of American Colleges and Universities, identified service-learning and internship participation as two of 10 high-impact practices for fostering college student engagement, persistence, and learning. Dugan and Komives (2010) examined the influence of higher education experiences on college students’ capacity for socially responsible leadership. Hierarchical regression analyses on data from (N = 14,252) college seniors nationwide revealed community service involvement as a positive influence on the development of socially responsible leadership. More recently, Kilgo et al.’s (2015) OLS regression analyses revealed a positive and predictive relationship between internship experiences and socially responsible leadership using data from the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education (n = 1,838).

To date, however, little research and practical literature have been dedicated to exploring the hybrid between service-learning and professional internships and its potential for unique positive impact on both students and community partners. In fact, some service-learning literature has been specifically dedicated toward separating service-learning and internships (Bringle & Steinberg, 2010; Furco, 1996), citing students as the primary beneficiary in an internship, while both students and communities should benefit reciprocally in a service-learning scenario (Furco, 1996). What would happen, however, if students were hired as interns for a community rather than a company, and the internship experience utilized service-learning pedagogy, dedicating equal focus to service and reflection? The service-learning literature is increasingly calling for community engagement that involves asset-based community development as opposed to traditional deficit-based service initiatives designed to “fix” a community’s problems (Donaldson & Daughtery, 2011; Hamerlinck, & Plaut, 2014). The goal of asset-based community development is to build the community’s own capacity by leveraging local assets, such as the skills and talents of individual community members (human capital), formal and informal networks among community members (social capital), and institutions like schools, churches, and community centers (built capital) (Flora & Flora, 2004; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993;
McKnight & Block, 2010, 2012). Considering the goal of asset-based community development, utilizing college students purely to provide voluntary service to the community may fall short of the intended outcomes of asset-based community development. By hybridizing with a community-based professional internship, service-learning initiatives can create value-added partnerships with communities by recognizing and leveraging local assets, yet drawing appropriate expertise from university students and faculty.

**Description of Practice**

A serviceship is a hybrid of the traditional professional internship with the pedagogy of service-learning. Utilizing an asset-based community development framework, undergraduate students serve as interns for a community rather than a company and are matched with rural communities whose local leaders have self-identified a community development project.

In its fourth year at a Midwestern, four-year land-grant institution, the Serviceship program has placed 21 interns in 11 rural communities. The Serviceship program is a collaborative effort, bringing together university student affairs and civic engagement staff, university faculty and administrators, as well as a non-profit rural community leadership development organization. Undergraduate students are recruited during the academic semesters by faculty and staff, while communities are recruited year round by the rural community leadership organization.

Based on the pool of selected students and community projects, students are matched in teams of two to communities that seem to fit their knowledge base and interest. Each team and community project is also assigned a faculty mentor whose research and expertise fit the demands of the unique community project. During the month of May, the undergraduate students engage in a two week “crash course” in community development, taught in partnership between the rural community leadership development organization and university faculty and staff. This two-week course includes several field trips to rural communities within a short distance to the university to conduct analyses in community asset identification and applying community leadership to address local challenges and opportunities.

Each student team is then sent to their respective communities for nine weeks to execute the locally identified project alongside community leaders. Throughout the duration of their Serviceship, students prepare biweekly reflections on their experiences and have two to three site visits from faculty mentors, staff from the rural community leadership development organization, and/or university faculty and staff involved in the Serviceship program. Upon return to campus, the undergraduate students present their locally identified project and final reflections to the Serviceship faculty and staff team.

Below are the community objectives:
- Complete locally identified project based on community priorities
- Gain access to talent and expertise (students/faculty)
- Build synergy between communities and university
- Increase community capacity to address local challenges and opportunities

Below are the student objectives:
• Work in a team-based approach to answer a community’s question
• Engage in meaningful work that increases professional capacity
• Build social capital and civic engagement
• Discover opportunities in rural life

Below are the faculty objectives:
• Engage communities and apply expertise to local questions.
• Develop students via community-based professional experience
• Build statewide collaboration for future work
• Deliver on the Land Grant promise

Since the inception of the Serviceship program in 2013, community projects have ranged from developing community marketing plans to facilitating historic preservation efforts to establishing alumni database tracking systems to developing youth entrepreneurship curriculum. The intern stipend has been shared between the community and the university, and the community has been responsible for providing no-cost housing.

**Discussion of Outcomes/Results**

As previously mentioned, since 2013 the Serviceship program has placed 21 interns in 11 rural communities. In four of the 11 communities, student interns created community marketing and branding campaigns—three for the community at-large and one for the local community foundation. In two of the 11 communities, student interns facilitated historic preservation efforts. One intern team conducted historical research on Main Street buildings and created plaques for each building, telling the “story” of the community throughout history. In the second team, student interns took an inventory of historic homes to document their merit and need, then conducted rehabilitation projects of historic homes in need. Two of the remaining 11 communities engaged student interns by working on alumni tracking systems and recruitment strategies to bring back local alumni. In two additional communities, student interns built a countywide secondary entrepreneurship curriculum, bringing together local entrepreneurs and business owners with high school students. In the remaining community, student interns developed a tourism promotion plan and research library for a local museum.

These students not only executed their locally identified project, but also were heavily engaged in community leadership activity and voluntary service. Student interns were asked to attend local civic group meetings (e.g., Rotary, Kiwanis, etc.) as well as local leadership meetings through the Chamber of Commerce or economic development offices. Additionally, students were asked to participate in local volunteering opportunities. Students volunteered their time through county fairs, vacation bible school, and local festivals.

Qualitative program evaluation feedback was collected each year from both students and participating community leaders. Overall evaluative feedback from both community leaders and students indicated satisfaction and perception of value from the Serviceship program.

From community leaders:
“The [Institute’s] Serviceship program was incredibly valuable to [our town]. We received high-capacity interns who championed community betterment and delivered professional products that still impact [our town] two years later.”

“[Our town and county] received exponential benefits by hosting [Institute] interns. Our interns’ unique perspectives, knowledge and insights have taken many of our local alumni recruitment, business promotion and youth engagement programs to new levels – all of which have had lasting impacts for the greater good of our county-wide community.”

From students:

"My experience enhanced my appreciation for integrity, empathy, self-confidence, and social judgment skills.”

“Looking back on this summer as a whole, it was great! Every time I tell someone what I was able to be a part of this summer they are always blown away! I’ve grown so much from this experience and am ecstatic I was able to partake in it.”

“We actually had the opportunity to improve the community.”

Additionally, students indicated in their final oral reflections: 1) Building relationships is the key to progress, 2) learning to communicate, cooperate and address challenges is critical to community success, and 3) rural communities have a future. Several interns indicated that their vision for relocation when starting their career changed from an urban location perspective to a rural perspective as a direct result of their experiences.

**Recommendations**

While overall program evaluation feedback was generally positive, we did receive helpful feedback from students and community participants on process and operational improvements. Below are three general categories of recommendations that are worth sharing for those who wish to replicate the program.

**Community Readiness**

Considering the student interns only had nine weeks to execute their respective community development projects, we learned early that community applications needed to outline a well-defined project (thorough description of proposed activities, collaborative partners identified, articulated plan for integrating students within the community, etc.) in order to demonstrate readiness for intern success. Due to the nebulous nature of most community development efforts, student interns needed to be able to hit the ground running with a well-defined project, so they could easily co-construct a plan of attack alongside local community leaders. In addition to a thorough description of the project, we recognized that community applications needed to demonstrate readiness by supplying multiple letters of support from a variety of community leadership entities (e.g., Chamber of Commerce, economic development offices, local banks,
etc.) to demonstrate wide community support and knowledge of the community development project.

We also learned that community readiness needed to include several communication opportunities prior to intern arrival. Thus, within the two-week “crash course,” student interns and community leaders are now given the opportunity to begin outlining a plan of work, and the student interns are paid mileage to visit their host community prior to the start of their official internship.

Local Media Coverage

Student intern success has been largely incumbent upon their ability to network within the community, and we learned that students were able to connect with local community leaders better if the community members were aware of the interns’ arrival and were aware of their community development project. Thus, we began strongly encouraging community leaders to facilitate local media coverage (print media, radio and television interviews, etc.) of the interns’ work.

Local Housing

To our surprise, student interns indicated during feedback sessions that they preferred in-home stays with local community members as compared to apartment or dormitory housing. Student interns reflected that staying in a home with local community members allowed them to integrate better within the community and facilitated their local networking efforts more smoothly.

Research Recommendations

In addition to practical recommendations, future empirical research will be necessary in order to provide confirmatory evidence as to the value of intersecting service-learning and internships in developing socially responsible leadership. Comparing pre- and post-Socially Responsible Leadership Scale (SRLS) scores for student interns, for example, would provide such an evaluative test. Additionally, leadership scholars may benefit from examining public polling data prior to intern arrival and after project completion to gauge changes in public perception of belief in community leadership, hope in the community’s future, and civic engagement.

Reflections of Practitioner

The “serviceship” idea delivers an interdisciplinary partnership for asset-based community development by coupling progressive community leaders with innovative, entrepreneurial student teams to build workable solutions in concert with university faculty and specialists. The combination of discipline, community engagement, and leadership training/experience creates human capacity and opens the door for active recruitment of new graduates and young professionals into the fabric of rural communities.

Through the Serviceship program, our intention behind hybridizing service-learning with a professional internship has been to show students that no matter what profession they seek—
whether they want to be a doctor, lawyer, business owner, non-profit director— their job is to build community. Considering the upcoming sizeable transfer of wealth and transfer of leadership opportunity, leadership educators may be better equipped to prepare college students for significant leadership roles at a young age by intersecting service-learning and professional internships. While both service-learning and professional internships separately influence the development of socially responsible leadership among college students (Dugan & Komives, 2010; Kilgo et al., 2015; Thompson, 2006), the field of leadership education may benefit from examining the added value of using service-learning pedagogy in employing students as professional interns for communities rather than companies.

References


A WiSE Approach: Examining Data from an Extensive Service-learning Project

Amber Manning-Ouellette, Ph.D & Katie Friesen
Iowa State University

Abstract

This paper presentation focuses on data from a service-learning project in a first-year leadership development course. The course is comprised of student leaders, peer mentors, and women in science and engineering (WiSE) students at a large public university in the Midwest. Session participants will learn the experiences of WiSE students and how they can identify courses to integrate similar programs at their institutions. Through the course, WiSE students found an increased sense of community, connection to the university, and identity as a leader on the campus. These important developments are associated with student retention as underrepresented populations at the university.

Introduction

Many women have been interested in science, technology, math, and science (STEM) majors because of the opportunity to create change in the world (Carlone & Johnson, 2007). However, the number of women enrolling and persisting to graduation in STEM majors is still relatively low (Mann & DiPrete, 2013). To answer the call of women in STEM retention and persistence, we will discuss the creation and success of a first-year service-learning project involving WiSE students and a leadership studies course at a large, land-grant institution in the Midwest. Service-learning is a good fit for women’s desire to create change and collaborative understanding of leadership (Harber, 2012). Also, service-learning is known to contribute to the civic development of students (Harkavy & Hartley, 2010; Stanton, Giles, & Cruz 1999), increase self-efficacy (Reeb, Folger, Langsner, Ryan, & Crouse, 2010), and overall success of students in college (Vogelgesang, Ikeda, Gilmartin, & Keup, 2002), which is beneficial to women in STEM who reported lower levels of leader efficacy (Dugan, Fath, Howes, Lavella, & Polanin, 2013) and lower retention rates (Seymour & Hewitt, 1997).

The paper will address the connection between service-learning and retention, providing insight on the development of campus partnerships across departments and with community entities to create service-learning opportunities for women in STEM majors. The session will include an analysis of quantitative data on service learning, civic learning, and leader identity development. Further, Qualitative data will include self-development and student activism experiences collected from a semester-long leadership course involving service-learning with WiSE students. Session attendees will have the opportunity to identify key programs and courses to create service-learning opportunities for students and identify strategic projects to incorporate at their respective campuses.

Participants in the session will be able to:

- Understand the essential components to developing campus and community partnerships
- Identify key programs and courses on their campus to consider for future service-learning projects
• Understand the important connection between service-learning and retaining underrepresented students in STEM

• Review of Related Scholarship

Enrollment Trends of Women in STEM

The number of women enrolled in higher education has passed that of the number of men (Renn & Reason, 2013). However, enrollment trends from 1977-2011 show the number of women enrolling in STEM majors has increased, but has not surpassed the enrollment of men (Mann & DiPrete, 2013). There has also been low progression of women holding jobs in STEM fields after graduation. The U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration (2011) reported women holding 24% of STEM jobs, compared to 48% of all jobs being held by women. While there continues to be a large focus on diversifying STEM fields, much work remains to increase the persistence and retention of diverse groups of people, including women.

Perceptions of a chilly climate (Hall & Sander, 1983), the competitive nature of STEM majors (Seymour & Hewitt, 1997), as well as the lack of sense of belonging (Johnson, 2012), women faculty representation (Seymour & Hewitt, 1997; Tonso, 1999), and the lack of self-efficacy to perform in math and sciences classes (Erwin & Maurutto, 1998) have contributed to the lack of persistence of women in STEM majors to graduation. However, in response to the low levels of persistence, engineering programs that have actively worked to change the nature of their learning environments saw greater rates of persistence among women by encouraging collaboration over competition, and positive interactions with faculty and peers (Tsui, 2010).

Service-learning serves as a collaborative strategy for women in STEM to engage in, and actively create change during their time in college.

Collaborative and Individual Benefits of Women Engaging with Service-Learning

Historically, an increased number of women are drawn to STEM fields with a purpose to “change the world”; the opportunity for them to engage in a meaningful STEM experience early in their academic career can serve as a strong recruitment and retention tool (Carlone & Johnson, 2007). More specifically, Haber (2012) notes that women’s understanding of leadership is more collaborative in nature. This understanding fits well with the team leadership learning outcome of service-learning projects in leadership courses (Sessa, Matos, & Hopkins, 2009). The area of STEM and service learning is an essential partnership because of the opportunity for students to experience how they can make a difference together through improvement of lives and communities (National Academy of Engineering [NAE], 2008). In other words, the population lends itself to align with the primary purpose of service-learning at the institutional level.

In most recent years, service-learning research is increasing as the number of higher education institutions implementing new programs expands. One benefit of service-learning for students is the development of personal self-efficacy through community service (Reeb et al., 2010); service-learning is significant as women in STEM majors reported lower levels of leader efficacy than women in non-STEM majors (Dugan et al., 2013). Other researchers argue additional gains include social justice, ethics, and civility (Harkavy & Hartley, 2010; Stanton et al., 1999). No
matter what the outcomes, service-learning provides a space for students to implement theory to practice and increase the likelihood of persistence. In particular, Vogelgesang, Ikeda, Gilmartin, and Keup (2002) report that students participating in service-learning projects in their first-year of college, indicate higher levels of success than those that did not, including academic and personal development.

**Intentionality of Service-Learning and Leadership Project**

Service-learning and partnerships between leadership programs and STEM programs provide an outlet to enhance the experiences of women in STEM majors with a particular focus on faculty and peer interactions and the learning environment (Tinto, 1993), as well as the cognitive development of women (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986). At the same time, service-learning and collaborative partnerships became a way to contribute to the experiences of women based on their collaborative view of the leadership process and the need for increased leader efficacy (Haber, 2012; Dugan et al., 2013). With opportunities to impact the learning environment of women and build leadership capacity and efficacy, women can prepare for leadership roles in American industry (Fischer, Overland, & Adams, 2010), and engage in the social change that draws many to a STEM major early in their college careers (Carlone & Johnson, 2007).

**Description of the Practice**

Each day, institutions implement service-learning projects across the United States as vehicles to apply learning and engage young adults in civility, community-based partnerships, and social justice. While important and opportunistic, they require intensive planning, strategy, and coordination to successfully create a powerful experience for students. One key component is the assessment of student learning and self-efficacy after the project. This session will highlight data from a successful service-learning program with WiSE students at a large Midwestern university. The course integrates a service-learning component that engages college students with children and adolescents from low-income backgrounds where the learning gap and access to educational programs is limited. Students in the course, provide after-school academic programming including leadership, literacy, mathematics, and science to low-income children and high school students at a local organization in the Midwest.

The session will offer insights into the WiSE student perspectives on service-learning as STEM majors. More specifically, STEM women, often find greater meaning in service learning projects because of the opportunity to engage in empathetic and support of helping others (Carlone & Johnson, 2007). This connection and engagement with community partners increases self-efficacy and greatly impacts the retention and persistence of first-year STEM students.

First-year service-learning requires dedication and coordination to successfully retain and offer meaningful experiences. Because women in STEM are multidisciplinary, typically, there is not one department that is responsible for their experience. This creates complications when creating academic programming and solidified experiences. Further, effective academic programming requires funding sources to secure adequate resources for the students to have a fruitful experience. The session will not only examine the data behind a successful program, it will also
offer recommendations for building campus partnerships and engaging with faculty to incorporate the program in targeted classes. Several steps are critical in developing a strong program. The structure of development is essential to the field of service-learning, so professionals and faculty can continually improve programming and increase creative partnerships across communities and the global society. Finally, the session will address how service-learning benefits STEM aspirations in K-12 youth and STEM career development in higher education.

Discussion of Outcomes/Results

Through a mixed-methods approach, we examined the service-learning experiences and leadership identity development of 20 WiSE students enrolled in a campus leadership course. Students enrolled in the CLPS 270 Campus Leadership Course in Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 participated in a service-learning project with the Community Housing Initiative, a non-profit organization, focused on low-income children’s and high school student’s academic enrichment programs. Students completed a pre- and post-assessment focused on collecting quantitative responses on service-learning knowledge, civic learning, and leadership identity development. Researchers analyzed results through a comparison test to see the change in their perception and service experiences.

Additional and richer data involved qualitative methods, which included descriptions and autobiographical information from student service monthly logs, final reflection papers, and reflection journals on involvement experiences. Further, student narratives, final reflections, and focus groups provided additional qualitative analysis of their experiences in the service-learning component of the course. A grounded theory approach guided the qualitative analysis as the researchers searched documents for themes and emerging categories of self-development and social justice categories.

Results

Preliminary survey results indicate that women in STEM who participated in the service-learning project had an increase in several areas of their identity as a civic leader. At the beginning of the course, 71% of the women stated that they viewed daily social inequities in our society and at the end of the project, 78% indicated viewing social inequities in daily life. Further, the women increased in their agreement with the statement, “I feel an obligation to better society and the world” from 71% to 78% in pre- and post-assessment. Moreover, the greatest indicator of leadership identity was the increase from 73% to 81% for the statement, “I consider myself to be a leader” in pre- and post-assessment. These increases identify the shift in leadership identity development through the service-learning project.

Preliminary results showed positive experiences in their leadership identity development through a civic-minded attitude and evolving leadership style:

I think when it comes to the group service project, the practice I have exemplified the most would be finding my voice. I was not sure where I fit in and when I should step up and take action. It has been interesting to see how I have found my voice in leading a
group of leaders while still allowing for others to work hard at our project. I would like to improve on morale and inspiring all group members to want to do a great job for these kids.

This student’s process of group work and service-learning experiences is two-fold. She has built confidence in her contributions as a student, leader, and peer as well as affirming her voice as a woman in STEM and a student of service. In addition, she is negotiating her position in a group to lead and challenge others to work on a shared vision and goal. Another student, shared her leadership identity development in this statement:

The work we are doing now is most definitely changing my leadership philosophies. It has given me an opportunity to embrace service leadership and realize that is something that I want to continue to carry with me. Valuing the input of a group is something that I also added to my own philosophies. I used to be very bad at delegating tasks because I didn’t trust the rest of whatever group I was in to do it, but now I don’t think we could get anything done without the whole group contributing.

Service-learning creates space for women to increase lower levels of efficacy (Dugan, 2013), collaborate with other women (Haber, 2012), and create change in their disciplines and communities (Carlone & Johnson, 2007). These narratives indicate an increase in self-efficacy and leadership capacity within the context of a global citizen and team member. The women process their experiences individually and as a team member. The experience provides a context to inform their work as a leader within their discipline and within other groups. All which benefit the development of women and promote their persistence in STEM majors.

**Reflections of the Practitioner**

Overall, the service-learning project continues to be a highlight of the women in STEM’s undergraduate experience, especially in the first-year. After the initial project, students actively worked to continue volunteering at the organization and with the children. Many of the students reported a greater sense of community and identity during the project and long after the class commenced. Students reported that they felt a connection to the local area and the university by serving as a representative of their field in STEM and university. Several women disclosed that the small group interaction and work with other women propelled them for success in the course and in their major courses. Further, one women expressed in a focus group that the course helped her bond with women who also feel isolation in their programs and that the course assisted in her identity development as an African American women on a predominantly white campus. She and other participants reflected on the significance of being with other women because their classes were predominantly made up of men. This course served as a catalyst of discovery and a vehicle for bonding with others that experience the same seclusion in their undergraduate career.

**Recommendations**

As a land-grant institution, this large Midwestern University values research, practice, and serving communities in the rural Midwest. The Program for women in science and engineering
builds platforms based on the philosophy to increase the participation of women in STEM, it is critical for girls and women to connect with other women involved with STEM. This role modeling allows women to ‘visualize’ their ability to pursue and succeed in STEM. Mentoring/role modeling is highly effective when it can be reinforced in many different configurations. This service-learning project serves as a way for participants to make a connection between people and STEM, serving the rural Midwest by directly impacting the lives of K-12 students. Ultimately, this program advances the university by developing additional pathways to careers in STEM. We hope to instill this understanding of benefit to the greater community to others at their respective institutions.

Another outcome of advancement for institutional programs is the continued and increased collaboration between several departments on campus. The service-learning project utilizes the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the College of Engineering, the Center for Women and Politics, the Leadership Studies Program, the Student Activities unit of student affairs, mentoring programs, and community agencies. These partnerships centralize conversations and development for campus students on a very decentralized campus. The students benefit from several perspectives and pedagogies of learning, increased evidence-based practices, and alignment of institutional, college, and student affairs purpose. Further, we recommend that institutions continue to work on building, valuing, and fostering these partnerships to enhance student retention and persistence.

References


Civic Responsibility (Monograph No. 34) (pp. 39-50). Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina, National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition
The Team Leadership Summit: Culminating the Leadership Experience

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Texas A&M University

Abstract

This innovative practice paper describes the Team Leadership Summit assignment used in a senior seminar course at Texas A&M University. Students are required to work in teams to identify a critical issue facing society today requiring leadership and work together to discover potential solutions to the issue. Completed assignments indicate the Team Leadership Summit assignment is providing students with an experiential learning activity that gives them the opportunity to become more familiar with the role of leadership in managing, and even changing, complex organizational, community, and societal issues. The assignment is also effectively demonstrating student progress related to the seven Undergraduate Learning Outcomes identified by Texas A&M University.

Introduction

Learning outcomes are a popular theme in higher education. “Students, employers, accrediting agencies, and those financing higher education increasingly challenge educators to demonstrate learning outcomes worthy of their substantial investments” (Schwering, 2015). Upon completing an undergraduate degree, stakeholders, especially employers are seeking individuals who can actually integrate and apply the knowledge they have gained through their studies (Schwering, 2015). Texas A&M University has identified seven Undergraduate Learning Outcomes “to express the results we expect undergraduates to gain through their educational experiences” (Texas A&M University, 2015):

- Master the depth of knowledge required for a degree;
- Demonstrate critical thinking;
- Communicate effectively;
- Practice personal and social responsibility;
- Demonstrate social, cultural, and global competence;
- Prepare to engage in lifelong learning; and
- Work collaboratively. (p. 1)

As noted in the National Leadership Research Agenda 2013-2018 (Andenoro et al., 2013), Leadership Education “is the pedagogical practice of facilitating leadership learning in an effort to build human capacity and is informed by leadership theory and research” and “is concerned with a focus on teaching and learning” (p. 4). This leaves leadership educators with the responsibility of designing undergraduate leadership degree programs that incorporate appropriate content delivered via effective methods to help students meet established learning outcomes. This paper focuses on one instructional method, problem-based learning (PBL), that can be effective at documenting student progress toward established learning outcomes.

Review of Related Scholarship
Research has documented the need for a capstone course in undergraduate agricultural leadership degree programs (Morgan, King, Rudd, & Kaufman, 2013). The pedagogy used in capstone courses in undergraduate leadership degree programs likely varies. Regardless of the instructional method(s) used, these courses should provide students with the opportunity to integrate their knowledge across the various facets of the leadership discipline. Project-based learning is a type of PBL that emphasizes real-life problems in which students learn by completing a project. As Desai, Tippins, and Arbaugh (2014) noted, PBL allows students to use “discovery and analysis to solve ill-structured real-world problems” (p. 259) as opposed to working on and through information provided by the instructor. Schwering (2015) identified six general or “meta” education goals common to project-based capstone courses, regardless of discipline:

Goal 1: Focus learning on problems or opportunities in real world contexts
Goal 2: Challenge students to select and apply relevant theory/knowledge
Goal 3: Integrate knowledge and multiple theoretical perspectives
Goal 4: Promote individual personal growth
Goal 5: Develop leadership and team process skills
Goal 6: Create an experience that serves as a rite of passage. (p. 93)

While the need for and the goal of capstone courses might be well documented in the literature, what to include in and how to teach such a course is often left up to the individual leadership educator teaching the course. While traditional instructional methods and pedagogical models have the potential to be effective (Schwering, 2015), these methods tend to be more teacher-centered as opposed to learner-centered, thus focusing more on “teacher delivery rather than on student learning” (Shepherd & Cosgriff, 1998, p. 349). Not all students are the same, and best practices of teaching have led many leadership educators to believe that actively engaging students in the learning process is critical. Utilizing teaching pedagogies that require active engagement by students has been shown to decrease the gap between academically inclined students and those who may not be academically inclined but rather are in college simply to obtain a good job following graduation (Biggs & Tang, 2011). Because PBL involves real-world problems, leadership educators can implement PBL in their capstone courses to encourage active engagement from all types of students.

Priority One: Teaching, Learning, and Curricular Development of the National Leadership Research Agenda 2013-2018 (Andenoro et al., 2013) called for the development of transdisciplinary perspectives and curriculum development frameworks that enhance transfer of learning. Clearly the “meta” goals of capstone courses (Schwering, 2015) require students to synthesize, integrate, and apply what they have learned in previous courses. Unfortunately, some educators encounter “students in senior-level courses that are open to receiving new knowledge without bringing sufficient know-how from prerequisite courses to the learning environment” (Raska, Keller, & Shaw, 2014). Leadership educators at [University] have adopted the concept of summit meetings as the context for a PBL assignment to help students review and utilize previously learned leadership concepts and theories and apply this previous learning to a real-world problem, thus demonstrating progress toward multiple Undergraduate Student Learning
Outcomes ([University], 2015) such as “mastering the depth of knowledge required for a degree” and “demonstrating critical thinking” (p. 1).

Summit meetings are often associated with a meeting or series of meetings between the leaders or the Heads of State of two or more governments. However, the concept can be extended to describe gatherings of people, such as high-level executives or leaders that are deeply interested and/or concerned with the same subject or issue. Baker and Rhea (2009) described a summit as “a strategic conversation that brings different perspectives within a system together to talk about the big picture and big questions” (Baker & Rhea, 2009, Not Just Any Meeting section, para. 1). Summits often lead to the creation of common ground and action plans that incorporate new ideas and approaches.

Booz Allen Hamilton (n.d.) noted, “summits often serve as a mechanism to facilitate a deeper understanding of a problem and to generate a plan of action through strategic conversations with high-level leaders from organizations across the country” (p. 2).

Summit meetings provide a context for promoting leadership development and team process skills. Booz Allen Hamilton (n.d.) identified six key attributes for successfully planning and executing summit meetings:

- Identify a challenge;
- Create a focused agenda;
- Provide an intimate setting;
- Determine concrete outcomes;
- Produce sustained improvement; and
- Evaluate program outcomes.

**Description of the Practice**

The senior seminar course at Texas A&M University is a capstone course intended to help students review, integrate and apply what they learned through previous coursework. Utilizing the conceptualization of summits as strategic conversations that can guide participants to a deeper understanding of a subject matter, leadership educators at Texas A&M University created and implemented the **Team Leadership Summit** assignment within the senior seminar course (See Appendix A).

The **Team Leadership Summit** assignment requires students to focus simultaneously on process and product. Students are divided into teams of approximately five to eight students, depending upon the total enrollment. Drawing upon each team member’s unique perspective, knowledge, skills, and abilities, they are asked to identify and address what they consider to be a critical issue requiring leadership as a solution. More specifically they are asked to: foster collaborative initiatives, inspire action to address a complex problem, focus on problem-solving outcomes for their issues; generate solutions to key issues, and identify concrete action plans. Teams are provided time each week to focus on their summit and submit accountability reports throughout the semester (See Appendix B).
At the end of the semester teams submit a written final report and orally present their findings to the class. The final report consists of a one-page executive summary and an after action report of their summit. The executive summary introduces their issue, the facts surrounding the issue, decisions the team made based on the facts, and recommendations the team has for moving forward and is distributed to each member of the class. The after action report includes the following sections:

- Summit Overview: a summary of the problem or issue;
- Introduction and Background: facts about the summit topic that can be supported with facts and/or statistics to illustrate both the need for and the history of the issue being addressed;
- Solutions: solutions to key issues identified;
- Action plans: including strategies and resources; and
- Food for Thought: a description of the overall summit process and lessons learned.

The seven Undergraduate Learning Outcomes (Texas A&M University, 2015) serve as the foundation for how Team Leadership Summit assignments are graded. Team accountability reports, the final report, and the team oral presentation are artifacts used to evaluate performance in each of the seven outcomes included on the assignment rubric (See Appendix C). Criteria for each of the seven outcomes were adapted from multiple VALUE (Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education) rubrics developed as part of the Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) initiative. The VALUE Rubric Development Project page (n.d.) of the AAC&U website notes that “the VALUE rubrics contribute to the national dialogue on assessment of college student learning” (para. 2).

**Discussion of Outcomes/Results**

The Team Leadership Summit assignment was implemented in the fall 2014 semester. The assignment has since been used each semester in both face-to-face and online sections of the course. Course instructors have observed team integrating and applying concepts from previous leadership coursework within the major as well as generating innovative solutions to their selected issue. Table 1 summarizes these concepts and the related leadership course name from selected Team Leadership Summits conducted in previous semesters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summit Issue</th>
<th>Leadership Concepts/Theories</th>
<th>Related Coursework</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concealed Carry on Campus</td>
<td>• Power Bases</td>
<td>• Survey of Leadership Theory</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bullying</td>
<td>• Relational Leadership Model</td>
<td>• Introduction to Leadership</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Kidder’s 9 Checkpoints for Ethical Issues</td>
<td>• Ethics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illegal Immigration</td>
<td>• Ethical Dilemmas</td>
<td>• Introduction to Leadership</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Stages of Moral Development</td>
<td>• Ethics</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1**

Issues, Leadership Concepts/Theories, and Related Courses Referenced in Selected Team Leadership Summit Assignments
Food Deserts
- Relational Leadership Model
- Change Models
- Introduction to Leadership
- Leading Change

**Reflections of the Practitioners**

While the *Team Leadership Summit* assignment has not yet been studied empirically, anecdotal evidence suggests it is effectively accomplishing each of the six “meta” educational goals of project-based capstone courses outlined by Schwering (2015). Course instructors believe the *Team Leadership Summit* assignment has provided students with an experiential learning activity embedded within the larger capstone experience, and simultaneously gives them an opportunity to become more familiar with the role of leadership in managing, and even changing, complex organizational, community, and societal issues. Course instructors have been encouraged by the ability of teams to apply various leadership concepts and theories to the ill-defined problems they selected for their summit assignment (Goals 1, 2, and 3). They have also noted, however, that some students, especially those in the on-line sections of course, are initially uncomfortable with the seemingly unstructured nature of some aspects of the assignment. Teams often experience moderate to significant frustration, especially when selecting their issue, but eventually tend to see the lack of structure as an advantage because it allows them to apply their own expertise (Goal 4). Because the assignment is completed in teams and each team is asked to focus on both process and product, teams often include a discussion of how the team worked in the Food for Thought section of their final report and within their oral presentation (Goal 5). Finally, course instructors have noticed that this assignment often helps students begin to see themselves as near-graduates who know more than they thought they knew at the beginning of the assignment (Goal 6).

Because teams are provided class time each week to work on their summits, course instructors have noticed team members holding each other accountable for class attendance and participation in ways not seen in previous courses within the major. This is further documented on the team accountability reports and is directly related to the “practice personal and social responsibility” Undergraduate Learning Outcome (Texas A&M University, 2015).

As Schwering (2015) noted, accrediting agencies are interested in whether or not programs are effectively meeting student learning outcomes. Because the *Team Leadership Summit* assignment utilizes the seven Undergraduate Learning Outcomes of Texas A&M University ([University, 2015] as the basis for evaluation, this assignment is currently used in the departmental assessment plans that are required for accreditation.

**Recommendations**

It is recommended that the *Team Leadership Summit* assignment be empirically studied. For example, a more detailed analysis of the decision-making strategies used in selecting the issue should be conducted as this process likely influences the overall commitment of individual team members to the summit.

This assignment is designed to actively engage all students. In addition to analyzing the decision-making strategies of teams, additional empirical research on the level of engagement of
individual team members should be conducted. Findings of such studies could provide insight into whether the assignment is successfully decreasing the gap between academically inclined and non-academically inclined students as Biggs and Tang (2011) suggest is the case with teaching strategies that actively engage all students.

It is also recommended that the students be reminded of the Undergraduate Learning Outcomes (Texas A&M University, 2015) in each course within the degree program to facilitate growth in each of the learning outcomes. In addition to being beneficial as a reminder for instructors, emphasizing the learning outcomes within each course offers the potential to help students communicate with future employers what they really learned within their degree program.

**References**


Appendices
Appendix A: The Team Leadership Summit Assignment

[Course Number]:
Seminar Team Leadership Summit

Situation:
Summits provide a unique opportunity to bring together the expertise of each team member to address a particular critical issue. More specifically, the team leadership summit can draw upon each member’s unique perspective, knowledge, skills, and abilities to: foster collaborative initiatives, inspire action to address a complex problem, focus on problem-solving outcomes for your issue, generate solutions to key issues, identify concrete action plans, and focus simultaneously on results/outcomes and the process.

Assignment:
For this assignment, you and your team members will identify a critical issue facing society today requiring leadership and work to identify potential solutions to the issue. You will work together to develop a written final report and oral presentation. To better inform your instructor of your individual contributions to the final report and presentation, you will submit accountability reports several times during the semester. Both the final report and your oral presentation should be guided by the Texas A&M University Student Learning Outcomes for Undergraduates:

- Master the depth of knowledge required for a degree
- Demonstrate critical thinking
- Communicate effectively
- Practice personal and social responsibility
- Demonstrate social, cultural, and global competence
- Prepare to engage in lifelong learning
- Work collaboratively

Your team’s final report should include, at a minimum, the following components:

- A one-page executive summary to be distributed to every member of the class that introduces your issue, the facts surrounding your issue, decisions your team made based on the facts, and recommendations for moving forward
- An after action report of your summit including the following:
  - A summit overview
  - Introduction and background
  - Solutions
  - Action Plans
  - Food for Thought

Your team’s oral presentation should focus simultaneously on the results/outcomes and the process. At a minimum, your presentation should include the following:

- Summarize your summit
- Discuss the summit process
Appendix B: Team Accountability Report

[Course Number]: Seminar
Team Leadership Summit Status Report

Date:

Project Team Members: Summit Topic/Theme:
Brief Description of the Summit:

Questions you still have:
**Team Member Tracker:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Area(s) of Expertise</th>
<th>Description of Tasks to be Completed</th>
<th>Task Due Date</th>
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## Appendix C: The Team Leadership Summit Evaluation Rubric

Team Members: ___________________________________________________________  Section #: ____________

**[Course Number]:**
**Seminar Team Leadership Summit**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Exemplary (3)</th>
<th>Acceptable (2)</th>
<th>Developing (1)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Master the depth of knowledge required for a degree</td>
<td>• Adapts and integrates concepts/competencies learned from throughout the curriculum</td>
<td>• Applies concepts/competencies learned from throughout the curriculum</td>
<td>• Identify concepts/competencies learned from throughout the curriculum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate critical thinking</td>
<td>• Compare/contrast own and others’ assumptions and evaluates the relevance of context to take into account</td>
<td>• Summarizes own and others’ assumptions and outlines the relevance of context to take into account</td>
<td>• Identify own assumptions; identifies the relevance of context to take into account account complexities of</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communicate effectively</td>
<td>• Evaluates appropriate format and language to professionally communicate and enhance meaning</td>
<td>• Proposes appropriate format and language to professionally communicate and enhance meaning</td>
<td>• Defines format and language to communicate meaning</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice personal and social responsibility</td>
<td>• Demonstrates personal accountability; completes all assigned tasks</td>
<td>• Demonstrates personal accountability; completes most assigned tasks</td>
<td>• Demonstrates personal accountability; completes some assigned tasks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate social, cultural, and global competence</td>
<td>• Interpret intercultural experience from own and more than one worldview</td>
<td>• Illustrates intercultural experience from own and other worldview(s)</td>
<td>• Recognizes intercultural experience from the perspective of own</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare to engage in lifelong learning</td>
<td>• Creates meaning from independently pursued experiences</td>
<td>• Demonstrates the pursuit of experiences</td>
<td>• Knowledge is pursued independently</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work collaboratively</td>
<td>• Engages team members in ways that facilitate contributions to meetings</td>
<td>• Fosters a supportive team climate</td>
<td>• Learns to help the team move forward by articulating the merits of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Adapted from the AAC&U Value Rubrics for [Course Number].*
The Use of Peer Feedback in Leadership Development Programs

Brian Griffith  
_Vanderbilt University_

Sarah Mangia  
_The Ohio State University_

Abstract

Leadership development programs often include an experiential component that allows students to work in teams and experience the inherent challenges of collaboration. A major part of the potential learning is the feedback they receive from each other. Yet, it can be difficult to facilitate open, honest dialog that leads to interpersonal growth. This session presents an online multi-rater instrument that provides feedback on 16 core competencies which can then be used to create personal development plans that guide student learning.

Goals of the Presentation

Participants in this session will:
1. Understand the relationship between leadership development and feedback practices
2. Appreciate the utility of multi-rater instruments to deliver feedback
3. Understand how feedback instruments can be used for leadership development
4. Discuss how to utilize feedback for leadership development on their campus

Program Format

1. Presenter introductions and topical overview (5 min)
2. Room introductions (5 min)
3. Brief activity on feedback (5 min)
4. Review relationship between leadership development and feedback practices (5 min)
5. Describe the G360 Emerging Leader Survey, an example of multi-rater instrument (15 min)
6. Share how the G360 is used by an Ohio State University leadership development program to foster personal and leadership development in undergraduate students (10 min)
7. Revisit activity on feedback (5 min)
8. Invite Q & A on use of G360 (10 min)

Conceptual Framework

It is arguable that leadership and leadership development are some of the most widespread organizational strategies of the current decade. Due to an increased interest in leadership as a competitive advantage, many organizations are investing significant temporal and financial resources in leadership development (Day, 2001). Theoretically speaking, it stands to reason that the sooner an individual could begin developmental experiences leading to improved leadership
abilities, the more that person will be able to offer an organization. Perhaps in reference to this idea, many institutions of higher education have increased spending and emphasis on leadership development programs (Smart, Ethington, Riggs, & Thompson, 2002). Many of these programs have been shown to increase the leadership skills of students. A variety of methods are used in leadership development interventions, including executive coaching, mentoring, and multi-source feedback tools (Day, 2001). This study will focus on 360 degree feedback instruments, specifically related to their use in the leadership development of college students.

Multi-source feedback refers to a method of performance review in which feedback comes from more than one individual, and such tools could be instrumental in personal and professional development. These tools often include ratings from some combination of self, peers, subordinates, and supervisors. 360 degree feedback refers to a specific kind of multi-source feedback that includes ratings from all four aforementioned categories of raters. From a theoretical perspective, multi-source feedback models are useful because they could potentially reveal information that is not available to supervisors (Atwater, Waldman, & Brett, 2002). Additionally, providing feedback from multiple sources makes negative assessments more difficult to deny or discount than if only a single rater provided the feedback. As a result, individuals receiving feedback from a multi-source tool may be more motivated to adjust their behaviors to lead to better ratings. These theoretical points seem to ring true to many industry professionals; nearly all Fortune 500 companies use some method of multi-source feedback (Conway, Lombardo, & Sanders, 2001)

360 degree feedback tools have been shown to provide information that is unavailable in traditional feedback models and offer meaningful developmental experiences when administered properly. In a comprehensive meta-analysis, Conway, Lombardo, & Sanders (2001) established the incremental validity of non-traditional feedback sources; additions of peer and subordinate ratings were shown to improve the predictive ability of feedback on objective business outcomes. Additionally, a great deal of research has been conducted that defines the most effective means by which to use 360 degree feedback tools for personal development. One study suggests that feedback is most likely to result in positive change when recipients have a positive feedback orientation, change is believed to be achievable, and subjects take actions toward specific, appropriate developmental goals (Smither, London, & Reilly, 2005). These strategies can be assisted by preparing participants for the feedback and development process, managing participant perceptions of the process, and integrating the process into the organizational system (Atwater, Waldman, & Brett, 2002).

Despite an increased interest in leadership development in higher education, there remain few instruments designed for use with college students. One instrument that has emerged to fill this need is the G360 Emerging Leader Survey. The G360 is a competency based survey designed for use in leadership development programs. It consists of four primary clusters of competencies: Personal Character, Interpersonal Skills, Problem-Solving Skills, and Leadership Skills. Each of these four primary skill sets contains four specific competencies, shown in the figure below. Research in the fields of organizational behavior, emotional intelligence, developmental psychology, and cognitive development has identified important attitudes, habits, and skills related to personal and professional success. In general, highly successful people tend to have strong personal character along with effective interpersonal skills, problem solving skills and
leadership skills. These are the four main concepts or pillars of success that are measured by the G360 family of surveys. The G360 Emerging Leader Survey measures the 16 most important competencies needed for success within a wide range of disciplines and professions. Scores for each of the main pillars is calculated from four subscales as seen below.

The G360 Emerging Leader Survey has been used at Ohio State since 2012 with cohorts of students in a leadership development program. The Office of Student Life’s Buckeye Leadership Fellows Program operates a co-curricular leadership development program for undergraduate students in their mid-sophomore year to mid-senior year. Within each semester of the program, Fellows engage in team-based leadership challenges, or consultation projects, to create solutions to an ill-structured problem presently facing a non-profit or corporate partner. Throughout the course of these leadership challenges, students build familiarity with members of their cohort, work in team capacities, and receive guidance from alumni mentors, community resources, and the partnering organization. At the conclusion of the leadership challenge, students use the G360 Emerging Leader Survey to assess their personal performance and that of their teammates over the course of the leadership challenge. Before receiving their personal reports, students engage in a conversation on the value of feedback, assess their personal experiences related to giving and receiving feedback, and learn key behaviors for using feedback effectively. Students sit with their teams as they receive their personal reports and engage in extensive face-to-face feedback and processing. Following the conversations, the Program Coordinator has one-on-one coaching sessions with each student around their feedback and goals for future work.

As a personal and leadership development tool, the G360 Emerging Leader Survey gives students a framework and language for their continued growth. The growth-oriented conversations students have with one another as a result of using this instrument are invaluable, as few students have the opportunity to help one another learn more about themselves through specific and constructive feedback. By using the G360 Emerging Leader Survey or other multi-source feedback instruments, practitioners can create an environment where students take
ownership of their actions and author goals for their continued personal and leadership development.
Bridging Theory and Practice in the Leadership Classroom: Intentional Emergence as a Modern Pedagogy

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Abstract

With leadership education expanding at an unprecedented rate, there is an acute need for an evidence-based leadership pedagogy that can bridge the gap between leadership theory and student practice both in the classroom and beyond its boundaries. This session will give an overview of the Intentional Emergence Model as a way to teach leadership to emerging adults that specifically addresses this gap between theory and practice. It will discuss the model, research and evaluation data associated with the model, training requirements for instructors and teaching assistants, and the implications for leadership education as a result of the research on and application of the model.

Introduction

While many professional fields have teaching tools and experiences that explicitly bridge theory to practice, the field of leadership education continues to search for a way to best ground theory in practice for its students. This session presents the theoretical and practical roots of a new model, Intentional Emergence, as an evidence-based pedagogy for teaching leadership in a contemporary world. By the end of this session, participants will understand how the Intentional Emergence Model addresses the gap between theory and practice, research and evaluation data associated with the model, training requirements for instructors and teaching assistants, and the implications for leadership education.

Review of Related Scholarship

While contemporary models of leadership argue that leadership can be taught and learned, many are unable to address the gap between theory and practice in the classroom. Some appropriate models for teaching leadership to undergraduates have been explored and explicated (Komives, Longerbeam, Owen, Mainella, & Osteen, 2006). However, these models primarily identify the ways students develop in their understanding of leadership. Alternatively, particular models identify specific elements of an unidentified general pedagogy, rather than putting forth a comprehensive model. Elsewhere, models and methods for learning about leadership provide useful frameworks, but rarely specific practices for teachers that bridge the gap between learning about theory and integrating theory into practice (Astin & Astin, 1996; Komives, et al., 2011).

Sharon Daloz Parks’ seminal text Leadership Can Be Taught: A Bold Approach for a Complex World (2005) documented an approach used at Harvard Graduate School with mid-career executives called Case-in-Point (CIP) teaching that explicitly acknowledges the need to address the gap between theory and practice. However, while CIP recognizes a need to create curriculum that engages students in developing skills and strategies for practicing leadership in a complex
world, the strategies used within CIP are difficult at best to translate from its specific Harvard
graduate context to more universal contexts, which require addressing several major differences
in student characteristics and experience including: 1) a lack of extensive and shared lived
experiences of leadership, 2) students’ consumer mindset toward education, 3) often the
inattention of large and/or research universities to student development, and 4) the differing
places students fall along developmental trajectories.

Description of Practice (Overview of Lesson/Project Plan)

The Intentional Emergence (IE) Model for Leadership Education relies on three components
(intention, emerging moments, and the alignment of these two) to define the most optimal
bridging moments to engage within the classroom.

Intention

The first component of the model, intention, may seem deceptively simple because many
instructors rely heavily on planning for the class. Such intentional construction of a unit, lesson
plan, or assignment is critical to the academic rigor and success of a leadership course, but it is
not uncommon that intention falls along the lines of interesting activities or simulations without a
deeper scaffolding process from one moment, class, and course, to the next. For example,
without intentional scaffolding from one core concept or skillset to the next, students may lose
the larger educational goal amidst a sea of disconnected activities. It is the planning (intention)
that allows an instructor to answer the most critical question, “To what end?” To what end are
we using this simulation? To what end are students conducting interviews of local leaders? To
what end will this activity lead us today? Tomorrow? At the end of the experience?

As Figure 1 demonstrates, sources for intention are available to the leadership educator through
many planning venues and tools, which create the foundation for intention in the classroom.

![Figure 1. Examples of planning sources which create the intentional foundation](image)

Emergence

It is often clear to see how necessary well-scaffolded lesson plans are to moving students along
the continuum of development in their understanding and leadership skill-building. However,
highly controlled and well-planned out lessons are not enough to transform theory into lived
practice. The ability to connect content to moments of consequence is where transformation is
possible. Emergent moments in the classroom hold the key to this bridge from theory to practice. Jeffrey Goldstein (1999), in the inaugural issue of the Journal entitled *Emergence: Complexity and Organization*, states “Emergence...refers to the arising of novel and coherent structures, patterns, and properties during the process of self-organization in complex systems. Emergent phenomena are conceptualized as occurring on the macro level, in contrast to the micro-level components and processes out of which they arise,” (Goldstein, 1999, p.49).

There are three important aspects of this definition to consider in the context of teaching: arising patterns, self-organizing, and macro vs micro levels. The first aspect of this definition to consider is the “arising of novel and coherent structures, patterns, and properties,” which is the heart of the work. In traditional CIP teaching, people call this working with “the here and now.” When instructors create the holding space and set an intention, they actively create space for the work that needs to be addressed by the group. It is the intentional orchestration of these novel and coherent structures that bridges the gap between theory and practice so profoundly.

Second, is the idea that “[e]mergent phenomena are conceptualized as occurring on the macro level, in contrast to the micro-level components and processes out of which they arise,” (Goldstein, 1999, p.49). In leadership terms, this would be the idea of the big picture versus the details (or the balcony and the dance floor in terms of Heifetz’s (1998) Adaptive Leadership model). Instructors must be able to engage at the micro level (the dance floor) as an authentic member of the community, but our primary responsibility is to be vigilantly aware of the patterns that are emerging at the macro level (the balcony overlooking the dance floor) in order to call these out to the class.

Finally, although Goldstein posits that it is the act of self-organization in complex systems that creates emergence, within teaching, self-organizing is also a result of using what emerges. What follows after the arising and overt identification of patterns, is a process of spontaneous self-organizing around a new level of understanding--it is the bridging of theory to practice.

This spontaneous self-organizing process also surfaces a key element of the IE model and how it differs from classic CIP teaching. While the foundations of both theories are similar and vital to learning (noticing and engaging what is happening in the moment), IE focuses more on what the system *does* with the here and now through organizing, bridging and leading to the *next* moment where effective and compassionate action can be taken.

![Diagram](image.png)

*Figure 2. Examples of sources for emergent moments*
Arising Teachable Moments

Instructors who are new to emergent pedagogy can sometimes err too far on the emergence side of the model, which leaves students confused as to the larger point of their learning and experiences. However, it is the confluence of intention and emergence that creates the ideal teachable moments in the leadership classroom—those moments where theory and practice are most likely to support long-term changes in default leadership behaviors.

![Image of Intention and Emergence]

Figure 3. When intention and emergence meet, ideal teachable moments arise.

However, not all emerging teachable moments can or should be engaged in the moment they arise. In an average 90 minute course period, there may be a plethora of emergent moments that overlap with the deeper intention for the course and the class period, however, only a few of these moments will be engaged during that time (please see handout #1 for diagram).

Engaging with these emergent and relevant moments creates a vibrant learning environment, where students are connecting what is happening with larger leadership concepts. At its best, IE helps students make rich connections between theory and practice through various inductive and deductive reasoning activities, adding connections between concepts and students’ current mental schema of ideas. Deepening these connections and building them even further allows the learning to “come alive” and be taken from inside the classroom to outside of it. That is the ultimate leadership educator’s goal: to take the learning into the world.

Discussion of Outcomes/Results

Proof of the effectiveness of the IE model comes from an ongoing program evaluation and research initiative. The IE model has nearly a decade of evaluation behind it, through which we have established a culture of curiosity, exploration and ongoing improvement. Through complex survey techniques that embed demographic data into student responses, we are able to identify, better understand and adapt to students’ unique needs as well as recognize the nuances across course sections and instructors. We found instructors employing the IE model consistently receive 30% higher student satisfaction ratings over their counterparts. After standardizing the IE model across sections, the gap dissipated, increasing the average course recommendation rate by 10% and the overall course experience by 23%. With 40% of students enrolling in our courses through peer recommendation, the rapid enrollment growth of 15% each year also demonstrates increase in student experience.
Moving beyond student self-report, we adopted a research agenda to better assess the impact of the IE Model on its students. The initial research findings on the IE model also indicate that the model is highly effective in retaining students, persistence toward graduation, and campus engagement when compared to matched samples of peers. For example, students who took even one course using this model of teaching, were six times more likely to be retained their first and second years of college than students who were not exposed to this model (n=528, eβ = 6.692, B = 1.901, p < .001). A comprehensive analysis of SERU data corroborated these findings. Students who participated in one course using the IE had significantly greater academic engagement (β = .211, p < .001), more engagement in advanced scholarship (β = .129, p < .05), and greater development of an understanding of diversity over their peers (β = .200, p < .05).

Reflections of the Practitioner

The success of this way of teaching and learning hinges on the quality and ownership of the instructor base. The foundations of IE requires that instructors hold several core practices and assumptions, most of which are opposed to those of the classical education model. As such, instructors must do a lot of unlearning of core assumptions, for example: the expectations we have of the role of a formal authority in facilitating and decision-making, stepping outside of competency and giving control to the students and the moments that emerge, using the class as a metaphor for real moments in the world, and allowing for students to be teachers as well.

As part of this unlearning, a cohort of new instructors proceed through a rigorous nine-month on-boarding process (see handout #2 for diagram). For one semester, instructors observe at least 10 class sessions while engaging in monthly trainings that discuss core assumptions like the foundations of students learning, the assumptions we bring about power and authority into the classroom, weaning off our need for complete control and appearance of competency. After a successful teaching demonstration, instructors are placed with a mentor instructor to co-teach for a semester. This immersive training experience allows for new instructors to practice these core tenets and assumptions every day, and how to merge the intention of the curriculum with the daily execution. Here, instructors learn how to make questions about assignment deadlines or attendance policies into leadership lessons and give the work back to the students.

Even when instructors move into teaching independently, they are invited to continued training sessions with the program. These trainings focus on developing “Instructor Artistry,” continuing to develop instructor knowledge about topics like cognitive learning theory, creating strategies to connect concepts and current events, and exploring the impact of instructor identity on authority and power in the classroom. These training opportunities are not only great professional development experiences, but they also aid in creating a robust instructor community. As leadership is a practice, teaching is also a practice, and these trainings offer new ways instructors can keep practicing (see handout #3 for an example of concepts covered).

In addition to these artistry trainings, the program holds an annual training for all instructors to further cultivate a culture of community, create more consistency by conveying curriculum changes, program updates, and hold specific training sessions on topics like responding to student writing, student mental health, pedagogical training, and more.
In the IE approach, the teaching team often times includes at least one teaching assistant. Teaching assistants are upper-level students who have previously taken the course, and are ready to explore the dimensions of authority, positional power, and facilitation in a classroom setting. As teaching assistants are students currently enrolled in the program, they are familiar with IE, meaning they have already endured the “unlearning” process associated with this model. Even so, teaching assistants benefit greatly from training and planning. The teaching assistant program utilizes a three-pronged training approach, combining the following: program-provided trainings, instructor-provided trainings, and knowledge learned from previous academic and non-academic experiences (please see handout #4 for diagram).

Once a teaching assistant has been placed in the program, training begins. Prior to their appointment, teaching assistants create an individualized Learning Plan, identifying which skills they hope to develop as a result of the experience. In addition, teaching assistants attend an orientation training. Here, teaching assistants are provided basic technical information to reduce the high level of ambiguity, and are encouraged to discuss their concerns, excitement, and questions surrounding the teaching assistant experience.

In contrast to instructors, the majority of teaching assistant training happens on-the-job. For many teaching assistants, this is their first opportunity to be on the “other side” of the classroom. While spending the majority of their time at the macro/balcony level, opportunities for teaching assistant development emerge throughout the semester. As a result, rich conversation topics emerge and the instructor and teaching assistant have the opportunity to identify and develop additional skills as the semester progresses.

Lastly, teaching assistants are encouraged to bring their previous experience into the classroom. As teaching assistants are students in the program, they are familiar with the IE model and teachings of the class. This means teaching assistants are able to challenge and support students as students explore the course content. Additionally, teaching assistants are encouraged to incorporate learnings they’ve received from other areas of their lives, as this enriches the classroom environment and deepens students’ connections.

**Recommendations**

As leadership education continues to grow in higher education, the next phase is to explore how to effectively scale these courses in a way that maintains the integrity and intention of the curriculum and allows for instructors’ authenticity and unique gifts. Supporting this teaching method on a large scale may include various support materials in synchronous and asynchronous ways, introduction videos, learning management systems, and on-going instructor check-ins. In future research and investigation, it will be beneficial to continue emphasizing the importance of creating curriculum and teaching practices that focus on student readiness and development. It is not enough to meet the need for offering “sexy” leadership courses in traditional formats of lecture and case studies, but rather to balance the skills of challenge and support in IE.

Beyond the scope of this single University, an area to explore would be partnering with other institutions and programs with similar aims and principles to expand this foundation-shifting leadership education work. As the world, specifically the United States, is increasingly divisive
and ambiguous, it is also imperative that this framework of leadership with compassion, community, cultural inquiry, and adaptability at its center becomes more prevalent.

References


Handout #1: Intentional Emergence Model of Teaching and Learning

AUTHENTICITY

CHALLENGE

COMMUNITY

COMPASSION

Support

EMERGENCE
Here & Now
Current events
Emotions
Climate/Culture
Behaviors
Group Questions

INTELLIGENCE
Core Concepts
Outcomes
Readings
Foreshadowing
Assignments
Mini-Lectures
Skill sets

Teachable Moments Actually Engaged

INTENTION
EMERGENT MOMENTS

Optimal Emergent Moments
Handout #2: Instructor Training Process

01 ATTEND A NEW INSTRUCTOR INFORMATIONAL MEETING

02 EXPRESS INTEREST IN TRAINING (POST-INFORMATIONAL MEETING)

03 PURCHASE AND READ LEADERSHIP CAN BE TAUGHT BY SHARON PARKS

04 COMPLETE MOODLE TRAINING (LESSONS, QUIZZES, AND EYI READINGS)

05 COMPLETE 10 CLASS OBSERVATIONS OF OUR 1000 LEVEL COURSE

06 ATTEND 3 OBSERVER CLASS TRAININGS THROUGHOUT THE SEMESTER

07 COMPLETE A TEACHING DEMONSTRATION AND INTERVIEW FOR CO-TEACHING

08 APPLY FOR THE POSITION (U OF M SYSTEM)

09 CO-TEACH WITH 1000 LEVEL MENTORING INSTRUCTOR

SUMMER

SEMESTER 1

END OF SEMESTER 1

SEMESTER 2
Handout #3: Making it Real: Finding Moments of Connection

MAKING IT REAL: FINDING MOMENTS OF CONNECTION

THE CONVENTIONAL MODEL
The conventional model of teaching involves covering each topic in depth for a period of time, before breaking and moving to another topic soon after. It is repeated.

OUR EDUCATIONAL MODEL
Our teaching model aims to pull on and connect to moments, readings, and concepts from earlier in the semester to contribute to a stronger understanding of leadership and be able to apply it out of the classroom.

CONNECTING CONCEPTS
Through these methods, instructors can choose how much focus and discussion occur around class concepts, current events, and external topics.

In cognitive psychology and studies on learning, connecting new ideas to old ones is critical to having a deep understanding of the concept. The more we can connect between ideas, experiences, examples, the more likely we can take learning from inside the classroom to outside. To do this, instructors have to make many choices about what examples to connect, when, and for how long. In an intentional emergent context classroom, instructors bring in many possibilities and strategies to capitalize on these moments in a variety of ways.

THE SLOW BURN: The longest and most intentional strategy may last several weeks or the whole semester. Instructors can pull on robust examples throughout, adding new nuances as more leadership concepts are introduced. This adds a contextual and temporal vantage to the discussion which helps students see the longer view and more complex view of an issue.

THE SPOTLIGHT: There are so many current events to choose from, but perhaps there’s a rich example you can ask the class to examine and identify what leadership concepts are present within the issue. For example, what are the different leadership connections we can make to the Flint Water Crisis? This is inductive reasoning, or “bottom up” reasoning, where you take one example and connect to abstract concepts.

THE DEBRIEF: Adding a few minutes to a debrief or discussion, instructors may ask students a question to connect what this particular concept “looks like” in different contexts like student organizations, politics, at work. This is deductive reasoning, or “top down” reasoning, taking an abstract concept and making it more concrete.

THE NAME DROP: the quickest of the four, the instructor may be elaborating on a topic and mention several examples of the concept ranging from moments in class, current events, or other class concepts.
Handout #4: Three-pronged Teaching Assistant Training Model

- Previous Experiences (Academic and Non-Academic)
- Instructor Training
- Program Provided Training
How might MEAs be used in leadership education?

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Abstract

This innovative practice paper presents the potential of using model eliciting activities to teach leadership. A brief review of the literature on leaders’ mental models and cognitive development is presented. Mental models can be used to understand how leaders use cognitive structures to guide their thinking about a phenomenon, situation, or problem. This view of cognitive learning has significant implications for teaching and learning. As opposed to the traditional approach of skill development in leadership education, cognitive development requires innovative instructional approaches. Model eliciting activities (MEAs) are offered as an example instructional strategy that focuses on the construction and demonstration of mental models. A potential context for a leadership MEA is presented using strategic clarity as the focus.

Introduction

Leadership is a contestable concept with a myriad of ways offered to define, research, and practice it (Bass & Bass, 2008). Avolio, Walumbwa, and Weber (2009) described the evolution of leadership research, which highlights the variation in how leadership has been conceived. They identified a shift in how leadership has been studied from a focus on individual leaders to including an emphasis on followers, peers, supervisors, work setting/context, and culture. They also offered several trends in the research including: (a) a more holistic view of leadership, (b) a focus on the process of leadership, including the cognitive dimensions, and (c) research focused on alternative methods for the examination of leadership.

Given the lack of consensus concerning the concept of leadership and the evolving nature of the research literature, there are significant implications for leadership education. Questions arise as to how to best teach leadership; what behaviors or skills individuals need to become leaders. Several authors have offered lists of competencies they believe are crucial for leaders. For example, Kim (2010) argued that leaders must be equipped in knowledge development, problem solving, adaptability, and innovation to be able to lead organizations in the twenty first century. However, the evidence for the importance of these particular skills is lacking and the implications for teaching and learning these skills are not well understood.

Many leadership programs focus on a particular set of skills deemed to be important to the organization or context. The educational approach tends to be knowledge driven whereby learners are asked to develop an identified set of skills. However, the evidence that this approach is effective is lacking. Johnson (2008) adds that most leadership development programs have failed to recognize this and the focus is primarily on learning more information (informational learning) by way of workshops and seminars. Although valuable, these programs have “limited potential to transform mental models, particularly in adults” (p. 86) and that transformative learning needs to be the focus. Transformative learning provides opportunities for the learner to
encounter context-specific experiences that challenge their mental models, forcing them to critically reflect on the assumptions underlying existing mental models.

The focus of this paper is to explore the literature on the role of mental models in leadership education contributing to the expanding research focus on the cognitive dimensions of leadership (Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009). Mental models are the cognitive structures individuals possess that enable them to make meaning. In the case of leadership, the framework of mental models can be used to understand how leaders use these cognitive structures to guide their thinking about a phenomenon, situation, or problem. When applied to education or leadership development, the role of mental models has important implications. Model eliciting activities (MEAs) are offered as an example instructional strategy that focuses on the construction and demonstration of mental models.

**Review of Related Scholarship**

**Leader’s Cognitive Learning**

Although much of the focus of leadership development programs is skill development (Northouse, 2008), the cognitive dimensions have not been completely ignored by leadership educators. Sessa, et al., (2016) have argued “Attempting to change skills and competencies while ignoring a person’s perceptions of the world, leadership and understanding of themselves as leaders will not result in the development needed” (p. 16). Lord and Hall (2005) suggested that leadership education needs to draw from the cognitive science literature on skill development and task expertise that indicates the skills are first learned through problem-related experiences, then are organized into increasingly higher level systems that guide behavior. They noted that an important aspect of leadership skill development is the leader’s self-view in that it “not only influences proactive attempts to gain leadership experience, it may also be an important cue to access knowledge related to leadership” (p. 611). Leadership identity is a concept that has been noted by several scholars as being an important aspect of leadership development (Komives, et al., 2009; Lord & Hall, 2005).

The research on the cognitive development of leaders is more recent but growing. For example, Haber (2012) conducted a mixed methods study to examine how college students define the concept of leadership and how this might impact their learning of leadership. Through free-written definitions of leadership and survey data, Haber found an overall pattern whereby students viewed leadership in more traditional, hierarchical and leader-centric terms. This view differs from most leadership development programs in higher education that emphasize contemporary approaches such as transformational, servant, and authentic. Haber argues that this mismatch, between the students’ views of leadership and the program’s, might become a roadblock for learners. Haber (2012) argued “students will not develop progressively more complex ways of thinking about leadership until they find that their current constructions of leadership conflict with the experiences they are encountering” (p. 26).

The cognitive dimensions of leadership are also emphasized in Day, Harrison, and Halpin’s (2009) leadership development model. The lowest level of the pyramid in their model is concerned with an individual’s constructive development, which is how people actively construct
or make meaning of their experiences and the world around them. A similar line of research is focused on meaning making and sense-giving. For example, Foldy, Goldman, and Ospina, (2008) offered an approach to understanding leadership as sense-giving whether carried out by individuals, groups, or communities, cognitive shifts occur changing the way individuals think about a certain phenomenon.

**Leaders’ Mental Models**

From a cognitive perspective, the learning of leadership requires the development and adaptation of mental models. Understanding how students are approaching the concept of leadership (i.e., their mental models) can assist leadership educators by targeting students’ leadership development needs, as well as the leadership development goals of the institution (program or curriculum). It can also provide insight into how students might engage in the process or act of leadership because mental models are the “road maps” that inform behavior.

Johnson (2008) argued that effective leaders have mental models that equip them with more valid and effective ways of dealing with complex issues, “not because they have more knowledge or experience than ineffective leaders” (p. 85). Mental models inform how we think and act. Individuals use mental models to explain how they think about a phenomenon, in particular how something works. Mental models are “the basis for our perception, analysis, understanding, and behavior toward the object in question” (Johnson, 2008, p. 87). As Ritchie-Dunham and Puente (2008) noted “what managerial leaders see, what they advocate, and what they ultimately decide are influenced by the maps of the world they carry around inside their heads” (p. 510) and that this impacts the organization’s strategy and ultimately its outputs.

The research exploring conceptual understanding or mental models of leaders is relatively sparse (Haber, 2012). Dionne, Sayama, Hao, and Bush (2010) described recent research linking shared mental models to improved team performance. There is also a line of research studying the cognition of leaders and problem solving (i.e., Marcy & Mumford, 2010). March (2015), for example, summarized that leaders “appear to be further aided in social problem-solving by their employment of a number of different cognitive tools, such as the use of particular diagnostics in scanning, the use of appropriate heuristics (i.e., mental shortcuts often used in dealing effectively with complexity) and causal analysis (i.e., the active and deliberate analysis of causal information with a problem set), which they use to further leverage information already contained in their mental models ” (p. 371). Instructional strategies, such as model eliciting activities, might further develop learners’ cognitive tools better equipping them for social problem solving and other leadership related activities.

**Model Eliciting Activities**

Mostly within the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines, model eliciting activities (MEAs) have been offered as an instructional approach that enables learners to articulate and expand their mental models. Moore and Diefes-Dux (2004), for example, provided advice to engineering educators on developing MEAs within the context of advanced engineering content (i.e., nanotechnology) for undergraduate students. Dark and Manigault (2001), on the other hand, described the development of an MEA for information assurance in
the realm of cyber-security education. This particular MEA incorporates a focus on both the technical and social aspects of cyber-security problems.

The six principles of model eliciting activities as described by Lesh and Doerr (2003) are:

1. Model construction: the activity must require that learners construct an explicit explanation or procedure for a mathematically significant situation
2. Reality: the activity must be situated in a realistic context that is meaningful to the learner
3. Self-assessment: the activity offers the learner criteria that is used to test and revise their current ways of thinking
4. Model documentation: the activity requires learners to depict their thinking about the situation
5. Construct share-ability and re-usability: learners must produce solution that are shareable with others and can be modified and used in other similar problem situations
6. Effective prototype: the model produced by the learner should be simple but yet mathematically significant

It should be pointed out that one of the differentiating elements of MEAs is a focus on models that can be explained mathematically. MEAs are typically focused on mathematical constructs or technical problems and the associated mental models used to solve or understand those problems residing squarely within STEM contexts. However, the six principles for developing model eliciting activities as described by Lesh and Doerr (2003) do not depend upon a STEM context and perhaps can be extrapolated to socio-technical problems where leadership resides.

**Description of the Practice**

Perhaps due to the creation of MEAs largely in STEM educational contexts, the applicability of MEAs to leadership education has not been explored much (if at all) in the literature. There are at least two possibilities for applying this instructional approach, developing MEAs that: (a) include leadership skills or competencies as aspects of the learning associated with the STEM contexts; or (b) are solely targeting leadership mental models. Obviously the second approach would require a re-thinking of some of the principles of MEAs, namely the creation of mathematically significant models. As of now, leadership has not been reduced to a mathematical approach that can be articulated in a model. However, there are certainly aspects of leadership such as resource allocation, building strategy, and change management that lend themselves to more quantifiable approaches that might lend themselves to MEAs.

Given the research on the importance of leaders developing robust mental models to guide their problem solving and decision making abilities, there appears to be great potential for engaging learners in MEAs (or a variation). MEAs would allow learners to articulate the mental models they use to guide decisions and behavior in authentic contexts that would inform their understanding of leadership, as well as enable educators to “see” the development of the learners’ understanding of leadership.

To explore this approach the applicability of MEAs within leadership education more fully Table 1 provides a comparison of the six principles of MEAs to a leader’s “strategic clarity” as an example. Ritchie-Dunham and Puente (2008) argued that a leader’s strategic clarity is “the
correspondence of their mental models with the reality they represent” (p. 510) and offered guiding questions to help enable leaders to better align these. They argued that a leader’s strategic clarity is about aligning her or his mental model of the organization with the other decision makers’ mental models of the organization. Strategic clarity is essential aligning an individual’s understanding with the collective understanding within the organization. This enables leaders to communicate and implement strategy more clearly and efficiently.

Table 1
*Strategic Clarity Model Eliciting Activity Example*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEA Principle</th>
<th>Strategic Clarity Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Model construction</td>
<td>Provide the learner with a case study that focuses on developing strategy and ask the learner to provide their approach to implementing strategy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Reality</td>
<td>The case study should draw from a real organization’s example of strategic planning. Questions like those posed by Dunham and Puente (2008) can be used to help structure the learners’ thinking when exploring the case study. These questions are:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Why does the organization exist?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Which resources drive value for stakeholders and which enable value?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Which actions most effectively leverage the enabling resources?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- What are the linkages among the goals, resources, and actions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- What brings the organization to life?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Self-assessment</td>
<td>Learners should be provided guidelines for strategic clarity like those derived from Dunham and Puente’s work to assess their mental models:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Goals – identify why the organization exists, key stakeholders and overarching goals.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Resources – identify those resources that drive value for stakeholders and those that enable value.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Actions – act at the level of enabling resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Structure – identify the linkages between goals, resources, and actions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- People – bring the organization to life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Model documentation</td>
<td>Learners would be asked to compare their approach to Dunham and Puente’s to identify similarities and gaps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Construct share-ability and re-usability</td>
<td>A refinement of the learner’s original model that is generalizable to other situations of strategic planning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Effective prototype</td>
<td>This component might best be met when considering the resource dimension and calculations for determining value.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Case Study Example

An Internet search results in several example strategic planning initiatives and reports, as well as published case studies. For example, the World Health Organization published “Strategic planning for health: A case study from Turkey” by Anne S. Johansen in 2015. The report documents Turkey’s strategic planning efforts to transform its health care system including its mission, goals, and evaluation framework with indicators and targets. This 72 page document might provide an excellent case for learners to elicit their models of strategic planning and explore the concept of strategic clarity.

Reflections

The goal of this paper is to present the instructional approach of MEAs and to explore its viability for leadership education. The above example needs further thought and consideration to consider its appropriateness. The selection of a case study, organizational data, and use of Dunham and Puente’s model of strategic clarity would need to be tested to see if they can serve as the basis for a MEA. Some of the principles of MEAs, such as model construction and effective prototypes that depend on mathematically significant concepts, need further thought in their utility for leadership education. However, the potential strength of this approach is that it highlights the cognitive learning of leaders and the role of mental models in guiding leadership.

References


Shared Leadership: A Primer and Teaching Recommendations for Educators

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Abstract

In this proposal, we provide knowledge and specific ideas for including shared leadership into curriculum. Shared leadership is an emergent group property whereby leadership functions are distributed among the group’s members. Though still relatively new to the groups and teams literatures, its strong, positive impact on performance has now been established. To encourage and enable inclusion of this important concept into future leadership courses, we review key empirical studies examining shared leadership and provide educators with important knowledge regarding conceptualization, measurement, antecedents, consequences, and unique findings. We also offer specific recommendations, including a shared leadership assessment tool, for teaching shared leadership in classroom settings. We conclude by discussing anticipated outcomes resulting from the implementation of our ideas.

Introduction

Scholarly examinations of shared leadership have increased notably in the past decade. At least thirteen team studies and two meta-analyses to date have been published in top-tier academic journals on shared leadership. The construct reflects the extent to which leadership influence is distributed across the various members of a collective as opposed to leadership remaining centralized within one, powerful figure (see Carson, Tesluk, and Marrone, 2007 for example). Shared leadership research has been evaluated with respect to varying work environments (Hmieslski, Cole & Baron, 2012; Ensley, Hmieslski & Pearce, 2006), team types, hierarchical structures (Hoch & Kozlowski, 2014), and distinct leadership types (Boies, Lvina, & Martens, 2010; Klein, Ziegert, Knight, Xiao, 2006). All studies hold evidence to support that shared leadership is positively related to team performance or team effectiveness (Drescher et al., 2014; Zhang, Waldman & Wang, 2012). These positive links to performance make the inclusion of shared leadership into leadership courses important and impactful.

However, several open questions regarding the shared leadership concept emerge from the extant literature that may pose challenges for educators wishing to include shared leadership in their courses. For instance, there is evidence that points to variables which may contribute to the effectiveness of shared leadership, as well as variables that may hinder team performance despite evident shared leadership (Hoch et. al., 2010). Considering these variables may raise the question of whether shared leadership is appropriate and most fruitful in all or most circumstances (Hoch et al., 2010). Moreover, the specific measures used for quantifying shared leadership also contribute to some variance found across studies regarding the effectiveness of shared leadership (Hoch et. al., 2010; Nicolaides, LaPort, Chen, Tomassetti, Weis, Zaccaro, & Cortina, 2014), which can potentially explain contradictory findings. Finally, there is some discrepancy with respect to the definition of shared leadership itself (see Carson et al., 2007 for a listing of definitions). All of these areas present challenges, making it necessary for educators to thoroughly understand the nuances of extant shared leadership findings so that they can present
and disseminate the most up-to-date knowledge to students. These are also factors from which opportunities arise to craft specific curriculum recommendations for teaching and encouraging shared leadership in the classroom.

To provide needed background information and specific teaching recommendations to educators, we first review and summarize extant shared leadership research. In so doing, we call attention to commonly asked questions by students and how our review of the literature helps educators to answer such questions and transition them into reflective in-class discussions. For this analysis of past research, we searched through top management and leadership journals for studies where shared leadership was either the main variable tested or a contributing variable. The journals searched were: Academy of Management Journal, Academy of Management Review, Journal of Applied Psychology, The Leadership Quarterly, Journal of Management, Personnel Psychology, Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, Administrative Science Quarterly, Small Group Research, Group and Organization Management. After identifying the empirical studies in these journals, we also looked through the references of “A Meta-Analysis of Shared Leadership and Team Effectiveness” by Wang, Waldman, and Zhang (2014) to ensure we did not miss any key studies. Though our literature review is not exhaustive in that it did not capture all of the shared leadership studies published, we believe that the studies we have covered not only demonstrate the range of investigation done on shared leadership, but also represent the most rigorous and impactful studies on shared leadership, and provide enough background for an instructor who wishes to teach shared leadership. We begin with conceptualizations.

### Defining Shared Leadership for Students: A Review of Related Scholarship

Among the foundational questions students routinely ask are: what exactly is shared leadership and how does this differ from other things like participation by all team members? We believe that the definition by Drescher, et al. (2014) that describes shared leadership as “an emergent property of a group where leadership functions are distributed among group members,” summarizes the most common understanding of shared leadership by academic scholars. It is important to note to students, however that, as we found in our review, some academic studies do not have a conspicuous shared leadership definition.

The above notwithstanding, our review of the literature showed us that emphasizing the notion of influence is helpful for answering student questions regarding the nature and distinctiveness of shared leadership. At least four studies identified shared leadership with mutual influence, which for many students is more easily differentiated from mere participation toward team tasks. For example, Mathieu, Kukenberger, D’Innocenzo, and Reilly, (2015) said that “(shared) leadership is a product of team member interactions (DeRue, 2011) and represents a mutual influence where team members take on the functions of leadership traditionally handled by an external leader” (p.719). Carson et al. (2007) also discuss shared leadership in this way, noting that it is an emergent team property where members mutually influence on another on key leadership functions such as direction, motivation, and support. Similarly, Nicolaides et al. (2014) look at shared leadership in terms of influence, defining it as “set of interactive influence processes in which team leadership functions are voluntarily shared among internal team members in the pursuit of team goals” (p.2). These definitions were also supported by Hoch, Pearce, and Welzel, (2010), Ensley et al. (2006), and Small and Rentsch (2010).
Professors should also be aware, however, that other scholars such as, Zhang, Waldman, and Wang (2012) do not provide a concrete definition of shared leadership, but refer to it as “informal leadership provided by multiple team members” (p.50). Other unique definitions are seen in the studies by Hmieleski et al. (2012) and Boies et al. (2010), who define shared leadership in terms of different types of leadership styles, (i.e., authentic shared leadership, or transformational shared leadership). Despite these variances, most studies coalesce on the criticality of influence.

Furthermore, most definitions agree that shared leadership is an emergent team property or characteristic, not a behavior. This distinction is very helpful when discussing the nature of shared leadership with students. We recommend professors spend time discussing the meaning of emergent collective properties. Shared leadership, like other emergent states such as collective team efficacy or psychological safety, are characteristics representative of what a team is or a property that the team has. Emergent team properties originate, but are distinct, from the interactions among its group members over time. Thus, participation by team members on team tasks or voice by multiple members on team direction are not examples of shared leadership. Instead, these are likely closely-related antecedent conditions that help lead to the emergence of shared leadership as a property that can be said to be characteristic of the team itself.

Understanding Team Study Types to Provide Illustrative Examples to Students

Understanding the various contexts and study types utilized when studying shared leadership is relevant information for educators for at least three reasons. First, because the performance effects of shared leadership are consistently positive across a variety of contexts, this provides pervasive evidence for the practical relevance of studying shared leadership. Second, from this range of contexts, professors can draw rich examples that are relevant to students and illustrate the nature of shared leadership. Lastly, should professors be interested in utilizing business simulations in classes, knowledge of these studies may help generate specific ideas for examining shared leadership directly in the classroom with one’s current students. The two major team study types examined in prior studies are: experimental student groups assigned to business simulations and existing work teams in organizations and classrooms.

Experimental Student Groups Engaged in Business Simulations

Several team studies engaged university students in a business simulation as a part of their class project over the course of 10-12 weeks (Boies et al., 2010; Mathieu, et al., 2015; Small & Rentsch, 2010). Students were assigned to “management teams,” where they were responsible for making a number of operational and strategic decisions. Team size normally varied between 2 and 5 members, with the exception of the online game simulations done by Drescher et al. (2014) where team size varied between 3 and 60 members. Interestingly, in some online game simulations, shared leadership was measured by “the total number of responsibilities granted by the group founders within the group using trace data” (Drescher et al., 2014, p.775), whereas others studies using virtual forums utilized a survey approach. The surveys measured shared leadership either by asking to rate each person’s leadership (e.g., Mathieu et al., 2015; Small & Rentsch, 2010) or by having them evaluate the types of shared leadership they see present in
their group (e.g., Boies et al., 2010).

**Existing Work / Student Teams**

Among the papers we reviewed, seven studies surveyed already existing work or student teams and asked participants to answer questionnaires regarding individual roles and team dynamics. The team size in these studies varied from 2 to 7 team members. These analyses gave a large range of environments and variables to examine the properties of shared leadership, such as a virtual team arrangement versus a new venture culture or a classroom setup. Moreover, work team studies were not just focused on whether shared leadership has a positive relationship with team performance, but also how the variance in shared leadership styles and particular work environments interact to allow shared leadership enhance performance. For example, one study examined how shared leadership unfolds in virtual teams to demonstrate that “the association between shared team leadership and team performance was not affected by the degree of virtuality” (Hoch & Kozlowski, 2014, p.398).

At a minimum, we recommend that professors discuss these studies with students to provide students with the variety of real-life examples of shared leadership in organizational settings. Emphasizing the pervasive with which shared leadership leads to higher performance across various contexts helps students to understand the relevance of this topic to their own leadership learning and development. Further, depending on the skill level of the course, another way to stimulate engagement and learning in the classroom is to assign selective studies for students to read themselves. We provide a few specific recommendations below.

**Helping Students Understand Key Antecedents and Consequences of Shared Leadership**

Once students are familiar with the nature and strong performance impacts of shared leadership, the follow-up question is often: how can we foster this in our teams? Here again, an understanding of the academic literature provides concrete and helpful answers. The commonly discovered antecedents of shared leadership are trust (Drescher et al., 2014), authenticity (Hannah et al., 2011), collectivism (Small & Rentsch, 2010), high interdependence (Nicolaides et al., 2014), and external leader coaching and support (Carson et al., 2007). More specifically, shared leadership prevails when the team members trust each other’s competencies. In addition, to facilitate shared leadership, the team members must view their tasks and responsibilities as interdependent and the performance as a collective outcome. Shared leadership also requires team members to have an accurate understanding of each other’s skills and abilities, which essentially leads to trust in each other’s competencies among team members (Small & Rentsch, 2010). Finally, Carson et al. (2007) provided significant evidence to demonstrate the importance of a supportive external leaders who help teams develop self-management, initiative, and autonomy for the development of shared leadership. Importantly, supportive external leadership is necessary only when the team’s internal team conditions do not support shared leadership. Should teams on their own provide one another with social support, encourage voice, and establish shared purpose, Carson et al’s findings demonstrate they can enhance their level of shared leadership and team performance significantly on their own.

As mentioned previously the most commonly studied consequence of shared leadership is
positive team performance and productivity (Carson et al., 2007; Drescher et al., 2014; Hannah et al., 2011; Nicolaides et al., 2014; Small & Rentsch, 2010). Importantly, however, students should be aware that Wang et al.’s (2014) meta-analysis provided strong evidence that the complexity of work serves as the moderator between shared leadership and outcomes. They found that when work is more knowledge-based and interdependent, there is a stronger relationship between shared leadership and outcomes. Especially given the time and effort involved in cultivating shared leadership, we recommend students are informed that such investments are more likely to yield high returns in certain kinds of teams.

**Experiencing Shared Leadership in the Classroom: Description, Reflection, and Recommendations**

In addition to the above recommendations, some educators may wish to also provide an experiential exposure through which students can readily assess, and as a result, more viscerally experience and understand, the nature and operations of shared leadership inside an actual team in which they either hold a member or a leader role. To do so, we offer one specific, easy to administer, and impactful shared leadership assessment tool adapted from Carson et al.’s (2007) article, which investigated the antecedent conditions and performance implications of shared leadership. In their article, the authors utilized a novel social network approach for conceptualizing and measuring shared leadership, which results in helpful visual diagrams through which students can see the pattern and level of leadership inside their own team and can compare these elements to those of other teams.

This assessment tool can be easily administered to students assigned to project as part of their regular course work. Alternatively, students can be provided the assessment tool and asked to administer the tool themselves to a selected team of their choice. Where these teams reside does not impact the administration of the tool. The results of the assessment provide each team with a quantitative score that indicates the level of their shared leadership, a visual picture of the pattern of such leadership, and can be provided with comparison visuals of other teams (either real or fictitious) that demonstrate low, average, and high shared leadership team levels.

To administer the tool and generate the visual illustrations, a short survey needs to be administered to each team. Per the survey, each team member rates all of his/her other team members on a single item, “do what extent does this team rely on individual for leadership?” The suggested Likert-type scale is 1 to 5 (1 = “not at all”; 5 = “to a very great extent”). After collecting the responses, professors can calculate a shared leadership score for each team in accordance with Carson et al.’s (2007) method: “summing all values (here, the team members’ ratings of each other’s leadership) and then dividing that score by the total number of possible ties, or relationships across, members” (p. 1225). Higher numbers indicate higher shared leadership. Then, leadership sociograms can be created for each team by dichotomizing the original scores (values of 4 or 5 = “1”; values of 3 or less = “0). All the relationships in which one team member perceives another as a source of leadership (which are now coded as “1s”) are plotted as directional arrows between each dyad, as appropriate, to form a leadership sociogram. For example illustrations, please see Carson et al. (2007) page 1226.

For the purposes of teaching, we recommend one important modification from Carson et al.’s
method, which is that professors provide team member names with each diagram. Seeing the
names, coupled with the aid of the suggested discussion questions below, provides opportunities
for students to further understand the leadership influence they have or do not have inside their
team. Should the names be revealed as we suggest, it is critical to ensure a safe environment. We
suggest student scores are not part of course grades and are not judged positively or negatively,
especially by their professor. Professors can help to create this climate of safety by showing
teams pictures of other teams in advance and communicating that most teams have unequal
distributions of leadership. Shared leadership takes time, trust, and specific antecedent conditions
to create. It perhaps can be discussed as an ideal. Students can be forewarned that while some
will see their visual findings as self-evident, others may be very surprised by the results.

We then recommend the professors utilize discussion questions to encourage student reflection
and deepen learning. Please see Handout A for suggested questions.

We also recommend administering this survey at or closely after the midpoint of the course as
shared leadership takes time to develop. The midpoint allows for a natural time when teams are
motivated to reflect and are most open to interventions (Hackman, 2002). Therefore, at this time,
students may be more likely to reflect upon their assessment results and undertake corrective
actions if needed. However, if anxiety seems too high or direction too unclear at the midpoint,
three-quarters of the way to course completion may be more effective. This later timing may
also allow for assessment of the team’s antecedents conditions, which can be administered via a
separate survey at the midpoint. Professors can view Carson et al.’s (2007) study for survey
items related to antecedent conditions.

**Anticipated Outcomes**

Incorporating the topic of shared leadership into curriculum as described above is expected to
have the following three primary learning outcomes. First, we anticipate students will gain an
advanced understanding of leadership, one that perhaps their supervisors or other leaders may
not yet hold. In particular, learning that shared leadership compares to, or exceeds, the team’s
external leadership as a driver of performance is both powerful and surprising at the same time.
Second, and related to the first, we anticipate an increased capability of students to create
conditions that enhance team performance at school and at work. Understanding key antecedent
conditions, coupled with a visual map of shared leadership, should result in sustained learning
that may allow students to be more successful in future team endeavors. At a minimum, we
expect students to experience stronger feelings of autonomy and self-determination in their
ability to make a positive difference toward achieving the outcomes they desire. Third, we expect
increased self-awareness by students of their own leadership skills and influence. Seeing their
leadership influence in a sociogram can reveal gaps that prompt students to reflect in new ways
on their capacity to exert and accept leadership from peers. Further, the opportunity to reflect
with classmates regarding conditions that support or hinder shared leadership can provide
students with new strategies for enhancing their leadership skills in future teams.

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http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2014.06.006


http://dx.doi.org.proxy.seattleu.edu/10.1037/a0034531

Handout A

Discussion Questions Accompanying Shared Leadership Assessment Tool

- (Prior to viewing assessment results), what is your prediction of the level (low-high) of shared leadership in your team? What do you predict regarding the pattern of leadership that has emerged? (Students can draw their own anticipated visual representations).

- (After viewing assessment results): How does your team’s shared leadership score reflect your actual experiences on this team?

- How does the information gained from this shared leadership assessment tool compare to your predictions prior? What similarities and differences surprised you?

- When examining the pattern of leadership visually, which team members do you believe are relied upon most and least by the team for leadership influence? How can individuals build mutual trust and influence in this particular team?

- Is it easier for you to accept leadership influence from your team members or to exert leadership influence on your team members? Why?

- Is the distribution of leadership across your team’s members equitable and just? If not, what distribution would be more just?

- What factors do you believe have helped or hindered the development of shared leadership in your team?

- What leadership functions does your team rely on you to deliver? What leadership functions do you rely on others to deliver?

- What leadership functions are currently not being addressed by the team’s members?

- How does the presence of an external leader (perhaps professors at school or managers at work) help or hinder your team’s shared leadership? What actions are most important for external leaders who wish to facilitate team shared leadership?
HANDOUT B

Example Results of Shared Leadership Assessment Tool

Lowest Level of Shared Leadership
(score = 2.40)

Median Level of Shared Leadership
(score = 3.15)

Highest Level of Shared Leadership
(score = 3.90)

Figure excerpted directly from Carson et al. (2007)
A Case Study Model for Critical Analysis of Global Leadership

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Abstract

The discourse on global leadership illustrates the intersection of intercultural sensitivity, self-awareness, and leadership capacity. As such, traditional, western approaches to leadership must be analyzed critically in order to determine their relevancy when working in developing nations or with vulnerable groups. A case study involving a U.S. nonprofit working in a developing country is a tool that can be used to explore how power dynamics, social hierarchies, social constructions of identity, and underlying assumptions of leadership theories can have an impact on practice. Introducing case studies outside the traditional organizational setting that encourages students to switch between positions of accepting and critiquing well-accepted leadership theories and offers opportunities for critical thinking and self-reflection on personal and cultural values.

Introduction

Although cross-cultural interactions are not new events, globalization necessitates leaders that have global perspectives and intercultural competence (Irving, 2010). Global leadership has been defined as “being capable of operating effectively in a global environment while being respectful of cultural diversity” (Harris, Moran, & Moran, 2004, p.25). The theory of global leadership has also been related more to the interaction of people and ideas among cultures instead of solely an extension of domestic leadership (Adler, 1997). When exploring leadership within the context of social change, a deep understanding of the self as well as what constitutes differences in worldviews and values of others is essential for accomplishing intended outcomes. Story (2011) argues that in order for individuals to grow into a global leader they must develop a global mindset, a self-authored identity, and a cultural adaptation worldview.

The discourse on global leadership illustrates the intersection of intercultural sensitivity, self-awareness, and leadership capacity. As such, traditional, western approaches to leadership must be analyzed critically in order to determine their relevancy when working in developing nations or with vulnerable groups. Power dynamics, the influence of context, and the co-construction of leadership are concepts that cannot be left out of the leadership classroom if we are to prepare students to truly be global leaders. As an instructional tool, case studies can be utilized to illustrate the complexities of working abroad and underscore the importance of reflection on one’s leadership paradigm and thus used as part of critical leadership studies.

Review of Related Scholarship

The emerging field of critical leadership studies maintains that leadership is “fundamentally the effective or ineffective exercise of power, authority, and influence (Collinson & Tourish, 2015). Critical perspectives are a relatively new approach to leadership studies (Gagon & Collinson, 2014) thus approaches to critical leadership pedagogy are very few. Undergirding critical
leadership studies is critical pedagogy, which must be explored in order to conceptualize its application to leadership education. At the heart of critical pedagogy are the oppression and power differences that have evolved during and after colonization around the world, especially in the production of universally valid knowledge (Kinchenloe, 2008). The assumption that those who were modernizing, civilizing, developing, and democratizing knew what served the needs of colonized peoples better than those people themselves set precedents for power relations that are still seen today. Universalism, the idea that all scientifically produced knowledge is true in all places and for all times, is a key concept in the discourse of knowledge and its relation to critical pedagogy (Kinchenloe, 2008) and can also relate to approaches to leadership education and discourse. The Eurocentric view of the world still drives historical and geographical scholarship and permeates the cross-cultural management literature, which, in turn, informs the study of leadership (Edwards, 2015). Collinson and Tourish (2015) illuminate that the conditions in which knowledge about leadership is produced, is shaped by the cultural history of the United States as most studies are conducted by U.S. researchers in U.S. companies, and informed by U.S. perspectives and methods thus articulating American values. If we conceptualize and teach leadership as influencing the thinking, values, and emotions of followers (Alvesson & Spicer, 2012) then we must query the frameworks that we have been taught and are teaching.

Alvesson & Spicer (2012) call for combining and switching between a position that largely accepts present conditions and constrains of leadership and that of a critical position that questions existing conditions, emphasizes independent thinking, and aims for less constraining social relations. Thus, acknowledging the benefits of traditional forms of leadership while questioning accepted ideas and practices. Although this call was directed to leadership researchers, it has a place in the leadership classroom in order to encourage critical thinking. For example, there are multiple critiques of transformational leadership and the role of leader and follower agency as the power relations that result (Tourish, 2014).

Transformational models and focus on charismatic individuals to which organizational actors are to subscribe dominate teaching leadership in business schools (Collinson & Tourish, 2015) and much of the leadership research since the late 1980s has concentrated on the positive effects of transformational leadership (Greiman, 2009). Traditional models such as transformational leadership, leader-member exchange, situational-contingency, among others are still suitable for organizational studies; however, with the increasing need for globally-minded leaders, support for diversity in organizations and growth of non-traditional business models, critical analysis of the assumptions that undergird these theories and approaches is needed.

Going beyond positivist approaches to teaching leadership as a set of principles, techniques, skills, and competencies, is evidence in the literature of critical leadership pedagogy that incorporates reflexive and critical thinking about leadership and themselves, the use of feminist and psychodynamic approaches and the encouragement of students to become proactive co-constructors of leadership knowledge (Cunliffe, 2009; Sinclair, 2007; Collinson & Tourish, 2015). As part of a critical approach, highlighting the influence of contexts and cultures on leadership dynamics and challenging romanticized views of leaders, how U.S. values have shaped leadership studies, and how many other ways understanding and enacting leadership are a way to co-construct knowledge (Collinson & Tourish, 2015). The examination of power dynamics and followers’ agency is also essential to both critical leadership studies and
intercultural explorations. Case studies, especially those that are in the context that implicitly or explicitly involve power dynamics, cultural differences, social constructions of knowledge and identity, can be tools to guide students through critical analysis and application of leadership theories

**Description of the Practice**

A case study involving a U.S. nonprofit working in a developing country is a tool that can be used to explore how power dynamics, social hierarchies, social constructions of identity, and underlying assumptions of leadership theories can have an impact on practice. This case study was written based on events from the participant’s perspective. Introducing case studies outside traditional organizational setting encourages students to switch between positions of accepting and critiquing well-accepted leadership theories and offers opportunities for critical thinking and self-reflection on personal and cultural values.

**Case Study Narrative**

**Introduction.** Nonprofit organizations are created with the purpose of meeting a present need through charitable acts. These organizations are found worldwide and take on various problems from health to the environment. The following case study focuses on a nonprofit organization whose main focus is on human services, within an international context. The authors do not intend to highlight the negative or positive aspects of a specific culture. The authors have disguised names and other identifying information to protect confidentiality.

**Overview/Analysis.** Sustainable Haiti, Inc. is a 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization based in a mid-sized city in the southeastern United States. SH was incorporated as a business in a southern state in July 2011 and recognized by the IRS as a 501(c) 3 organization in December 2011. Since 2011, SH has been actively pursuing its three-fold mission. This mission can be summarized in three words- *create, support, connect*. According to the organization, its mission statement is as follows: “We create projects that foster sustainable development, impacting both individuals and the nation as a whole. We support Haitians in their endeavors, solidifying ownership through training and empowerment. We connect the world to Haiti through partnerships that build alliances and redefine perceptions”. This three-fold mission offers a holistic approach to sustainable development. This organization hopes to partner with Haitians educationally and vocationally in order to see Haiti rise to its full potential. Currently, the organization is comprised of 17 unpaid staff, 12 interns, and a base of over 100 volunteers.

Among their many conferences and initiatives, SH began an annual Women’s Leadership Conference in Haiti. The purpose of this conference is to empower the Haitian women to use leadership skills in the context of their homes and professional lives. The conference is spread over three days. The topics include visioning, work/life balance, self-awareness, and planning. SU aims to create an environment of support and collaboration among the conference participants. This past year, the Haitian participants decided to create Famn Avanse, a women’s agricultural cooperative intended to foster collaboration and knowledge sharing among its members.
Ruth Blenton is the Program Coordinator of SH and is directly involved with the implementation of the Women’s Leadership Conference held in Cap-Haitien, Haiti. Ruth has been working with SU since its creation. She is incredibly passionate about its mission. Ruth came to SU because of her previous experience in Haiti. She has always loved the Haitian culture and is always eager to learn more. She is not of Haitian decent, although she does speak Haitian-Creole. Her team enjoys working with her and commonly use words such as “warm”, “happy”, and “caring” when describing Ruth. She is currently leading a team of four US-based staff members who are directly in charge of planning the Women’s Leadership Conference and overseeing the progress of Famn Avanse. This team helps to secure financial resources, educational materials, and encouragement to the Haiti-based cooperative initiative.

Loudmia Joseph is the President of Famn Avanse. Her peers and most who come in contact with her, commonly refer to Loudmia Joseph, as a “strong” woman. She is a wife and mother of three. She also owns a small plot of land where she plants corn, peanuts, and yams in the Northern Haiti. When the Haitian women initiated the start of a cooperative, they unanimously chose Loudmia as the president. They felt that she would have the ability to gather all of the members under one strong purpose. The cooperative, Famn Avanse, has been in existence for a total of six months. During those six months, the US SH office has been in constant communication with Loudmia. They have also been on the ground to provide assistance to the leaders of the small organization. One of their most consistent communication topics centers on the gender issues that are found in Haiti. Gender-based violence and discrimination is a common problem for women in Haiti. This discrimination keeps many women from advancing in male-dominated vocations. While women in Haiti have constitutional rights, inequality is still present.

Historically, women have not benefitted from the educational system in Haiti. In comparison to other Latin American countries, Haitian women participate at higher rates in agriculture and commerce. Gender-based issues are a present source of challenges for the women in the Famn Avanse cooperative.

The women in Famn Avanse have recently decided to collectively bring their harvests to then sell to larger markets. Currently the women sell to madann saras in their communities. Madamn saras are women who sell agriculture products within their communities. They hope that selling to larger markets will increase their overall incomes. Loudmia has been actively seeking to find access to those markets through her connections. The current gatekeepers to the larger markets are men. She is finding it difficult to gain access to these markets because the moment someone hears the produce is coming from a women-only cooperative, they lose trust in the quality of their goods. Loudmia is great at using her connections to meet important individuals within her community. Lately, her connections have been avoiding her as word is spreading about Famn Avanse and their desire to sell to larger markets in the Northern region. While it is possible to reach the larger organizations personally, most business in Haiti is gained through personal recommendations. The women in the cooperative have been becoming increasingly frustrated with Loudmia because they feel as though she has not been working hard enough to gain access for the group. Loudmia has reached out to SH for assistance in this situation. She has personally felt as though the issues facing Famn Avanse are deeply rooted in male perception of female-grown agricultural products. Ruth and her team are shocked to hear of this difficulty and are not sure how to encourage and support this organization.
**Status Report.** Currently, SH is actively attempting to understand the extent of the gender-based issues within the community where Famn Avanse is based. Her team is becoming increasingly bothered by the cultural context in Haiti. During a staff meeting, one team member said, “Why can’t the men get it together? It’s not that hard.” Ruth has been attempting to keep the momentum of the US team as they work to resolve their problem. Money that has been earmarked for program development must be spent and so decisions on what groups to continue supporting need to be made. The team has been focused on the depth of the gender issues and has not offered any potential solutions and they feel that they are here to help those that are in need. As time has progressed, many of the team members are finding it hard to look with enthusiasm at the grassroots organization in Haiti and feel that they could make more of a difference on another project or with a different organization. When speaking with Loudmia, Ruth has also seen how the members of Famn Avanse are dissatisfied and even threatening to leave.

**Case Problem.** The SH team is facing a critical challenge. They must provide the support and encouragement for Famn Avanse but are having problems understanding the gender-based problem at hand without cultural bias. They have received federal funding that must be spent on developmental programs, including the work with women and if it is not spent it will be re-allocated to another organization. Ruth must find a way to collaborate with Loudmia to address the cooperative’s access to larger markets, while encouraging Loudmia to keep her members centered on their goal. How should Ruth address her US-based teams cultural biases without causing more stress to their situation? How can Ruth address Loudmia’s need to gain access to the larger markets within the community? How can Loudmia bring her organization’s members together in order to address the challenges within their communities and make a change? Use the models of transformational leadership, servant leadership, and adaptive leadership to address the problems at hand.

**Educational Objectives.** This case study may appear to focus mainly on intercultural issues centered on gender; however, it is also about critiquing models of leadership such as transformational, adaptive, and servant. At the end of the activity, students should have a clearer understanding of the following issues: (1) the importance of antecedent conditions in the model of servant leadership as it applies to the case study: Context and Culture, Leader Attributes, and Follower Receptivity (2) the necessity of challenging one’s deeply held beliefs in order to adapt his/her behaviors to address an issue (3) the importance of asking questions to fully understand the values, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors of stakeholders (4) underlying assumptions in the approaches used and how they can or cannot be adapted when working in different cultural contexts.

**Discussion Outline/Question Set.** Following are key issues or questions to raise to encourage discussion about this case. There is not a specific order to the points; therefore, pose as needed during the discussion: (1) The SU team is only on the ground in Haiti for three weeks, every three months to work with the women in Famn Avanse. What considerations should be made due to this timeline? Should the team be looking for other alternatives for Famn Avanse (2) As a Program Coordinator, Ruth returns to Haiti every three months. However, volunteers change and may not be working on the same project each time they visit Haiti or may go only once. What
does Ruth need to think about in terms of knowledge gaps that new volunteers may have? (3) Good leaders are lifelong learners; therefore, what do both Ruth and Loudmia need to do in order to address new challenges? What knowledge and skills should they seek?

**Tips for Resolving the Case Problem.** The instructor should encourage students to prepare a course of action for the problem presented. They must define the elements of the problem and focus on how to address it according to the Sustainable Haiti timelines (3 weeks in Haiti every 3 months). The plan should include recommendations and actions specific to the key players in the case.

The course of action may be completed as an individual written assignment or developed in small groups. As a written assignment, learners can utilize additional research to prepare their course of action. As a small group exercise, groups may present their key ideas at the conclusion of the activity. This can be done in one session or as a longer project, with additional research completed. For a one-session activity, learners can brainstorm and present ideas on chart paper in order for the whole group to see similarities and differences in the plans.

Potential areas for the learners to address are as follows (1) identify the key players, factors, and issues in the case (2) identify the named and potential stakeholders relevant to the case (3) determine all of the problems relevant to the case at the interpersonal, organizational, and community levels, prioritize them, and determine what additional information you need (4) address historical contexts in the present social hierarchy and power dynamics at play (5) identify various options for the aforementioned problems and then put together your “best” plan of action (6) list recommendations and their justifications.

**Discussion of Outcomes/Results**

This case study was developed for use in leadership and intercultural communication courses. It will be implemented in the current semester after foundational understandings of worldviews, values, social hierarchies, cultural contexts, and gender has been discussed. Students should be able to identify underlying assumptions of the theories analyzed and ways in which approaches can and cannot be applied within certain cultural contexts.

**Reflections of the Practitioner**

A critical approach to teaching leadership, global leadership and intercultural communication requires a foundation of historical, sociological, psychological and anthropological knowledge of how inequalities are formed and reproduced in society. Bringing in topics such as race, gender, and social class can be difficult for students to discuss, especially when their beliefs are being challenged. Therefore, it is important to ground discussion in the literature and move to critiques of relevant events and phenomena. Students must feel comfortable in sharing their perspectives in order to co-construct knowledge around leadership.

**Recommendations**

Critical leadership studies, both research and pedagogy is not found extensively in the literature;
therefore, there are many different avenues to extend the discourse. Specific to pedagogy, developing and writing about critical approaches for use in leadership education can expand our understanding of the limitations and possibilities of established leadership theories. Perhaps to address the global challenges of today, the leadership curriculum must aim to be more critical, questioning and relational in order to limit the reproduction of power imbalances and detrimental leadership.

References


COIL Collaboration

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Introduction

Global leadership has emerged as an important issue in many multinational corporations (Javidan, Dorfman, De Luque & House, 2006), but little research has been implemented on global leadership. Success of global leaders will be determined by their ability to show effective leadership in different cultures (Javidan et al., 2006). For decades Americans have conducted most global leadership studies. Bagshaw (2008) supported this and says “much of what we know about [effective] leadership anywhere in recent times is based on what researchers have discovered about leadership in America” (p. 52).

So, as scholars and professors we might wrongly assume that the American’s leadership models can be applied across-cultures. According to Javidan et al., (2006) the issue for the American manager is whether the attributes that made him or her successful as a leader in the United States will also lead to success overseas or may it cause harm in a foreign context.

Substantial empirical evidence indicates that leader attributes, behavior, status, and influence vary considerably as a result of culturally unique forces in the countries or regions in which the leader functions (Javidan, et. al., 2006, p. 72).

Specifically, the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE), indicates that leadership across cultures is “the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute towards the effectiveness and success of the organizations of which they are members” (House, et. al., 2002, p. 5). Global leaders “influence the thinking, attitudes, and behaviors of a global community to work together towards a common vision and common goals.” (Osland, 2009, p. 1). GLOBE research program focused on culture and leadership and found that a fundamental factor is that an effective leader in Mexico and Latin America will be a person who practices and promotes team-oriented leadership (Dorfman, Hanges, & Brodbeck, 2004). House, (Hanges, et.al., 2004) found that Mexico has a collectivist culture while the United States has an individualistic culture. Thus, American and Latin American cultures influence how leadership is conceptualized and operated within its cultural environment (Javidan et. al., 2006).

That is why, we as professors determined that an international, cross-cultural academic experience would enlighten our students and generate understanding of the meaning of global citizenry. Indeed the collaboration that we created has strengthened our students’ understanding of the realities of the business world in which they will soon forge careers.
Note however, that the framework of our courses is somewhat unique. At the University de Monterrey, UDEM, a class of 34 students met face-to-face twice a week while 19 Fashion Institute of Technology, FIT students met online working in the Blackboard CMS. The two “Leadership Development” and “Leadership in Organizations” courses for the spring 2016 semester featured our first enhanced modules delivered through the Center for Online International Learning (COIL), a program founded by faculty from the State University of New York (SUNY). The course project required each student to use their own analytical skills while maintaining frequent communication in order to collaborate within assigned teams. COIL enabled students at UDEM and FIT to collaborate across multiple technological platforms in order to complete the assigned project.

**Issue Statement**

Our aim was for students from Mexico and the United States to understand what makes leaders effective by discovering the complexities of leadership through their team collaborative efforts. Students worked to identify, analyze and reflect on the leadership characteristics and methodologies that inform effective leadership across cultures.

Students discovered through the process of completing the course project that leaders are people who succeed in the face of crises and unfamiliar situations by taking informed risks and applying innovative approaches to achieve success. The interview process encouraged students to learn that leaders are usually charismatic, emotionally intelligent individuals who display courage and humility.

**Student Learning Outcomes (SLO’s)**

Students were able to identify and analyze the characteristics of Leadership in international businesses.

Students analyzed the impact of Leadership on the Organizational Culture and its Environment.

Students were able to describe and discuss Leadership Issues in the 21st Century:
- Leading in a Global Environment
- Driving Change and Innovation

**Our Process**

The SUNY COIL program was introduced at FIT during the 2014 Strategic Planning process. In the case of UDEM, the Director of International Programs introduced SUNY COIL. We created our project around the framework of the SUNY COIL program adhering to this mission:

> to encourage and support the development and implementation of collaborative online international courses as a format for experiential cross-cultural learning at SUNY, across the U.S. and around the world. Thereby participating students are sensitized to the larger world by deepening their understanding of themselves, their culture, how they are perceived and how they perceive others. These globally networked courses also intensify
disciplinary learning in fields where engaging other cultural perspectives is key. COIL seeks to build bridges between study abroad, instructional design and teaching faculty through team-taught courses, thereby promoting, integrating and enhancing international education experiences across the curriculum. The COIL Center also strives to help international programs offices better integrate technology into their workflow. (http://coil.suny.edu/page/about-coil-0)

Following the 2014 COIL Conference, coordinators from each institution reached out to each other and introduced us virtually. Fortunately, both of our course subjects were “Leadership Development.” We began developing our ideas via Skype and in so doing validated the importance of comparing and contrasting leadership styles between Mexico and the United States. We recognized that the American perspective in many ways defines the history of leadership characteristics but also realized that in today’s global economy this standard cannot always apply. Or does it?

We decided to bring American and Mexican students together via technology to explore the diverse characteristics of leaders in real-time in an international context. Would characteristics of American leadership work well in Latin America? Would Latin American leadership characteristics work well in the United States? Following an online orientation process we met for training workshops in Cuernavaca, Mexico. There, we established the goal of our COIL collaboration for our students:

“Students will be able to identify and analyze the characteristics of Leadership in international businesses.”

We also decided to share the following quote as a focal point for our courses:

“Creating a better world requires teamwork, partnerships and collaboration, as we need an entire army of companies to work together to build a better world within the next few decades. This means corporations must embrace the benefits of cooperating with one another…” Simon Mainwaring

We introduced the COIL concept to our students before the semester began and through the following COIL description we acquainted them with the exciting opportunity they were about to embark upon.

**COIL** has developed an approach to fostering cross-cultural student competence through development of multicultural learning environments that link university or college classes in different countries. In this COIL course, students from different cultures (New York and Mexico) will work on shared course content and a course project with faculty members from each country co-teaching and managing coursework. The COIL model does not merely promote courses where students from different nations co-habit a course, rather, we advocate creation of co-equal learning environments where instructors work together on solid academic coursework emphasizing experiential and collaborative student learning. http://coil.suny.edu/page/course-models
The primary purpose of the project is for students to have a real-life glimpse into the role of organizational leaders and how they’re positions and the employees they lead impacts their companies. The secondary purpose of the project is the student’s’ experiential education on cross-cultural and cross-border collaboration. Students were responsible for interviewing a top organizational leader residing in their country, comparing their findings with those of their international team-members, and creating a final team presentation.

We made use of a closed Facebook page for two Icebreakers, enabling students and professors to see and communicate with each other. The first Icebreaker was a ‘getting to know you’ where everyone responded to a series of questions and shared photos of their campuses and favorite places. The second Icebreaker began in “Glogster” where we created a poster of our favorite or most inspirational leader. Students linked their creations into Facebook.

In an effort to bridge communication gaps, Prof. Cooper met with the UDEM students via Skype, which gave the students an opportunity to ask questions and have an open exchange, which was quite successful. We followed with a Webex meeting in which Prof. Salcedo was able to meet the FIT students and we had a successful exchange once again.

Subsequently we created team folders in Google Drive to facilitate document sharing and team communications. Communication efforts grew more serious at this point as teams established connections to begin working through the steps of the project. We found the Icebreakers had a positive effect by offering the students a familiar tool in which to collaborate.

We provided students with the following project guidelines and tools:

- Organizational Leadership Project Interview Schedule Template
- Organizational Leadership Project Questionnaire Template
- COIL 2016 Organizational Leader Interview Project Guidelines
- COIL 2016 Organizational Leader Interview Project Guidelines - UPDATED

The following chart reflects the technology tools that were used during project development:

What resources did you use while working on this project? Which ones were especially helpful? Which ones would you use again? Did you find communication technology innovative and useful?

(23 responses)
Discussion of Outcomes

Following are select highlights of the course evaluations and reflections from students. Overall, the student response rate was 43%. Based on students’ feedback of leadership traits and methods, you can see that most agreed there were lessons learned in regard to the levels of understanding of leadership characteristics and effectiveness.

Were you able to identify if leadership skills are inherent to a successful manager? Were you able to differentiate between Leadership and Management?

(23 responses)

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“My team's answers were almost the same when in came to our interviews. Leadership is crucial to be a successful manager. One must know how to lead when in a management position. Leadership is key to the successful of a business.”

“I feel that I was able to identify between leadership and management because a leader to me, talks about how they're willing to help their team, they don't boast about what they tell them to do. This was evident in the leader I interviewed, who actually said "I don't expect my associates to do anything I wouldn't do, I wouldn't tell them to do something I wouldn't do."

“I do think you need great leadership skills in order to be a successful manager. I believe a leader is a person who encourages everyone and guides them in the direction they should go in. A manager is someone who tells people what to do and makes sure they're doing it right. The interviews taught me that it is important to have leadership skills to be a successful and respected manager. We did compare U.S and Mexico leaders and they had many of the same qualities.”

“Leaders motivate people towards success and managers help the leaders attain their goals and get the job done right. Both leaders from the US and Mexico were very similar in styles and achievements.”

“Both leaders had very similar answers even though they were in two completely
different fields. Leadership skills are inherent to a successful manager.”

“I believe that leadership skills are formed with the passage of time or the things you learn from others and you decide to implement in your life, the difference between the Mexican and American leader in our case was very similar.”

In their reflections students clearly expressed the challenges that they faced:

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We had scheduling issue, but it was not that big problem. We all understand that this is online class and every one has different schedule. We try to meet after everyone done with their work, so that everyone can participate and contribute to the work.

We had scheduling problems since there were so many members with all different schedules. To compensate for that, I made sure to continue to give the group a heads up when things were due to make sure we met the deadlines. Different members would also pick up the slack if others were not participating as much.

Scheduling was the number one problem for my team. Everyone had completely different schedules. As an online class, a student typically does the work on his/her own time, making it hard for other students ESPECIALLY in a different country and time zone to find the same time do work together.

There were no problems as the UDEM students were very cooperative with all of the guidelines of the assignment.

No problems.

Scheduling and meeting deadlines. The best solution was to listen to everyone and come up with things that worked for everyone.

Communication, scheduling, and meeting deadlines. I did a lot of the work to avoid missing deadlines when my group members didn't answer me.

We found it was hard to get everyone together at the same time. As a result, things had to move forward and get done even without some people present. We did our best to keep everyone updated via texting and messenger in order for everyone to be involved. Language was not a huge barrier, but it did exist. When messaging with the students in Mexico, I made sure to explain myself thoroughly.
Still, there is conclusive evidence of positive cross-cultural experiences.

**What did you learn about the value of intercultural communication?**

(23 responses)

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Key: 1 = least agreeable, 5 = Most agreeable

YES, I LEARNED THAT PEOPLE FROM US ARE VERY PROACTIVE

Yes it was difficult

I did learn about the value of intercultural communication. When working with people from another country it is important to understand their culture and work ethics.

Students also gave positive feedback of the experiential learning process in analyzing the differences and similarities in working across cultures:

**Interpersonal Relations: was positive and productive throughout the project process 1=Strongly Disagree 5=Strongly Agree**

(35 responses)

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And finally, the majority of the student respondents confirmed learning outcomes regarding the
global environment.

Did you learn issues that leaders face today leading in a global environment?
(23 responses)

![Bar graph showing responses]

Lessons to Date

To date students have adjusted to curriculum, which includes the implementation of a variety of technology tools, which are required to complete assignments and projects. The Facebook Icebreakers successfully “connected” students via social media, which is one of their most comfortable means of communication. This also allowed students freedom of creativity and for most the first chance to test language boundaries.

Following the Icebreakers students were assigned to teams. Teams consisted of 5-6 Mexican students and 2-3 American students. Initial communications met with many challenges to make contact with one another. It took follow-up and understanding to reach an agreed upon time to meet via Google Chat or Skype. Indeed, several teams added Face Time and Google Messenger as their choice for virtual meetings and frequent contact. In a few cases teams reached out to Professors to facilitate bringing team members together. At the project’s end only 1 team out of the 7 was not successful in meeting the project’s collaborative requirements.

In the final analysis, what was the real student experience? Following is a link to “Evaluation of Your Team Member’s Performance” completed by 70% of participants: https://docs.google.com/a/fitnyc.edu/forms/d/1VSQs2urDZXpmf3we2j1mpXUk39Rylo0q485NRRfFto/edit#responses

Professor’s’ Reflections
Mexican students have been enthusiastic about this project because it represents an opportunity to learn how leadership is executed in two different cultures.

Initially some U.S. students were apprehensive about participating in this collaboration. Indeed, one student withdrew from the course. However, after the Icebreakers and meeting Prof. Salcedo via Webex FIT students were much more enthusiastic. In the end most students felt this was an exceptional learning opportunity.

From my perspective, I will re-read all course instructions. It is more important than ever to be clear, concise and specific to put students at ease about the process. There is room for improvement here.

Additionally, flexibility on the part of the Professors is key. Revising the plan of action at an opportune moment such as the addition of Facebook Icebreakers and Google Forms evaluations can yield large rewards. Thankfully, frequent communications between professors allowed us to adjust due dates which improved the quality of the final projects in the end.

**Recommendations**

- Constantly review instructions to students to insure clarity.
- If one student asks a question respond to all students for transparency.
- Schedule more frequent “visits” from each Professor with both classes.
- Use Professor’s contacts for more executive level Leaders to interview.
- Include more COIL discussions in FIT Blackboard with the UDEM students.
- Add an early Reflection. Reflection does not have to wait until the course ends. It helps students to communicate concerns at the outset of the process.
- Allow more time for open conversations when the project is complete and before the course ends.
- Each Professor should visit the other’s campus.
- Inform students about Study Abroad opportunities.
- Develop Study Abroad abroad/exchange agreements between schools specific to Leadership Development.

**References**


Cooper, R., Salcedo J. (2016). *Organizational Leadership Project Questionnaire Template*. Fashion Institute of Technology & Universidad de Monterrey.


Reimagining Discussion Boards in Introductory Leadership Courses

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Abstract

Online asynchronous discussion boards can be a valuable tool for connecting students to leadership concepts, theories and models in introductory leadership survey courses. The author explains a scholarship of teaching project involving an in-depth look at the use of discussion boards. Recommendations are given for designing effective discussion boards that engage students and enhance their leadership learning. Student outcomes which resulted from redesigned discussion boards in the presenter’s courses included construction of knowledge, relevant connections between course material and personal lives, and critical reflection.

Introduction

Leadership Studies faculty who teach introductory survey courses are often faced with the challenge of engaging students. Faculty understand the importance of introductory leadership courses as they provide students with a (a) sound, academic framework to study leadership and (b) solid foundation for future leadership courses. Students, however, are not typically enthralled with learning about the plethora of leadership definitions, concepts, models and theories presented in introductory leadership courses. Additionally, it is in these introductory courses that many students decide whether or not they will continue with further study in the field. Student attempts to learn definitions, theories, models, concepts, etc. through rote memorization often leave them dissatisfied with course content. In order for students to appreciate introductory leadership content they need to connect what they are learning in the classroom to their own lives.

One way faculty can facilitate those connections is through the use of discussion boards. Several years ago the author began teaching a foundational leadership course entirely online. In converting the class to an online format, the author replaced classroom discussion content with online asynchronous discussion boards intentionally designed to help students analyze and apply leadership theories and concepts. It was not long before the author noticed a depth of engagement and learning not observed in her face-to-face classes. Student discussion board posts and replies indicated students were indeed making theory to practice connections and also challenging, supporting and learning from one another. In addition, student course evaluation ratings and comments reinforced the author’s sense that discussion boards were a valuable course component that helped students become genuinely interested in the course material. However, when the author first started teaching online a colleague shared that his discussion board assignments resulted in students providing minimalistic or canned answers. Fascinated (and sometimes even moved) by her students’ online interactions, the author engaged in a scholarship of teaching project to specifically learn what it was about discussion boards that facilitated or stifled student learning.

In this session participants will consider the issue of how the design of discussion boards impacts...
student learning in introductory, theory-based leadership courses. Session objectives include; a) participants will learn about broad concepts in the literature related to student learning and discussion boards, and b) participants will leave the session with nine specific recommendations they can utilize in their own courses.

Review of Related Scholarship

Unlike classroom discussion participation, asynchronous online discussion board participation provides students with the opportunity to reflect upon their responses and replies. As defined by Dewey (1910) reflection is the “active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it, and the further conclusions to which it tends” (p. 6). The U.S. Department of Education (2009) asserts that including opportunities for self-reflection in online courses is an essential component for increasing student achievement.

Reflection is a critical element of effective leadership education programs (Harvey & Jenkins, 2014). It helps students consider their perceptions of leaders/leadership and how they make subsequent interpretations (Densten & Gray, 2001). It also offers students an opportunity to connect course concepts to their personal lives (Moore, Boyd and Dooley, 2010, p. 5). By examining how leadership theories and models are evidenced in their own lives, students move from being passive to active learners. As active learners students engage in critical reflection which Harvey and Jenkins (2014) define as “an iterative process of returning to what one has studied, thought, experienced, done, and felt, and an autonomous but still relatively structured and disciplined process of synthesizing lessons, conclusions, uncertainties, and questions” (p. 79). Harvey and Jenkins go on to assert that by applying critical reflective practices students evaluate their experiences from a leadership perspective, and thus develop their own leadership abilities (p. 80).

Rainsbury and Malcolm (2003) explain how discussion boards help students learn course content and reflect critically. In their study students commented that posting on discussion boards made them read, research, think more for themselves and “generate new ideas and opinions” (p. 58). Meyer (2006) shared similar research findings stating that the use of discussion boards provided students with a chance to first analyze course content and peers’ posts, and then develop meaningful, well written, grammatically correct responses. This process is especially helpful for students for whom English is a second language (Alvarez-Torres, 2001) and can serve as a means of inclusiveness (Dengler, 2008). Furthermore, if the topic being discussed is sensitive or challenges students to consider their own biases or beliefs, an asynchronous online discussion board can be a safe place for students to formulate and openly express their thoughts and opinions. Students reading each other’s posts can then think critically and possibly create a deep learning that transforms their present knowledge into new knowledge (Lockyer, Gondocz, & Thivierge, 2004; Mauriano, 2006; Moon, 1999).

Smith (2001) cautions that the reflective process may be new to many students. Such students may default to trying to find the right answer in course texts or one which they deem will please their professor. Roberts (2008) makes a similar observation that without guidance and direction students might resort to merely providing “written logs or verbal narratives of events with little
critical thinking applied” (p. 118). To help avoid such shortfalls Huber (2002) asserts that leadership educators need to model for students what it means to engage in critical reflection.

This modeling, however, should not necessarily take place in the course discussion boards. When faculty refrain from directly participating in discussion boards, students tend to rely on each other’s comments and feedback rather than the instructor’s feedback (An, Shin, & Lim, 2009). Blackmon (2012) concurs noting that there was an inverse relationship between instructor presence and interactions amongst students in her research synthesis on outcomes related to chat room and discussion board use in online courses. She summarizes that while instructors should be accessible to students, instructors who intentionally minimize their social presence in online forums can help students begin to construct their own knowledge.

Instructors should also be aware that some students may feel isolated in online courses. If students do not feel connected to their peers (typically due to lack of peer reply to their discussion board posts), they might deem that their social presence and participation in the course is not valued (Richardson & Swan, 2003).

**Description of the Practice**

In this section the author describes how literature findings were used to set up discussion boards in an author-taught introductory online leadership studies course. Students were assigned six discussions throughout a standard 15-week semester, which cumulatively equaled 30% of their grade. For each discussion board students answered two or three questions (from a choice of five or six). Questions were either derived from end-of-chapter questions already included in one of the course texts (e.g. Crawford, Brungardt, & Maughan, 2007) or based on other course materials, such as videos. Students were also asked to meaningfully respond to one or two of their peers’ posts. The discussion board questions typically asked students to identify and apply a leadership theory, model or concept in a case study or to draw upon situations or experiences from their own lives. Some examples of discussion board question prompts used were:

- Select and identify an organization in which you are a member. Does the organization operate under an industrial or post-industrial paradigm, or a mix of both? Give three specific examples to support your assertion.
- Using the concepts covered in class, describe someone you know who is a servant leader.
- What were your thoughts about the two gender and leadership related articles you read this week? Anchor your response on related course material.
- Select an organization (e.g. school, work, volunteer organization, church, etc.) in which you are involved. Describe its artifacts, symbols, language, heroes, leaders and values. Overall, how would you summarize the organization’s culture to an outsider?

Students were provided with a document containing examples of student posts and grades, a grading rubric and an opportunity to practice using the discussion board tool. Each of these components is described in detail in the Recommendations section.

**Discussion of Outcomes and Reflections of the Practitioner**
The privilege of reading student discussion board responses has truly been one of the author’s greatest teaching joys. In fact, it rejuvenated the author’s interest in teaching our introductory leadership studies course. No longer was the discussion of theories and models boring for both students and instructor alike.

Generally speaking, students made meaningful, personal connections to leadership theories and models in their discussion board posts. For example, here is a slightly paraphrased portion of one student’s response to identifying and describing leaders in her life who displayed various leadership styles:

I was in a local chapter of the [name withheld]. The group’s president used a laissez-faire approach. This chapter had been in existence for almost 20 years. One of the president’s responsibilities was to assign leaders to all of the groups in this chapter; community service, education, and awards to name a few. The group leaders were assigned late in her presidency since the president felt each group would manage themselves and assign a leader. As a result, and without leadership in these groups, no community service was completed the year of her presidency, no educational classes were held, and at the awards meeting no awards were presented. In addition, membership plummeted that year to the point the chapter almost became non-existent.

In this example the author was pleased the student clearly articulated an understanding of laissez-faire leadership and the negative implications such a style can have for organizations. The student went on to make further course connections by discussing maturity levels, expertise and power roles, particularly as they pertained to the followers. She expressed regret that she did not believe at the time she could do much about the situation and seemed determined to not be a passive follower in the future.

In another discussion board students were asked to discuss their own leadership strengths and weaknesses. One student responded to his peer’s post by saying:

In reference to your belief that you can do everything on your own, I know where you come from. For me I began my career wanting no help in anything I did. I wanted to be the one to control all things which bore my name. However, I learned very quickly, especially when I moved into management, that delegation is key to being successful. Sure you can do it all yourself and be successful, but with great success comes more responsibility…doing it all yourself is impossible, and if you try you implode.

The students continued their discussion well beyond what was required for the assignment. This same level of authenticity and meaningful exchange may not have occurred had the students not been completing an online discussion board assignment.

The author believes it is the somewhat anonymous nature of an online discussion board that helps students feel more comfortable openly communicating with one another than when they are face-to-face. For example, two students in a previous author-taught introductory leadership studies course held an animated discussion board conversation about whether or not leaders were born or made. Rather than taking a stance that their position was right and their peer’s was
wrong the students made comments such as “I really enjoyed reading your post, but I think you misunderstood…” and “That is a point I did not consider.” In another discussion board exchange a student commented “I have to agree with your response to part one but I suppose my view regarding part two is slightly different. I am not so sure from how I read and interpreted your response that I agree with you.” The student who made the original post then replied with detailed clarification. It is extremely gratifying to see students respectfully disagree and respond to each other in a mature, thoughtful and professional manner, as well as be genuinely interested in understanding one another’s positions. The author concludes that it is the asynchronous aspect of discussion boards which allows students the time needed to reflect and carefully consider how they might reply to a peer with whom they disagree.

Recommendations

As Jarosewich et al. (2010) share about discussion boards, “If tasks, prompts, and instructor feedback are not properly structured, and students do not engage in higher-order thinking, then the potential for this useful tool will not be realized” (p. 120). Having used asynchronous discussion boards in online introductory leadership course for several years, the author has had many opportunities to reflect and try out techniques designed to maximize discussion board use.

The author’s first recommendation for other leadership educators is to develop a discussion board grading rubric. Depending on the length, number of replies expected, etc., consider carefully the corresponding point value. Well-written discussion board posts require time and effort which should be rewarded accordingly. Roberts (2008) suggests the following criteria be considered when grading reflective assignments, “…depth and clarity of discussion, application of course content to experiences, personal insight and learning, logic of conclusions, quality of examples, and technical aspects (e.g. format, grammar)” (p. 120).

Second, share examples of discussion board posts and what type of grades the posts received. Students need to get an idea about the appropriate length of the assignment to help them avoid extremes (e.g. very short, elementary type responses or overdone, long essay posts). Example posts also show students that online discussion boards are an academic assignment and they should avoid making casual responses that might be used in other online interactions (i.e. various forms of social media).

Also, if teaching an introductory undergraduate course the author suggests creating and encouraging students to participate in a non-graded practice discussion board near the beginning of the semester. Not all students have had online courses or they may incorrectly assume the expectations and discussion board grading criteria used by a professor in another course also apply in your course. It is equally important that students understand the assignment is a discussion board, not just an assignment in which they are to answer questions and submit responses. After the practice discussion board has concluded provide general feedback to the entire class anchored on the grading rubric. Students who do not score well should receive an individual email suggesting ways to improve their next post. Providing students with detailed feedback at the beginning of the course helps ensure future quality posts and student interactions.

Continuing, make sure students have a good understanding of how they should and should not
communicate with one another online, often referred to as netiquette (Shea, 1994; Strawbridge, 2006). It is incumbent upon the instructor to foster and create an online environment in which students can trust one another and feel safe and respected (Kolb & Kolb, 2005).

Fifth, refrain from participating in the discussion unless you need to intervene because of a netiquette violation. As was discussed in the literature review, instructors who minimize their social presence will help facilitate deeper student learning. If students share something highly personal on a discussion board, follow up with them privately.

Sixth, some students may feel isolated in online forums if they do not receive replies to their posts from peers. When students make original posts immediately preceding the posting deadline and other students have already finished the assignment requirements, the author privately emails the late-posting students to comment on their posts and encourage them to consider posting earlier on the next discussion board.

Another suggestion is to ensure that students do not grow weary of reading lots of long posts by splitting the class in half, or even thirds. Many online course platforms offer this group feature which can be used throughout the course or only on particular assignments.

Eighth, use the online course platform discussion board setting to restrict students from being able to read posts until after they have created their own original post. This forces students to connect to and reflect on the course material themselves.

As a final recommendation, leadership educators should consider how they might use asynchronous discussion boards in their face-to-face and hybrid courses. Some colleagues have shared that they use discussion boards to start a conversation online and then continue the conversation in class. Thus, students who might not initiate or participate in classroom conversations have their voices heard. When students have time to reflect and meet together they reportedly have much more engaging conversations than when the professor first introduced the topic in the classroom.

For leadership educators teaching introductory survey courses, getting students excited about and engaged by definitions, theories and models can sometimes be daunting. As Densten and Gray (2001) state, “teachers are faced with the challenge of presenting underlying theories in a way which will demonstrate the relevance of theory to their students” (p. 3). In general, instructors who design online courses which require students to use in-depth learning techniques such as integration and reflection show higher course achievement (Bliuc, Ellis, Goodyear, & Piggott, 2009). A well designed discussion board fosters both critical reflection and student engagement.

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Real Life Leader in the Mirror: An Online Undergraduate Leadership Course Assignment

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Abstract

Teaching online can be a challenge for leadership educators. This innovative practice involves an assignment given to undergraduate students in an online personal leadership course as an end of course final project. In this assignment, students synthesize leadership concepts by comparing and contrasting their personalities, interests, beliefs, and capacities with a leader in the media. Through this assignment, students demonstrate the leadership competency of self-awareness and development.

Introduction

Teaching leadership online can be a challenge. Online instructors are held to a higher standard of engagement with their students. While social presence and demonstrated immediacy can influence student satisfaction in online learning environments, the lack thereof can lead to decreased student satisfaction, motivation, and perceived levels of overall learning (Richardson & Swan, 2003). An instructor’s “actions or inaction inform students’ perceptions of faulty commitment and authenticity and, ultimately, students’ perceived learning experience” (Downing, 2016, p. 178). Thus, the assignments and curriculum plans designed by online educators must be intentional in how they engage students with the instructor and the course material.

Outside of the classroom, students are consumed with a variety of sensory experiences at the touch of their fingertips. Social media, online video games, web-based movie collections, YouTube videos, and other forms of online entertainment can pose as enticing obstacles to overcome for the online learner. As online learning environments become a norm in higher education, it is crucial for leadership educators to innovate new ways to engage students in the leadership development process from the other side of the computer screen. More so, leadership educators have the opportunity to turn the very obstacles that may prevent their students from engaging deeper in course material into helpful, innovative tools for the learning experience.

The opportunity for students to connect class material to examples seen outside of the classroom in their lives or the outer world can provide students with the aptitude to better comprehend, retain, and engage in the material being taught (Bach, 2011; Berk, 2009). Furthermore, the opportunity to utilize pop culture mediums for learning “can create authentic, meaningful and transformative teaching encounters with students of all levels” (Bach, 2011, p. 144). There is unlimited potential in how students may contextually apply course topics, especially in an online learning environment where the internet is at hand for discovering topic application.
Self-awareness is a key component of interpersonal leadership development, and “is vital to effective leadership” (Seemiller, 2014, p. 23). While college students enter the process of self-awareness as they move through the vectors of identity development (Chickering & Reisser, 1993), collegiate leadership educators may capitalize on this process through intentionally designed coursework and facilitation. For students to become self-aware and identify their values, vision, and personal qualities, it is necessary to provide an open, reflective, and creative learning environment (Pennington, 2006).

The objectives of this innovative practice include: 1) introduce participants to an assignment used in an online personal leadership course and 2) demonstrate how the assignment helps students gain leadership competencies in self-awareness and development. This assignment has been utilized twice in an online undergraduate personal leadership course.

**Review of Related Scholarship**

Day, Harrison, and Halpin’s (2009) theory of leadership development provides a pyramid model combining adult development, leader development, and leader learning. At the top of the pyramid model are the observable aspects of a leader’s development, including the acquisition of skills and competencies. While many leadership development efforts are focused on this observable level, these aspects reside on the broad foundation of a person’s identity development and their understanding of leadership (Day et al., 2009). According to Day, et al. (2009), as a leader’s identity becomes more crystallized, the more likely that the leader will seek out experiences to enact and develop aspects of themselves. One study found that “a high self-awareness score was the strongest predictor of overall success of a leader” (Flaum, 2009, p. 4).

Competencies are defined as the “knowledge, values, abilities, and behaviors that help an individual contribute to or successfully engage in a role or task” (Seemiller, 2014, p. xv). Seemiller (2014) created a list of leadership competencies as a measure for learning outcomes for academic leadership programs. The Student Leadership Competencies consist of sixty competency areas within eight categories; each of the sixty competency areas includes at least four competencies that reflect each of the following dimensions: knowledge of or an understanding of the value of a competency, value placed on a competency, ability to perform a behavior or skill, and behavior engagement. The eight categories include: learning and reasoning, self-awareness and development, group dynamics, personal behavior, civic responsibility, strategic planning, communication, and interpersonal interaction.

Seemiller’s (2014) competency category of self-awareness and development was utilized as a theoretical framework for this innovative practice. In the category of self-awareness and development, the competencies included are: understands oneself (knowledge), values understanding oneself (value), motivated to enhance the understanding of oneself (ability), and enhances the understanding of oneself (behavior). Understanding oneself refers to being aware of your personality, beliefs, capacities, and interests. Values understanding oneself is the belief that “it is important to be aware of one’s own personality, beliefs, capacities, and interests in an effort to engage in more authentic and productive behavior” (Seemiller, 2014, p. 24). The competency of being motivated to enhance the understanding of oneself is having the motivation to enhance one’s understanding of their personality, beliefs, capacities, and interests so that they
can develop a greater understanding of themselves and engage in more authentic and productive behavior. Finally, the competency of enhancing the understanding of oneself refers to actually engaging in behaviors to understand their personality, beliefs, capacities, and interests.

**Description of the Practice**

This practice includes an assignment “Real Life Leader in the Mirror” given in an online personal leadership course to help students synthesize their self-awareness and development as a leader. The assignment was completed at the end of the course. For this assignment, students were asked to think of a leader in the media that is similar to themselves individually. The leader chosen had to be someone who students could easily search for in the media (Internet, book, articles, television, etc.) and find background information on to help them assess some personal characteristics about this leader. Students were asked to describe how they and this leader are similar in characteristics using topics, concepts, and vocabulary learned in the course. Topics in the course included the five practices of exemplary leaders (Kouzes & Posner, 2014), values development, authentic leadership, strengths, personality type, emotional intelligence, balance, and creativity.

The assignment outcome was a written reflection describing how the student and the leader share similar interpersonal leadership characteristics. The assignment also required a brief overview of the leader in the written reflection along with the sources used for this information. The overview was to include enough information for the reader to get a general idea of who this person is and what made the student believe the student possesses characteristics in common with this person.

The students were informed they would probably not be able to clearly identify traits and characteristics of the leader in the media. For instance, it is less than likely to find an article listing the leader’s strengths or their values or emotional intelligence or way they balance their life. Instead, students were empowered to use the information located about the person and make conclusions about the discovered characteristics to complete the assignment. The key to this assignment is for the student to form these conclusions based on the facts and information about the leader. Students were reminded that they may be different from their chosen leaders in some ways. It was acceptable to point out these differences in the written reflection as well.

**Discussion of Outcomes**

The assignments from students revealed the meeting of the leadership competency of self-awareness and development. Students articulated knowledge of self, an understanding of self, the value of understanding self, ability to understand self, and the behavior of actually enhancing their understanding of self.

**Understands oneself (knowledge)**

Students demonstrated they were aware of their personality, beliefs, capacities, and interests through this assignment. This competency was the one most easily assessed through the assignment. Many students chose the topics of personality types, values, strengths, and
exemplary leadership behaviors to compare to their chosen leader. They gave examples from their life of how they demonstrate knowledge of personality, beliefs, capacities, and interests through this assignment.

**Values understanding oneself (value)**

Students demonstrated their value of understanding self through this assignment. Though not as easily assessed from this assignment, there was some indication that students believed it was important to know your personality, beliefs, capacities, and interests. Some students discussed how they can now leverage their leadership capacities to be more effective leaders.

**Motivated to enhance the understanding of oneself (ability)**

Students demonstrated their motivation to understand self as they discussed researching more about their own personality types. Some mentioned that they actually reevaluated what their strengths or personality type meant as they were writing this paper. Some students discussed how the assignment helped them critically evaluate their less preferred aspects of self and now they can use it to improve for future situations.

**Enhances the understanding of oneself (behavior)**

Changes in behavior were evident in this assignment as students did actually enhance their understanding of self. Some students remarked that this assignment helped them gain a more clear idea of aspects of their leadership which were helpful and ones that may need improvement.

**Reflections of the Practitioner**

This assignment “Real Life Leader in the Mirror” seemed to really help students gain self-awareness by looking at themselves through the lens of someone else. Some students remarked at how fun the assignment actually was and that they had not really ever thought of how they compared to other leaders. Leaders chosen for the assignment ranged from war heroes to political leaders to athletes to movie characters. Examples of specific leaders featured in students’ assignments included Abraham Lincoln, Dick Cheney, Ellen DeGeneres, Yoda from Star Wars, General Martin Dempsey, J. J. Watt, Oprah Winfrey, and Hillary Clinton.

**Recommendations**

The assignment was very easy to assign. Through an online format, very little instruction was given other than the assignment description and rubric. Students did very well in synthesizing course topics for this assignment. If there was one thing that some students may not have done as well in, it was the articulation of the course concepts. Some students tended to use vague language instead of the terminology from the course when explaining characteristics about themselves and their chosen leader. Leadership practitioners who want to utilize this assignment should reiterate for students the need to connect course concepts by using vocabulary and terminology from course materials and to use proper citations throughout the paper.
References


Student Perceptions of using Web-based Applications for Engaging with Leadership Learning

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Abstract

The use of web-based technologies and personal electronic devices can be used as a means for understanding leadership concepts. Free online applications like Prezi, VoiceThread, Padlet, and Powtoon, allow opportunities for leadership students to demonstrate both learning and application of leadership concepts. These web-based tools allow facilitators to create learning environments that increase engagement. Preliminary data regarding perceptions of using web-based technologies for learning among 59 undergraduate leadership students suggests that engagement occurs on three levels—behaviorally, emotionally, and cognitively—as well as promoting a transfer of learning for uses outside the classroom. An overview of these tools will be presented as well as strategies for using these tools to engage students with specific leadership concepts.

Introduction

As mobile-device ownership and usage increases among college students, the exploration of using such means for engaged learning is critical. Incorporating web-based technologies for learning provides opportunities for innovative and creative forms of engagement in educational and training environments. Everything from animated presentation tools to real-time polling can be utilized through personal electronic devices (cell phones, tablets, laptops, etc.). Students having access to such technologies represent a growing interest toward using these tools for learning. Pew research suggests that Millennials (born between 1981 and 1992), have a tendency to viewed their cell phones as a necessary and important appendage and hold to the perspective that their use and adoption of technology is what makes them different from other generations. (Taylor & Keeter, 2010). A 2012 finding by EDUCAUSE, suggests that university students exert an expectation for faculty to use emerging technology in both personal and academic ways (Dahlstrom, 2012).

Because of these expectations, web-based applications like Prezi, VoiceThread, Padlet, and Powtoons, allow users with light to moderate technology skills to develop professional and engaging presentations using their personal electronic devices. Each of these are considered web-based, presentation software, with differences among the features offered and overall layout. But more important than understanding new applications, technologies like these may be strategically aligned with certain pedagogical approaches for the purpose of increasing student engagement—behaviorally, emotionally, and cognitively. Below is a listing of these applications, along with a brief explanation:
Web-based Applications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prezi</td>
<td>Viewed as an alternative to PowerPoint, Prezi makes use of an on-screen canvas allows users to zoom and pan to various parts to emphasize specific ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.prezi.com">www.prezi.com</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powtoon</td>
<td>A user-friendly, and intuitive animated presentation application. Most effort requires ‘click and drag’ responses from users choosing images, video, and other types of media.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.powtoon.com">www.powtoon.com</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VoiceThread</td>
<td>A slide-sharing application allowing for multiple users to collaborate. Allows users to add voice, text, images, or video, as well as provide comments to collaborators.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.voicethread.com">www.voicethread.com</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Padlet</td>
<td>An online-based bulletin board allowing users to display text, files, video, and images.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.padlet.com">www.padlet.com</a></td>
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This session focuses on the use of web-based technologies to increase student engagement as defined by Fredrick, Blumenfeld and Paris (2004), who developed a classification of engagement arranged into three conceptual areas; behavioral (actions), emotional (feelings), and cognitive (thoughts). Using this understanding of engagement, a self-perception survey regarding the use of certain web-based technologies such as Prezi, VoiceThread, Padlet, and Powtoons was developed by leadership faculty and administered to 59 undergraduate students enrolled in five sections of a leadership course. The survey contained 20 items arranged into three clusters pertaining to behavioral, emotional, and cognitive student perceptions of using these web-based tools for learning leadership concepts. Although the research is preliminary, early data indicates positive student perceptions of using web-based technologies for learning. The data is also categorized to explore patterns regarding to what extent student perceptions of using such technologies might have toward specific behavioral, emotional, and cognitive aspects of their learning. This session will illustrate how web-based technologies can be used with students as an effective means for understanding leadership concepts. Participants for this session will also be given strategies on how to promote these web-based technologies to leadership students for creating, evaluating, analyzing, and demonstrating leadership concepts.

Review of Related Scholarship

The interest in using emerging technology for purposes of learning is nothing new. But research supports the idea for integrating web-based applications with learning and offers promise for several specific reasons.

One issue regards the attention needed by leadership programs toward emerging technology and the importance it has among current and future generations. Wisnewski (2010) conducted a one-
year research on Millennials, and suggests for institutions that offer programs in leadership to design more creative and new approaches for integrating the use of technology with the processes of learning and teaching. She introduces an active learning (constructivist) model to connect emerging technology with new and former experiences as an effective means for learning. She indicated that this kind of approach for leadership programs may “enhance leadership effectiveness” (p. 64). The use of web-based technologies offers an innovative approach requiring students to go beyond a basic understanding of leadership concepts. Web-based applications encourage them toward analysis, evaluation, creativity, and mastery of an innovative communication not often evidenced through traditional academic exercises (e.g., writing a paper).

Another important aspect of web-based applications involves the students’ use of personal mobile devices. Recent studies have reported 91% of adults as having ownership of a cell phone (Brenner, 2013), with 99% of college students using cell phones and 97% utilizing text messaging as their highest source of communication (Hanley, 2010). An example of a millennial perspective on technology is illustrated, in NEA Today magazine, when a seventeen-year old high school student expressed an opinion on what those in education need to understand regarding technology. He stated, “don’t just use technology for the sake of technology—find a way for it to deepen our understanding of a subject” (Long, 2014, para. 24). Those who teach may benefit from exploring ways in which emerging technologies may promote acceptance and relevance among young learners.

Finally, a pedagogical approach to engage leadership students using web-based applications should continue to build as new technologies emerge. Building on the original work of Bloom’s three learning domains (1956), and drawing from a meta-analysis of forty-four studies on engagement, Fredrick, Blumenfeld and Paris (2004), describe engagement as a multifaceted construct involving three categories—behavioral, emotional, and cognitive. The behavioral aspect of engagement regards the amount of physical activity or response students give toward their learning. The emotional category pertains to the affective feelings and attitudes students express toward learning. Cognitive engagement is the level of thought-activity students give while learning. Odom, Jarvis, Sandlin, and Peek (2013), suggested that the use of social media in leadership programs promotes student engagement as defined by Bloom’s three domains of learning. They stress the use of particular technology as having the potential to encourage cognitive, affective, and physical responses.

In terms of behavioral engagement, students using web-based applications for learning leadership concepts may discover a transfer of learning. Bjork (1994) defined transfer of learning as, “the ability to use information to solve problems that arise in a context different (if only slightly) from the context in which the information was originally learned” (p. 187). Research on emotional engagement has been focused on students’ affective reactions to their learning (Fredrick, Blumenfeld and Paris, 2004). Millennials view their mobile devices as important appendages of themselves and take pride in defining their generation through emerging technology (Taylor & Keeter, 2010). This perception may influence certain affective responses when using web-based applications to increase their understanding of leadership. Studies on cognitive engagement have stemmed from literature on school engagement and literature regarding the processes of learning (Fredrick, Blumenfeld and Paris, 2004).
based learning tools should have the potential to promote deep levels of learning. Stover, Noel, McNutt, and Heilmann (2015) surveyed ninety-eight undergraduate leadership students who had used mobile-based polling in response to class questions and discussions. In their study, students reported having a good grasp of the course material and an increase in engagement after using their personal devices for learning in class.

**Description of the Practice**

Undergraduate students from five sections of the same organizational leadership course were randomly assigned (using playing cards) to complete an assignment using one of four web-based presentation tools—Prezi, VoiceThread, Powtoon, or Padlet. Students were given instructions to use their assigned presentation tool to: 1) describe an example of a personally experienced or imagined issue or need expressed by organizational members or their leaders, 2) provide a certain number of images or video to illustrate the example and, 3) research and include mention of a specific assessment, model, or theory, which might help increase awareness of this issue to organizational members. Because this course is designed as an introduction to professional coaching and training, the assignment promotes the practice of understanding organizational training needs. Students were given ample time (outside of class) to register and view the tutorials that each presentation tool offers, in order to familiarize themselves with the features of web-based tool they were assigned. Students were also given specific instructions as to format, word count and grading rubric.

Although Prezi, VoiceThread, Powtoon, and Padlet have distinct differences in their layout and features, they share commonalities which allow for use among student groups and fairness in grading. Each shares the ability for students to type their responses, maintaining similar expectations as writing a traditional paper (word count, spelling, logic, citations, etc.). Each of these tools also allows students to upload and insert various forms of common media, such as video and images from online search engines. Including this requirement may help to promote creativity as students learn to integrate images and video appropriate to an organizational needs. These tools are web-based, meaning they are accessible through the internet, there is no software to download, and changes are automatically saved in real-time while presentations are being created. Lastly, students were directed to upload their web-based link into the university course learning management system for viewing from peers, and grading from the faculty. It is important to note, that some students preferred to showcase their final projects during class time through video projection.

**Discussion of Outcomes / Results**

A twenty-item survey regarding student perceptions of using web-based tools for learning leadership concepts was developed by the course instructor using Qualtrics, an online market research platform. A link to the survey was uploaded to courses through the university learning management system—allowing for student access. Students were directed by the course instructor as to the nature of the survey and the timeline for completing it. Instructions for taking the survey indicated as having no benefit to the student, that participation was voluntary, and that each response would be strictly confidential to the course instructor. The number of survey items and their specific groupings were as follows:
Fifty-nine students among five sections of the same leadership course responded to the survey. Participants reported the following distribution of web-based tools: Padlet 22%, Prezi 32%, VoiceThread 15%, and Powtoon 31%.

The intent of this survey was to determine if students perceived themselves as being engaged with learning leadership concepts through the use of web-based applications. Using the framework of Fredrick, Blumenfeld and Paris (2004), items pertaining to engagement were categorized into three groupings---behavioral, emotional, and cognitive related items. The four behavior-related items pertained to students who reported showcasing their work to others not connected to the course (e.g., friends, co-workers, family, etc.), and their intent to use the web-based tool in another context (e.g., another course or job-related project). The emotional-related items asked for specific affective responses such as feeling engaged, fun, and the student’s perceived level of creativity with using the web-based tool. Cognitive-related items asked students to determine the extent to which using a web-based tool enhanced their learning, the level of concentration needed, and whether or not using such a tool helped them to gain increased understanding of a real-world leadership issue. An initial overview of results present generally positive views of using web-based applications among leadership students (mean range 1.68 to 2.45). Results for the 12 items relating to engagement are summarized in the following table.

| Item Grouping                                | Number of Items |
Overall, there is a general sense that students involved with this course perceived the use of web-based tools as a positive and engaging learning experience. Additionally, the use of such technologies allows students to view and share their work using personal mobile devices. Although the behavior-related category had higher variance, students reported either intent or actual follow-through in sharing their completed projects outside the classroom. The higher variance may be a result of items geared to elicit intent rather than actual behavior. Two items

**Reflections of the Practitioner**
did not use the Likert-scale, and are worthy of mention. The first pertains to students sharing their work with someone outside of class with 64% reporting yes and 46% reporting no. Although their reasons for sharing are unknown, it may suggest that students have gained a sense of accomplishment in learning. The second item was categorized with the cognitive-related section and asked students if their perceived level of concentration for this assignment was equivalent, more, or less than writing a two-page paper. Seventy-four percent indicated equivalence or more, suggesting that this activity was viewed as a legitimate assignment, equal or more to writing a paper.

The course instructor intends to continue with this assignment and collect further data from future student groups. The data presented here are preliminary and generalized. Efforts are needed to produce a more meaningful statistical analysis. For example, the survey could be distributed to higher numbers of students who enroll in the same course in future semesters. This would contribute to a stronger sampling size. Further analysis should be focused on differences among demographics, such as variances between particular web-based tools assigned to students. A factor analysis on survey items or loading of factors could be employed toward understanding the concept of engagement as well as attempting to measure it.

**Recommendations**

During one semester of this course, a student reported using Powtoon during an interview for full-time employment, with the result of accepting a job offer. Feedback like this may suggest that students prefer to use emerging technologies for learning, but also transfer this learning to contexts outside the classroom. If engagement is truly multifaceted as Fredrick, Blumenfeld and Paris (2004) suggest, then web-based applications for learning have the potential to encourage behavioral, emotional, and cognitive responses from students. Research on particular groups like Millennials, indicates trends toward a desire to use personal devices for being engaged with their learning. If this continues, faculty of leadership studies need to explore ways to embrace these kinds of opportunities as a means for promoting learning environments that are truly engaging.

**References**


**Workshop / Session**

**Ideas for Involving Participants**

A workshop session on this particular topic would include displaying posters around the room, having QR (quick response) codes printed on each. Workshop participants would be encouraged to move around the room, using their smart phone QR app, to view actual Prezi’s, Powtoons, Padlets, and VoicThread projects completed by undergraduate leadership students. This exercise would help to promote / illustrate engagement. The QR codes would display at large sizes and be similar to the following:
Prospecting For Elusive Communication Skills:  
The Importance in Undergraduate and Executive Leadership Education

Gregory T. Gifford & Christine H. Shaefer  
*Federal Executive Institute*

Robert L. McKeage  
*University of Scranton*

Abstract

Communication surrounds us, especially in this technological age of streaming content and constant connection via text, email, and a host of apps. This can lead to the assumption that we can communicate well and with ease. Unquestionably, most people can engage in communication behaviors; however, questions arise regarding the effectiveness of the communication. People who believe they communicate well yet do not may find it difficult to achieve leadership roles, and for those who do, they may struggle in their efforts to lead if they fail to effectively communicate. How can educators help leaders build their communication skills in ways that resonate and have lasting impact? Two current programs suggest that developing communication skills by experiencing short lectures on theories/behaviors followed by recorded practice with relevant scenarios and subsequent feedback/reflection can achieve meaningful results.

Introduction

As attributed to playwright George Bernard Shaw, “the single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.”

Two unrelated leadership development programs underscore the practical truth of Shaw’s statement as each sought to make the practice of effective communication skills tangible to learners and impactful to their roles as leaders. Successful communication among colleagues revealed parallel efforts of the educators and similar positive outcomes for the participants – undergraduate students in one case and working professionals in another – resulting in this Innovative Practice Paper.

The program for undergraduate students grew out of needs identified by local corporations as skills gaps among recent college graduates, resulting in an honors program supporting 15 students having an average GPA of 3.6. The group spends two years together in five classes and four seminars, focusing a significant amount of time on one of the primary skills gap – communication. While this includes written communication, this paper examines only the practices related to oral communication.

Working professionals transitioning into leadership roles constitute the participants of the other program addressed herein. A federal agency recognized that technically-capable individuals need additional skills to serve as effective leaders, so it worked with the [professional development agency] to create a one week Emerging Leader Program (ELP), of which two and a
half days solely address one-on-one communication skills. (Another day of the program concentrates on presentation skills, using a similar lecture-recording-feedback approach, but which is beyond the locus of this paper and its presentation due to space and time constraints.) Each ELP averages 32 generally highly educated participants; Table 1 outlines participant demographics from four recent programs.

Table 1.
Emerging Leader Program Participant Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highest Level of Education</th>
<th>Number of Years with Agency</th>
<th>Age Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HS/some college</td>
<td>Less than 1 yr.</td>
<td>20-29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate degree</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
<td>30-39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelors degree</td>
<td>4-5 years</td>
<td>40-49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters degree</td>
<td>7-9 years</td>
<td>50-59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JD</td>
<td>10+ yrs.</td>
<td>60-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD</td>
<td>1+ years</td>
<td>70+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>54.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>45.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As represented in the four most recent programs (Sept. - Nov. 2015)

Both programs ground the learning in presentation of effective communication theories and behaviors, and repeatedly, active listening surfaces as the behavior most critically in need of practice. Progressive recordings of learners engaged in relevant communication scenarios as well as learner feedback reveal both skill improvement and significant realization of the impact communication can have on one’s ability to lead.

The presentation associated with this Innovative Practice Paper will include an overview of the studied programs in relation to existing literature, clear and concise outlines of the key practices included in each program, a summary of learner results from these programs, recommendations for implementing elements of these programs into other leadership development offerings, and an active listening exercise to engage attendees and underscore its importance not only in communication but also in teaching communication. Through this paper presentation, attendees will be able to connect existing knowledge to the two programs outlined herein, reframe known communication/leadership development offerings through the practices in the subject programs, and validate the need for active listening for effective communication to occur.

**Review of Related Scholarship**

Business communication receives ample attention as a subject area offered by colleges and universities (Du-Babcock, 2006), and research on leadership has long identified communication
as a key element for leader effectiveness (Riggio, Riggio, Salinas, & Cole, 2003). According to Riggio, et al. (2003), distinct elements of the communication process include sending/encoding messages, receiving/decoding messages, and regulating communication. Consideration of each of these stages, separately and combined, provides a useful and learner-friendly framework for communication development coursework.

In a review of more than 200 sources, Conrad and Newberry (2012) found heavy emphasis on the need for leaders to develop and use effective communication skills in order to succeed. Additionally, studied writers maintained that leaders can learn such skills. Table 2 highlights three categories of business-related communication skills created as a result of the comprehensive literature review.

Table 2.
Needed Business Communication Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizational</th>
<th>Leadership</th>
<th>Interpersonal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initiating open discussion</td>
<td>Arousing enthusiasm</td>
<td>Active listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolving conflict</td>
<td>Being a change catalyst</td>
<td>Building rapport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating information networks</td>
<td>Creating group synergy</td>
<td>Demonstrating emotional self-control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching important skills</td>
<td>Building team bonds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using information technology</td>
<td>Expressing encouragement</td>
<td>Building trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing performance feedback</td>
<td>Being persuasive</td>
<td>Relating to people of diverse backgrounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negotiating</td>
<td>Building optimism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing business correspondence</td>
<td></td>
<td>Demonstrating respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making convincing presentations</td>
<td></td>
<td>Building relationships</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In their review of relevant literature, Conrad and Newberry (2012) found clear consensus regarding the importance of communication skills as well as a lack of preparedness in regard to these skills on the part of new graduates. As a result, the authors concluded that rather than general communication teaching, training should emphasize specific skills that lead to successful outcomes in business. This echoed Du-Babcock’s (2006) realization that teaching business communication requires real-world, skill-building learning experiences.

Similarly, and more than 20 years earlier, Argyris (1991) pointed to the need to connect leadership development program content to actual business problems. Leadership researchers continued to find the strength in this approach, such as Conger (2004) who drew a related conclusion in his study of leadership capability which asserted that training customized to specific needs of the audience, placed in context of real-life challenges, can have great impact on leader development.
Making the deliberate practice of developing leader communication skills (in a higher education institution or a professional development program) relevant to the learners follows not only sound andragogic practice but also addresses concerns raised by researchers such as Argyris (1991) and Spitzberg (1994) who found that people tend to place the blame for ineffective communication at the feet of others and therefore see little need to improve their own skills in this area. By engaging learners in communication exchanges similar to those they encounter in their leadership roles – and recording those exchanges – students recognize the mutual responsibility for successful communication.

As Epner and Bail (2011) wrote, “mindful and attentive listening is arguably the most critical skill for effective communication, despite the fact that many people equate effective communication with speaking rather than listening” (p. 41). Demonstrating to learners – especially reluctant ones – how leadership communications can easily derail through “unproductive parallel conversations” (Argyris, 1991, p. 102), quickly calls attention to a skills gap in need of filling and sets the stage for meaningful skills development.

Researchers have long studied and reported on the value of reflection, especially reflection on experience (Ferry, & Ross-Gordon, 1998). With students now prepared to learn and participating in a program based on real-world scenarios, the incorporation of reflection on the skills practice increases opportunities for knowledge retention and behavior change.

**Description of the Practices**

**Practice #1: Short lectures**

Both honors undergraduate students and working professionals transitioning into leadership roles express the desire to know not only how to communicate effectively but also why these methods work, as well as the theories that support them. To achieve this, both programs studied herein include a series of brief lectures to scaffold the experiential learning to come.

The professional development program maximizes the limited time with participants and offers a practical takeaway for implementation on the job by focusing its lectures on a Leadership Communication Skills (LCS) Model, depicted in Figure 1. Each of the three key skills outlined in the model receive separate and deliberate explanation and practice (see Appendix A for the LCS module schedule outlining the progression of activities).

**Practice #2: Recorded exercises with relevant scenarios**

The two-year progression of the undergraduate honors program allows extended practice opportunities, enhanced by the university’s behavioral laboratory including a conference room setting, audio/video recording facilities and an observation room with one-way glass. During the first year, students focus on individual presentations based on assigned topics. In the following term, students participate in a case study analysis and its presentation to faculty and outside evaluators. The program culminates in the students’ senior years with a course entitled “Successful consulting, theory and practice.” Students study the theoretical aspects of consulting in the first half of this course, and then undertake, in the second half of the course, a consulting
project for a real company. The capstone of the project rests with a formal boardroom presentation to and verbal exchange with the client.

Participants in the Emerging Leader Program divide into groups of four, each with a trained facilitator, and engage in a series of five recorded role play exercises using scenarios developed with input from their agency to best address situations they likely have or will encounter as they continue in leadership roles within the agency. The module begins with each participant playing him/herself in a leadership role in a workplace scenario that is video recorded. This “baseline” exercise serves to gauge the existing communication skills of each participant and is undertaken prior to any skill-based instruction.

Following this typically unexpected, “on-the-spot” activity, the short lectures as outlined above introduce participants to the individual skills within the LCS model with each followed by the role play activity for that skill which includes video recording of the exchange. In each of these practice sessions, the participant practicing the communication skill plays an “A” role in the given scenario, and another participant plays a “B” role. After practicing each skill in the model, each participant puts all the skills together and redoes the initial scenario (a “baseline retake”) to assess improvements in his/her communication between the beginning of the course and the end.

Figure 1. Leadership Communication Skills (LCS) Model

**Practice #3: Feedback/reflection**

In both programs, reviewing the videos allows the students to see their communication behaviors, which rarely happens outside of developmental settings, and calls to their attention things they often were unaware of about their exchanges. Extending the learning, participants receive detailed feedback, both written and oral, and opportunities to reflect on that feedback before undertaking additional exercises.

In the first year of the undergraduate program, students not giving a presentation constitute the
audience and use a simple rubric (Appendix B) as a guide for giving feedback. Also, the instructor adds voice-over feedback to the recording of the presentation. Each student receives the feedback sheets and recordings of his/her presentation. Students use the feedback for study and reflection and to tabulate their personal scores. Near the end of the term, students receive the aggregate average scores of all the presentations.

The group presentations during the next term require a different rubric (Appendix C), and students receive written and oral feedback at the end of their presentation on which they reflect and use to further assess areas in need of improvement. The final boardroom presentations provide the students and the instructor with feedback directly from the clients, allowing the students to experience supervisor-style evaluations and the instructor to discern what, if any, very specific areas of the communication skills gap employers still seek students to fill before joining the workforce.

Written feedback to the person in the “A” role in the Emerging Leaders Program scenarios comes from the participants in the small group, as well as the facilitator, using provided checklists for the skill focused on in the particular session. The “A” person receives the checklists and verbal feedback as well as a copy of the video on an SD card that is his/her to keep. This process occurs with each video recording session – and small groups change with each session, adding diversity to the feedback pool – allowing participants to reflect on their behaviors before moving on to the next scenario.

The final role play brings the original small group back together for each participant to re-do the scenario first done as the “baseline,” followed by the review of both the original and the redone video. Again, the participant receives oral and written feedback (Appendix D) as well as a recording of this final role-play. The module concludes with each participant meeting one-on-one with the facilitator with whom s/he worked for the baseline and baseline retake activities for coaching regarding leadership communication skills and an action plan for applying the learning done throughout the program.

The combination of real-world experiential learning and feedback-informed reflection provide the participants in these programs with impactful and needed communication skills development applicable for a wide variety of positions and leadership roles.

**Discussion of Outcomes/Results**

For the undergraduate student program, the university set goals of each student achieving a minimum of 2.5 on Rubric A and at least 70% of the students receiving at least a 2.0 on Rubric B. The students in this honors program consistently score higher than average undergraduate students, and over time, scores on both Rubrics have improved. Additionally, students have offered very positive feedback about the impact of the program, such as:

- “I became more aware of how important interaction with your audience is with communicating”
- “By watching others talk, it helps me realize what I need to do to be a better communicator, for example, eye contact, body language, elimination of ums, etc.”
• “It causes me to reflect on my own speaking habits (um, hand motions, body language, etc.) and constructively criticize myself to improve”

Perhaps one of the best comments this program has received came from a client executive who had just listened to the formal presentation and said, “five minutes into their presentation, I forgot they were students.”

While the Emerging Leader Program doesn’t score or rate participants, facilitators and participants regularly report improved role-plays by the end of the course. A question in the end-of-program evaluation (which includes all modules, not just LCS) asks what three things participants learned that they expect to improve their on-the-job performance, and elements of LCS appear on that list in the overwhelming majority of responses. Representative of qualitative responses participants give on their evaluations of the LCS portion of the program, one recent participant wrote:

All the sessions held on communication were incredibly relevant to me. I identified many communication mistakes that I was not aware I was making, and I learnt a series of skills and techniques that will have a big impact on my work.

Reflections of the Practitioner

In reporting on these practices, we acknowledge that designs of the programs relate primarily to U.S./English-speaking workplaces (though the Emerging Leader Program includes foreign participants and participants working throughout the world; however presentation time constraints prohibit giving specific attention to this). Additionally, while the programs do not specifically address communications aided by technology (e.g. video-conferencing), the skills practiced can transfer to such platforms, and in-person skill development offers a solid foundation on which to build.

Recommendations

These programs demonstrate success in heeding the call of industry and government to aid in the development of communication skills for leaders through the use of short lectures, realistic scenario-based experiential learning, and feedback combined with purposeful reflection on theories and the practice of them. Among the theories and skills addressed through these programs, active listening has emerged as a cornerstone for effective communication and an impactful learning point for students, and longitudinal studies may support the feedback received from past participants about the lasting influences of these programs on their communication and leadership.

References


Appendix A

Emerging Leader Program – LCS Schedule

**THURSDAY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2:00 - 2:25 p.m.</td>
<td>Introduction of facilitators and course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:25 - 2:30</td>
<td>Walk to team rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30 - 3:35</td>
<td>Baseline video <em>(team rooms)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:35 - 3:50</td>
<td>Break &amp; return to general session room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:50 - 4:30</td>
<td>Overview &amp; Listening lecturettes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:30 - 4:35</td>
<td>Walk to team rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:35 - 5:25</td>
<td>Listening video <em>(team rooms)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FRIDAY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:00 - 8:10 a.m.</td>
<td>Debrief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:10 - 8:15</td>
<td>Walk to team rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:15 - 9:40</td>
<td>Listening video <em>(team rooms)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:40 - 9:55</td>
<td>Break and return to general session room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:55 - 10:25</td>
<td>Inquiry lecturette</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:25 - 10:30</td>
<td>Walk to team rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Inquiry video <em>(team rooms)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 - 1:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Lunch, reflection, walking, stretching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30 - 2:20</td>
<td>Inquiry video <em>(team rooms)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:20 - 2:25</td>
<td>Walk to general session room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:25 - 2:55</td>
<td>Feedback lecturette</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:55 - 3:10</td>
<td>Break and go to team rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:10 - 5:20</td>
<td>Feedback video <em>(team rooms)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:20 - 5:25</td>
<td>Walk to general session room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:25 - 5:30</td>
<td>Brief reflection</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SATURDAY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:00 - 8:10 a.m.</td>
<td>Debrief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:10 - 8:15</td>
<td>Walk to team rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:15 - 8:45</td>
<td>Feedback video <em>(team rooms)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:45 - 8:50</td>
<td>Walk to general session room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:50 - 9:15</td>
<td>Putting it all Together lecturette</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:15 - 9:30</td>
<td>Break and go to team rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Baseline retake video <em>(team rooms)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:15 - 1:45</td>
<td>Lunch, reflection, walking, stretching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:45 - 2:00</td>
<td>Action plan, part II lecturette <em>(general session room)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00 - 4:45</td>
<td>One-on-one coaching, accountability partners, evaluations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:45 - 5:15</td>
<td>Processing and wrap-up</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B

Undergraduate program: Rubric A

Please rate the student in the following areas.

Student: ________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCALES</th>
<th>1.</th>
<th>2.</th>
<th>3.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not good enough</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good enough</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Way far good enough</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.</th>
<th>2.</th>
<th>3.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preparation/ content</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eye Contact</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other nonverbal communication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kept Interest of Audience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Communication skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Express thoughts clearly and concisely</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Including good listening skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gave Audience time to ask questions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional/Personal appearance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Visual Aids/ charts/graphs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relaxed Presentation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tone of voice, pace of talk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answered questions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Presentation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was Enthusiastic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other Comments:

Date: ___________________________
Appendix C

Undergraduate program – Rubric B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL</th>
<th>TRAIT</th>
<th>Does Not Meet Expectations 1</th>
<th>Meets Expectations 2</th>
<th>Exceeds Expectations 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ETHICS</td>
<td>Choose an Action</td>
<td>Has difficulty identifying a course of action from among alternatives</td>
<td>Commits to a reasonable course of action that is based on a consideration of ethical principles and social justice implications.</td>
<td>Commits to a course of action that evidences a thoughtful reflection of benefits, risks, consequences, and principles of ethics and social justice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memo, Question 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ETHICS</td>
<td>Considers Stakeholders</td>
<td>Is unsure as to who will be affected by the decision.</td>
<td>Accurately identifies the major stakeholders.</td>
<td>Determines who should be involved in the decision-making process and thoroughly reflects on the viewpoints of the major stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memo, Question 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ETHICS</td>
<td>Identifies Dilemma</td>
<td>Has only a vague idea of what the dilemma is and is uncertain what must be decided.</td>
<td>Identifies the dilemma, including pertinent facts, and ascertains what must be decided.</td>
<td>Describes the dilemma in detail having gathered pertinent facts. Ascertains exactly what must be decided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memo, Question 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WRITTEN COMMUNICATION</td>
<td>Purpose &amp; Organization</td>
<td>The purpose and focus of the writing are not clear to the reader. Does not develop ideas cogently, uneven and ineffective overall.</td>
<td>The writer has made good decisions about focus, organization, style, and content so as to achieve the purpose of the writing.</td>
<td>The writer’s decision about focus, organization, style, and content fully elucidate the purpose and keep the purpose at the center of the piece.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WRITTEN COMMUNICATION</td>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Uses words that are unclear; sentence structures are inadequate for clarity; and spelling and grammar errors are seriously distracting.</td>
<td>Word forms are correct, sentence structure is effective. Presence of a few errors is not distracting.</td>
<td>Develops concise standard English sentences that contain no spelling and grammar errors. Balances a variety of sentence structures effectively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORAL COMMUNICATION</td>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Difficult to follow the answer. Information does not seem to have a clear flow.</td>
<td>Presents information in a logical sequence that the audience can generally follow.</td>
<td>Presents information in a logical and interesting manner which engages the audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions 1-5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORAL COMMUNICATION</td>
<td>Overall Delivery</td>
<td>Poor eye contact. Speaks too softly to be understood. Has distracting habits (e.g., &quot;um and ah&quot;).</td>
<td>Makes moderate eye contact. Uses adequate voice volume and few distracting habits.</td>
<td>Makes good eye contact. Uses good voice volume and has no distracting habits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions 1-5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORAL COMM &amp; CRITICAL THINKING</td>
<td>Quality of Conclusion</td>
<td>Missing or poor conclusion. No summary points that “tie-up” the answer.</td>
<td>Summarizes answer’s main points and draws logical conclusions from these points.</td>
<td>Summarizes answer’s main points, draws and delivers logical and persuasive conclusions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memo, Questions 1-5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRITICAL THINKING</td>
<td>Use of Quantitative Skills</td>
<td>Response demonstrates a flawed understanding of spreadsheet values and report data</td>
<td>Response demonstrates an adequate understanding of spreadsheet values and report data</td>
<td>Response demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of spreadsheet values and report data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memo, Questions 1-5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRITICAL THINKING</td>
<td>Implications &amp; Consequences</td>
<td>Just begins to appraise relevant facts and assumptions, and identifies vague alternatives.</td>
<td>Clarifies more than one alternative and predicts their associated consequences in adequate detail</td>
<td>Evaluates more than one alternative, and evaluates each on the basis of concern for the welfare of the major stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memo, Questions 1-5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTEGRATION</td>
<td>Interrelatedness of</td>
<td>Considers the decision or situation as an isolated action having little or no impact on more than one functional area</td>
<td>Provides arguments using specific case information to show how the decision or situation affects at least two functional areas</td>
<td>Provides arguments using specific case information to show how the decision or situation affects three or more functional areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memo, Questions 1-5</td>
<td>Functional Areas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D

LCS Baseline Retake Checklist

Person practicing the skill

Person playing the support role

Person preparing these notes

This checklist is intended for your use in providing feedback regarding the how the “A” person exhibits key communications enhancement skills during this scenario. This final video repeats the same role-play from Day One. Please try to be as helpful as you can. You may make tally marks and/or comments opposite each element (behavior) shown below. Note emphasis on positive behaviors. There is also space for additional observations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Listening</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1- Effective body language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2- Effective use of silence/pauses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3- Reflect/verbalize feelings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4- Capture core message</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inquiry</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1- Use one inquiry at a time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2- Use open-ended questions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3- Reinforce answers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4- Question assumptions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1- Start with positive message)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2- Describe the problem (not the person) and the consequences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3- Give clear and specific message</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4- Focus on actionable behavior</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5- Seek commitment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other Comments:
The Dissertation in Practice: Designing a Meaningful Dissertation for Leadership Students

Gretchen Oltman, JD, PhD
Creighton University

Abstract

The Dissertation in Practice is a relatively new dissertation model emerging in professional practice doctorate programs. This scholarly milestone paper is meant to appeal to the student actively engaged within a profession more so than a traditional dissertation that hosted no clear path for practical application within the professional practice setting. This session details one university’s processes, challenges, revelations, and successes in defining and implementing a Dissertation in Practice model for doctoral-level leadership students, including the necessity to facilitate both a scholarly research study and an evidenced-based solution with practical application.

Introduction

Designing a dissertation model that students can relate to, engage with, and produce meaningful research through is a challenge in today’s competitive doctoral environment. The traditional dissertation model often leaves readers wondering “so what?” when results or findings are produced. Doctorate degrees are no longer reserved for elite, specialized researchers, but are now sought after by professionals in many industries. Graduates want to leave their institution with an original, scholarly piece of research, but also want their research to have meaning in the real world. This Innovative Practice session details the experience of one institution’s attempt to design and implement a Dissertation in Practice for doctoral interdisciplinary leadership students. This session will trace the evolution from idea to design to implementation of this innovative dissertation model, challenges and successes with the process, and the current DIP model in use today. By the end of this session, learners will: (a) identify the purpose of a Dissertation in Practice within a doctoral leadership program; (b) identify the distinctions between a traditional dissertation and an applied dissertation; (c) understand how one institution has implemented the Dissertation in Practice.

Review of Related Scholarship

The Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate (CPED) defines the Dissertation in Practice as “a scholarly endeavor that impacts a complex problem of practice” (CPED, 2015). The organization as a whole consists of a collection of graduate institutions seeking to define and articulate a scholarly foundation for the Education Doctorate degree (EdD). The Project recommends Shulman’s Signature Pedagogy, which focuses on preparing scholarly practitioners to work within their professional practice settings in a purposeful and scholarly fashion. It also suggests that students within EdD programs learn within “laboratories of practice” or places where theory and practice intersect.

The myriad of forms and content within Dissertation in Practice products is not universal. While most tend to arise within Educational Leadership programs, some institutions have implemented
a Dissertation in Practice in other disciplinary settings from nursing to applied technology to leadership. Dawson and Kumar (2014) noted that the diversity of content within dissertation programs across the country could actually make the program planning stages overwhelming (p. 63). The authors surveyed the myriad of institutions offering Dissertations in Practice and found a range of content from resembling a “traditional dissertation” to completing pieces of a dissertation throughout the coursework within a program to studying a common theme explored by most students in a program (p. 63). In their study of the Dissertation in Practice products produced at the University of Florida, one interesting theme emerged: students who created a personal context for their study were often able to implement the study within the professional practice setting – thus, an immediate application of research could be implemented (p. 67).

Challenges are innate within EdD programs. Meeting the changing demographics of students, working with doctoral students who are often mid-career and who have had a gap in graduate education due to professional pursuits, and the need to balance practice with research are common among EdD programs (Shulman, Golde, Conklin Bueschel, & Garabedian, 2006). The need for a different type of dissertation is as evident as is the differences between these professional practitioner students and their more traditional, hard sciences counterparts. Shulman, et al. (2006) described a vision for a “P.P.D.” or Professional Practice Doctorate which would be “highly rigorous” and yet contain a “substantive assessment” at the end of the program (p. 29).

The question of relevance seems central to the discussion of the dissertation model designed for today’s professional students. Herr and Anderson (2015) wrote about doctoral students returning to universities across the country even in a time of economic upheaval and questions about the value of instruction from an out-of-touch professor. They argued, however, that there is no better time to implement an applied dissertation model than now, when many students within our universities are professionals actively working within a rich field of research opportunities. This applied approach however, does tend to stand directly in opposition to the foundations of a traditional doctorate program. Willis, Inman, and Valenti (2010) stated “While there is general agreement that doctoral programs in virtually all disciplines need to prepare students to be more flexible and to understand and work well with related disciplines, efforts to move in that direction contradict the tendency for doctoral programs to push students toward greater and greater specialization” (p. 15). Thus, the Dissertation in Practice model certainly has its critics.

The Dissertation in Practice featured in this Innovative Practice session is based upon the CPED Consortium’s Working Principles and Design Concepts (2014). While not a member of the Consortium, the foundational design of the Dissertation in Practice is similar in nature. That is, it assumes the student is a scholarly practitioner, one seeking to combine scholarship with practical knowledge. It involves signature pedagogy of teaching grounded in theory, research, and practice and promotes research to benefit the greater good of the professional practice setting. It requires students to engage in a professional practice setting (described within the CPED as “Laboratories of Practice”) or real-world settings where research can be applied. It requires students to identify a significant and complex problem of which the research has some influence. And it culminates in a final piece of scholarly research within the Dissertation in Practice itself (CPED, 2015).
Description of Practice

This Innovative Practice session will explore one doctorate leadership program’s experience in designing and implementing a Dissertation in Practice (DIP). The Dissertation in Practice evolved within a doctoral leadership program wherein the student population consisted of working professionals seeking to instigate and lead change within their professional practice settings. Writing a traditional dissertation left many students unsatisfied and unsure of where or how to apply what they learned in their research within their jobs and professional practice settings. The students were underprepared with research methods, struggled to find a meaningful research path, and then left wondering how to apply their dissertation research within their professional lives. The Dissertation in Practice was designed to help alleviate some of these issues. Research courses were strengthened, topic development became intentional in coursework, and the Dissertation in Practice introduced an “aim,” or evidence-based solution derived from the “findings” of the research study. In addition, this particular Dissertation in Practice model requires leadership students to focus on how their research contributes to the greater good of the professional practice setting, integrating a values-based component to the dissertation process. This Innovative Practice session will describe how one university’s faculty team dove into designing a unique Dissertation in Practice model for a doctoral leadership program and will trace the development of the Dissertation in Practice product, the design of the five-chapter Dissertation in Practice, the purpose of the Dissertation in Practice, and the evaluation of the Dissertation in Practice. Participants will explore and converse about the challenges when working with doctoral leadership students, many who seek to do more than simply complete a dissertation, but who also seek to find personal meaning both within the process and final product of the research process. Participants will also view specific examples of how doctoral leadership students have designed meaningful, scholarly research-based dissertations within this values-based Dissertation in Practice model.

Discussion of Outcomes/Results

The featured Doctoral Leadership Program hosts roughly 70 completed dissertations to date and might be considered early in the development phases of the Dissertation in Practice when compared to more traditional programs producing dissertations under the traditional model. The assessment of the product is in its infancy. However, lessons can still be learned from the faculty and student experiences with the Dissertation in Practice design and implementation. First, implementation of a nontraditional dissertation design raised considerable challenges and concerns from students and faculty. Second, implementation of the Dissertation in Practice required guidance for students and faculty so as to ensure consistent publication qualities throughout the program. Third, the placement of content within the five-chapter Dissertation in Practice changed over time, particularly where the applied product fit within the traditional five-chapter outline. Last, the doctoral leadership program emphasizes a heavy reliance on reflective practices taught and reinforced throughout the curriculum. However, including a reflection component within the dissertation produced mixed results and ended in the reflection component being removed from the final written product. This evolution led to spirited faculty conversation and clear consideration of what constitutes a scholarly dissertation.

Doctoral program graduates have published dissertations with meaningful evidence-based
products, from implementation plans, to leadership protocols, to professional practice guides. Faculty members have engaged with students in conversations about the application of the dissertation study within the real world. The implementation of the Dissertation in Practice has not been without objection – some students still seek a “traditional” dissertation experience, some practitioners in the field question the quality of the innovative, applied dissertation, and some students face difficulty finding resolution within their completed studies. Writing ability, regardless of the dissertation model, continues to be a challenge. However, most leadership students have embraced the practicality of designing a research project and producing an evidence-based solution. Assessment data gleaned from program exit surveys demonstrates student investment in the dissertation process and virtually no student graduated from the program unhappy with the scholarly product they produced within their program.

Reflections of the Practitioner

I served as the Doctoral Leadership Program’s Dissertation Consultant during the evolution and design of the Dissertation in Practice. I was charged one late summer afternoon with creating an outline and template for a new dissertation model specifically tailored for our professional practitioner students. I immersed myself in understanding the history of the traditional dissertation and how it could be adapted for the leadership student seeking to stay in his/her leadership position. This was a taxing challenge – one that caused consternation among faculty colleagues and one that included many, many revisions to very small facets of the final product. Overall, the Dissertation in Practice makes sense to the leadership student of today within this private university’s interdisciplinary leadership program where many students are professional practitioners probably not headed into academia. However, the value of having doctoral-trained leaders in the professional practice field should not be understated – these practitioners can lead in more efficient, proactive, and meaningful ways because of their doctoral background. Creating a Dissertation in Practice that was respected by my colleagues, meaningful to the student, and helpful to the professional practice was no small feat. In the process, I was able to practice the reflective techniques we teach our leadership students— and discovered that this unique dissertation model was achievable and a worthwhile pursuit.

Recommendations

The Dissertation in Practice is a practical application of scholarly research to the leadership student of today—a professional practitioner probably not headed directly into academia. However, the value of having doctoral-trained leaders in the professional practice field should not be understated – these practitioners can lead in more efficient, proactive, and meaningful ways because of their doctoral background. Institutions should carefully consider the Dissertation in Practice as one way to modernize and customize learning for today’s doctoral student. This approach is not suggested for every institution – certainly there are institutions that benefit from a traditional dissertation model. However, this Dissertation in Practice model is one approach meant to influence the field of leadership education with practical, evidence-based solutions to today’s professional practice problems and this Innovative Practice Session is a story of the journey from conception to adoption to implementation of a Dissertation in Practice and the lessons learned from that journey.
References


Innovative Practice Handout

(Participants will dissect the scholarly and applied components within this university’s Dissertation in Practice Purpose Statement)

The purpose of the Dissertation in Practice is to explore a significant and complex real-world problem based within a student’s professional practice setting and to design an evidence-based solution incorporating leadership theories, reflective practice, and an interdisciplinary focus to contribute to the greater good of the professional practice field.

Discussion Questions:
1. Which words are universal in traditional dissertations and which are unique to the Dissertation in Practice?
2. How is the integrity and rigor of a traditional dissertation present in the Dissertation in Practice?
3. Where can leadership students find practical meaning and application within their Dissertation in Practice product?
4. What challenges are apparent within this purpose statement?
5. As a student or faculty member, which piece appeals to you the most? Which piece detracts you from this product?
Utilizing the Hardiness Approach in an Undergraduate Leadership Course in Agriculture and Life Sciences

Ms. Michele Curts, Dr. Hannah Carter, & Dr. Elio Chiarelli

University of Florida

Abstract

The Hardiness Approach to Leadership is a combination of motivations and skills that extensive research has shown to enhance performance, conduct, morale and health (Maddi, S., n.d.). The motivation in this approach is contributed by the HardiAttitudes of commitment, control and challenge. Recent research, conducted with agriculture leaders, who are considered successful entrepreneurs, determined that each of the entrepreneurs all shared a high level of hardiness. Utilizing this research, an undergraduate course, the Hardiness Approach to Leadership, was developed to increase students’ level of hardiness, introduce the ideas of entrepreneurship and hardiness, involve students in agriculture issues, and interact with leaders to develop solutions to the issues. Using tools to evaluate students’ hardiness levels, a majority of students showed an increase in all areas of commitment, control and challenge.

Introduction

The goal of the Hardiness Approach to Leadership course was to develop student’s abilities to successfully handle stress in all areas of their life and develop an entrepreneurial mind set, with a heavy interest in expanding this training to more undergraduate students at the university. Hardiness lends itself to entrepreneurial thinking, with an increased need for more students who see possibilities of careers and a desire to meet the future needs and challenges that face the agriculture industry. The skills taught in this course can translate into other areas of undergraduate student’s life, such as, other classes, clubs or extracurricular organizations, social interactions and can later benefit them in their careers. The HardiAttitudes of the Hardiness Approach, are commitment, control and challenge. Having strong HardiAttitude skills will potentially make the students more valuable employees and can lead to longer and healthier lives with reduced stress related illnesses.

Review of Related Scholarship

“Peace is the result of retraining your mind to process life as it is, rather than as you think it should be’” (Dyer, 2014). Evidence shows that today’s youth are struggling to find the means to handle and cope with difficult or stressful situations (Gray, 2015). According to the Washington Post, and the latest article about helicopter parents, students are not being prepared to handle life’s high stress moments. Rather, adults in their life have grown accustomed to intervening on the student’s behalf, instead of letting them attempt to solve the problem first. “The kids who have been raised by parents who watched their every move, checked their grades online hourly, advocated for them endlessly and kept them busy from event to activity to play date are tucked away in college. But that doesn’t mean their parents have let go. They make themselves known to schools, professors, counselors and advisers... But parenting 101 says saying goodbye at the dorm and giving that bird a little push is what will help them succeed” (Joyce, 2014).
Another hypothesis to this dilemma is the idea that this generation of students, known as Millennials, have been raised with the notion that they are the best of the best. Repeatedly, they receive ribbons for participation rather than being praised based on their shear performance. “Students haven’t developed skills in how to soothe themselves, because their parents have solved all their problems and removed the obstacles. They don’t seem to have as much grit as previous generations” (Gray, 2015). The lack of mechanisms to handle failure has resulted in extreme stress and emotional breakdowns when faced with these situations in college.

“With the intense media focus on the rising number of suicides on college campuses, there is a desperate need to understand what can be done to prevent serious emotional and mental health problems among students. In a national survey, more than 50 percent of college students reported feeling so depressed that it was difficult for them to function during the past academic year” (Kadison & DiGeronimo, 2004). The increased amount of less resilient students are “putting a strain on counseling centers” (Gray, 2015). “Rates of anxiety and depression among American college students have soared in the last decade, and many more students than in the past come to campus already on medication for such illnesses.

The Hardiness Approach to Leadership is successfully taught at universities across the county and in military academies (Maddi, S., n.d.). “Results suggested hardiness protects against the ill effects of stress, particularly under high and multiple-stress conditions. These results have implications for preventing the ill effects of stress across a variety of occupations that can expose workers to multiple stressors, including job disruption and family separation” (Bartone, P., 1999). In the Spring of 2015, the Journal of Leadership Education published a research article about moral imagination levels of leadership students which encompassed the HardiAttitudes. “This developmental pursuit towards increased moral imagination in students sets the foundation for more intentional decision-making and more morally sound practice. It also has the potential to develop resilience and hardiness in local and global communities. Maddi’s three constructs of hardiness, commitment, control and challenge, set the foundation for resilient communities in the face of adversity (Odom, Andenoro, Sandlin, Jones, 2015). This information attributes to the importance of incorporating the Hardiness approach into the leadership curriculum.

**Description of the Practice**

Utilizing the Hardiness Approach to Leadership as the focus of this new undergraduate course as it provides the teaching of a combination of motivations and skills that enhance performance, conduct, morale, stamina, and overall health, as well as develop an entrepreneurial mind set for solving issues within the agriculture industry. The motivation is contributed by the HardiAttitudes of commitment, control and challenge. HardiSkills are for coping, social support, relaxation, nutrition, and physical activity. The research shows that this combination of attitudes and skills is especially beneficial as stresses mount. The emphasis of this pilot course in hardiness was on helping students learn about hardiness conceptualization, research, assessment and training, as well as using what is learned to improve their own performance, conduct, morale, stamina and health. This course was developed and implemented in the Fall of 2015 with a class of twenty-one students at a major southeastern university within the Agricultural Education and Communication department, as part of the leadership curriculum. During the
The course, students were given the Hardisurvey at the beginning and end of the semester, to determine if their hardness levels increased. Through the hardness model of stress management, performance and health, the attitudes and skill-sets of HardiCoping and self-care behaviors that strengthen their ability to learn, students are able to work with disruptive changes in ways that turn them to advantages, allowing them to successfully handle difficult challenges. (Maddi, S., n.d)

The last few weeks of the course focused on the development of the entrepreneurial mindset with focus on the agriculture industry. There were four guest speakers who presented an issue from within their sector of the agriculture industry. Students were asked to discuss and develop solutions with the guest speaker on ways to address and potentially solve the issue. Students reported at the completion of this process that each speaker shared similar traits of determination to succeed and a willingness to push through challenges. Each speaker was passionate about their business within agriculture and demonstrated a true heart for caring about people. This process allowed students to truly experience the reason for the Hardiness approach and applying an entrepreneurial mind set.

Discussion of Outcomes/ Results

Students took the Hardisurvey at the beginning of the course to create a base level understanding of their individual stress levels and ability to use coping mechanisms. After several weeks of learning and implementing HardiTraining throughout the semester and putting these skills to the test with practical application in their daily lives, students took a second Hardisurvey to measure if their Hardicoping skills had improved over the span of the course. Majority of the students showed an increase in all three areas of HardiAttitudes; commitment, control and challenge. Students reported feeling better prepared to handle the stress of college classes and life away from home, ability to manage change better, improvements in personal and professional relationships and an overall improvement to health compared to other semesters. Students also made recommendations at the end of the course, to make this course a requirement for all undergraduate students.

Having the four guest speakers who represented different areas of the agriculture industry, attend class and present real world issues that their businesses was facing, gave students the opportunity to put their skills and entrepreneurial mind set to addressing current agriculture industry issues. Students reported feeling valuable to the efforts of solving these industry issues, as the guest speakers engaged in discussion and possibilities of using the student’s ideas to solve the issues facing their businesses. Students had the opportunity to learn more about each sector of the agriculture industry and explore some of the challenges currently being addressed. Mostly students observed how dedicated these four industry leaders were and the resilience they demonstrated to facing these challenges with a positive outlook.

Reflections of the Practitioner

As this was a pilot course offered in the College of Agriculture and Life Science at a major southeastern university, the material of the course was based heavily from the Hardiness course developed by Dr. Maddi. If this course is accepted to be a regularly scheduled course, there will
be improvements made based off the pilot student reviews. One adjustment would be to use the readings as supplemental educational material outside of the class and applying the principals taught to more applicable real world problems. Toward the middle of the course there is heavy focus to hands on participation activities, changing these activities to occur more evenly throughout the entire semester is anticipated to keep students better engaged. Due to time constraints, only four guest speakers were able to meet with the class and present major issues that their businesses were facing. Better time management of material throughout the course would allow for a greater number of guest speakers to present issues to the class. It was also determined that a more in-depth back ground of the speaker and the sector of the agriculture industry they worked in, would benefit the class and their understanding of the topic. There were students who possessed a greater depth of back ground knowledge in the areas of agriculture being represented, than others and this presented an obvious challenge for students who lacked exposure or knowledge to the topic being addresses.

Concepts of this course could also be utilized with adult audiences through leadership programming as the skills and motivations that form the basis of hardiness can be developed through training and education.

Recommendations

After the completion of a successful test piloted course the instructors saw improvements to the majority of students’ HardiAttitudes of commitment, control and challenge. It is recommended to make the Hardiness Approach to Leadership a required course for leadership majors within the College of Agriculture and Life Science. This course should also be made a requirement as part of a certificate program in entrepreneurship, as well as be used to develop entrepreneurial skills in adult education leadership programs. It is strongly believed that this curriculum needs to be expanded and offered to more undergraduate students in all areas of disciplines, at more universities.

References


The Line Leader: A Rare Resource for Early Childhood Educators

Matthew Sowcik
University of Florida

Caroline Jones
Kings College

Abstract

As a result of the lack of research into early childhood leadership, the absence of resources appropriate for educators and the fact that leadership still remains an abstract concept difficult to explain, leadership education is often ignored in elementary school curriculum. However, scholars writing on the topic suggest leadership education should ideally begin as early as preschool or kindergarten because it establishes a foundation for future leadership competency. This innovative practice paper will discuss the creation of a children’s leadership book as a resource for early childhood educators and research examining children's perception of leadership in response to the book.

Introduction

As a result of the lack of research into early childhood leadership, the absence of resources appropriate for educators and the fact that leadership still remains an abstract concept difficult to explain, leadership education is often ignored in elementary school curriculum. However, scholars writing on the topic suggest leadership education should ideally begin as early as preschool or kindergarten because it establishes a foundation for future leadership competency. There is both an opportunity and responsibility for scholars and practitioners in higher education to develop resources and tools to more intentionally and purposefully introduce leadership into these early education classrooms.

One resource that has long been used in early education is children’s fiction books. The importance and positive impact reading has on early childhood education is as important today as it has ever been. Just this year, President Barack Obama made a Presidential Proclamation that March 2, 2016, was to be Read Across America Day and “called upon children, families, educators, librarians, public officials, and all the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities” (White House, 2016). A leadership children’s book is the perfect opportunity to begin the process of leadership education and identity development at these early educational stages.

Review of Related Scholarship

In the 1990s, leadership development became extremely popular in corporate America. Following this organizational trend was an increase in both resources on leadership and leadership education programs in higher education. However, even though a considerable amount of research and writing has been done on adult leadership education, far less attention has been paid to the dynamic nature of early childhood leadership education (Shin, Recchia, Lee,
As a result of the lack of research, the absence of resources appropriate for early childhood educators and the fact that leadership still remains an abstract concept difficult to explain, leadership education is often ignored in elementary school curricula (Bistand, 2004).

Even though there has been inconsistency in the research and application of early childhood leadership education, three factors concerning early childhood leadership education remain true. First, scholars have been exploring leadership in early childhood education for over 80 years. Mildred Parten, in 1933, wrote the article *Leadership Among Preschool Children*, in which she “devised a method for observing and measuring leadership at the preschool age, obtained reliable and valid measures by the use of this method and analyzed the data for factors that encourage or discourage the development of leadership” (Parten, 1933). The second factor of early childhood leadership education is that scholars writing on the topic suggest leadership education should ideally begin as early as preschool or kindergarten because it establishes a foundation for future leadership competency (Karnes & Stevens, 1999; Bistand, 2004).

The final factor of early childhood leadership education is the need for well thought out resources, which are grounded in leadership scholarship and assists teachers with the introduction of leadership into the classroom. Along with early educators, these resources should be easily accessible to parents since they are integral in the child’s leadership education process. “A strong connection between families and providers of early childhood services is essential for creating quality learning environments for young children” (Rodd, 2012, p. 221). One popular resource often used by both parents and educators to enhance a student’s education is a children’s book (Bistand, 2004). In this particular case, an age appropriate story that is grounded in leadership education scholarship can provide both teachers and parents a space to communicate complex concepts associated with leaders, followers and the leadership process.

**Early and Middle Childhood Leadership Education**

Almost all theories of childhood development indicate that age six is a tremendously important milestone in a child’s life due to a child’s ability to begin to reason (Eccles, 1999). It is also around this time, between ages five and seven, that critical shifts in a child’s cognitive functioning occurs, which is the reason that all cultures begin to provide formal schooling. These are just two reasons that early to middle childhood is a critical time to start to introduce the concept of leadership. In addition to these developmental milestones, in these formative years, children are still very optimistic about their ability to master a plethora of skills and activities (Eccles, 1999). In fact, by the time they are ten, children become far less optimistic, therefore, these early years are a tremendously important time to provide children experiences to take on leadership roles. These leadership experiences, paired with optimism, incremental improvements over time, and supportive adults, reduces the child’s frustration and maintain high expectations about their ability to be an effective leader (Eccles, 1999).

When taking a more focused look at the particular concepts necessary to leadership, once again, the early to middle childhood years prove to be extremely important in the child’s leadership development. Perruci (2011, p. 6) offered a definition of leadership, which outlines these key concepts, suggesting, “Leadership is the process by which leaders and followers develop a
relationship and work together toward a goal (or goals) within an environmental context shaped by cultural values and norms.” As a future leader, it is during early to middle childhood that students start to form a self-concept, personal identity, and become more self-aware (Eccles, 1999). Also pointed out as critical, by Perruci, is the ability to build healthy relationships with others. As Eccles (1999) states, “Alongside their increasing ability to reflect on themselves, children also develop the ability to take the perspective of others. They come to understand that others have a different point of view and different knowledge than they have, and they come to understand that these differences have consequences for their interactions with other people” (p. 32). It is during this new awareness of others that children can start to form healthy social relationships with peers and adults outside the family.

Finally, Perruci’s discusses the importance of achieving a goal or goals as an important component of leadership. It is during early adolescence that child begins to measure progress and forge an orientation toward achievement. Children in this stage are looking to master and demonstrate new skills and competencies, make independent decisions and develop ways to respond to challenging environments. Therefore, due to a child’s ability to be more aware of self and others, in effort to achieve a goal, it is imperative we begin to shape the way students practice leadership to achieve these goals.

**Description of the Practice**

The following is the children’s leadership story that was written to be used as a resource to introduce young children (pre-kindergarten to second grade) to the concept of leadership. Additionally, the story provides children with a perspective of leadership, which allows them to see leadership differently than their current perception of leadership being associated with positional power. Applying Osteen, Owen, Komives, Mainella, & Longerbeam’s (2006) Leadership Identity Development (LID) Model to this resource, the leadership book helps young children move from the beginning stages of the LID model to more advance stages. Students no longer have just awareness of leadership or that is exclusively held by those who have positional power, but instead as a process exhibited by non-positional member of the team or class.

**The Line Leader**

**Page 1:** As the sun began to rise and shine on Thursday morning, Spider climbed down from her web and crawled to her classroom. She was eager to go to school because she knew that her teacher, Mr. Owl, had an exciting announcement to make.

**Page 2:** “Tomorrow we are having a party!” Mr. Owl announced as his class cheered. “It will be a great celebration. So great there will even be ice cream.

“What are we celebrating?” Bumble Bee asked.

“We are celebrating some very special leaders that will be in our classroom,” replied Mr. Owl.

**Page 3:** Spider wondered which special leaders would be visiting her class. Spider’s friend Cat was especially curious. The students gathered around Mr. Owl and tried to guess who might be visiting.
Page 4: “Maybe Principal Lion will be coming here. He is a great leader who is strong and powerful.”
Or maybe it will be Mr. Bear. He leads the cub scout troop.”
“Colonel Ant leads the Army. Will he be coming to our classroom?”
“Leaders make rules. Mayor Wolf makes sure everyone does what they are supposed to do.”

Page 5: “Those are all great examples of leaders, but none of them will be here on Friday!” said Mr. Owl. “It is a surprise. Today you must get the classroom ready for our celebration. I have some jobs listed on the board. Please make sure all of this work gets done for tomorrow!”

Page 6: Spider enthusiastically read the board and wondered which job she would get to do.
- Line leader
- Door holder
- Teacher’s assistant
- Lunch helper
- Toy cleaner
- Classroom greeter

Page 7: At that moment the students began arguing over who would be in charge of each classroom job. Wise Mr. Owl came up with an idea. He would meet with every student to see which job they think they would do best.

Page 8: One by one he called the students up to the front of the class to meet with them. One by one he asked each of them what job they would like to have and why.
And one by one they each said they wanted to be the line leader because they would be the best leader of all the students.

Page 9: Finally Mr. Owl called up Spider. In front of the whole class Mr. Owl addressed Spider and said, “Let me guess, you want to be the line leader…but is there any other job you want?”

Page 10: Spider thought about it for a second. She could see herself as the door holder, but she knew she was too weak to hold open the door. “Horse should hold the door because Horse is the strongest. Many people will have to depend on him, and Horse is always reliable.” Horse nodded and the class knew that Spider was right.

Page 11: Spider would enjoy being the teacher’s assistant, but she was not experienced enough to help other animals. “Cat should be the teacher’s assistant because he can help the other animals with their homework and projects. He is curious and willing to try new things.” Cat meowed happily.

Page 12: Spider wanted to be the lunch helper, but she could not reach the lunches on the high shelf. “Giraffe is the right student to help with the lunches because he is the tallest.” Giraffe and the other students nodded in agreement.

Page 13: Spider thought she could clean up the toys but she knew she was not fast enough. “Bumble Bee should be the toy cleaner because he is the fastest and most efficient. Bumble Bee
is always hardworking and accomplishes his goals.” Bumble Bee buzzed around the classroom and started his job.

**Page 14:** Spider wanted to be the greeter so she could meet the leaders first, but Spider knew she was too shy for that job. “Peacock is the most confident and assured of herself. She should be the Greeter.” Peacock was proud that Spider chose her.

**Page 15:** And yes, of course Spider wanted to be the line leader, but she knew she was too small and someone might step on her. “I have an idea,” Spider said. “I think that Turtle should lead the line. Turtle is determined and won’t stop until we all get to where we need to go.” Turtle smiled.

**Page 16:** All of the animals had stopped fighting and they went home happily, knowing that they all would get to help prepare for Friday’s celebration. Spider, however, crawled home sadly because there were no more jobs left. She cried and said, “I am the only student without a job. I can never be a leader because I am too small and powerless.”

**Page 17:** The next morning, the students arrived early to lead each other in getting their tasks done. They worked hard and with a great deal of energy. Without a designated task, Spider supported her friends and made sure everyone was doing their jobs well.

**Page 18:** Everyone waited for the leaders to arrive. They waited and waited but no one came into the classroom. Finally Spider asked, “When are the leaders coming?” Mr. Owl smiled. “You all performed your tasks wonderfully. You are the leaders we are celebrating!”

“What about me?” Spider asked sadly. “I am not a good leader. I didn’t do anything. I am too small.”

**Page 19:** “Actually, Spider, you were the most important leader of all, and your size had nothing to do with it. In fact, you did the most important job without even realizing it. Because of your web of connections, you knew the perfect job for all of the students. You stopped the fighting and helped all of your classmates discover their strengths,” Mr. Owl told him. “Without you, Spider, nothing would have gotten done.” The class agreed, and Spider smiled.

**Page 20:** “A leader’s job is to help other people to work and lead effectively,” Mr. Owl wisely remarked. “You don’t have to be the strongest, biggest, or oldest to be a great leader. You can be a great leader by being humble, helping others, and inspiring them to be the best they can be.”

**Discussion of Outcomes/Results**

Qualitative research was conducted with 75 students, in 15 different educational settings, grades pre-kindergarten to second grade to assess whether students perceptions of leadership change after having heard *The Line Leader* story. The following questions were asked of the students prior to reading the story and immediately after the story was read, to see both pre and post perceptions of leadership: (1) Do you know someone who is a leader? (2) Are leaders important and why or why not? (3) What do leaders do? (4) Are you a leader? Why or why not? (5) Did you enjoy the story? Why or why not? The researchers utilized the week of March 2, 2016, which was declared as Read Across America Day, to visit the classrooms and conduct the
research. Since the deadline for this conference proposal was due the same week the qualitative results have not been analyzed at this point. However, the results from the research will be presented in the Association of Leadership Education Innovative Practice Papers session.

**Reflections of the Practitioner**

As educators in the field of leadership development it is our responsibility to develop the necessary resources, which can be used to promote a better understanding of leaders, followers and leadership at all levels of student development. Early childhood educators have struggled to find a resource they could use to facilitate learning around leadership. This resource just scratches the surface of a larger need to provide leadership based resources at this early age of development. If we can lay a foundation for leadership education at an early age, the interest and passion for leadership development will be significantly advanced by the time they begin college. In order to encourage this development we need to continue to provide a wide variety of resources to early childhood educators.

**Recommendations**

This innovative practice paper addresses the lack of current leadership resources available to early childhood educators and provides one tool to encourage learning utilizing a children’s leadership book, *The Line Leader*. It is recommended that as a community of leadership educators, we need to continue to find new and innovative ways to provide additional resources to ensure developmentally appropriate leadership lessons are being introduced to students at all levels of their education. It is imperative that both scholars and practitioners continue to engage in both research and scholarship concerning best practices in early childhood leadership education.

**References**


Mindful Leadership and our Future Leaders: Undergraduate Course Integration to a University Mindfulness Program

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Abstract

In 2014 a collaborative university-wide project was established to bring more mindfulness to a university campus. The interdisciplinary program strives to provide mindfulness to campus community. One way in which mindfulness is being offered on campus to students is through the development of an undergraduate Mindful Leadership course. The course integrates the history of mindfulness, leadership theory, and practical application of mindful leadership throughout diverse industries.

Introduction

“The paradox of our modern time is that mindfulness is inherently simple, human, and available anytime and anyplace; yet many of us have forgotten about it. In order to bring awareness to this practice, a large land grant university established a mindfulness program. The program aims to reconnect us to ancient truths, by using breath to tame the anxious mind” (Vision, n.d.). The mindfulness program has opened access for all campus community members including faculty, staff and students. The overarching mindfulness program offers events, trainings, group practice, and dialogue in order to create a more mindful campus. The programs Vision (n.d) aims to infuse mindfulness practices in existing courses and curricula, offer new cross-disciplinary short courses, trainings and workshops, and serve as a catalyst sparking mindful moments to create a healthy campus culture. Representatives from numerous colleges and support areas make up the stakeholder and affiliate support groups to drive this campus initiative.

In the modern, fast-paced world mindfulness has become a latent human quality. Disconnected right- and left brains, stress, learning anxiety, and tunnel vision are common in student communities. Mindfulness practices can help to counteract them through suspending, focusing, breath by breath, connecting to the present moment, and aligning mind, body, and spirit.

Contemporary life is digital, is fast-paced and busy (Breathe, n.d). We are often too busy doing and not being fully present. When our nervous system is on high alert, or when we are burdened with self-critical thoughts, our working memories function poorly, our creative juices do not flow, and our collaborative capacities are stymied (Rechtschaffen, 2014). Anxiety and stress promote a freeze, flee or fight response and in these disembodied states we are disconnected from our body, mind and spirit which leads to dissatisfaction, experiences of meaninglessness or depression, numbness and an unfulfilled life. McSpaden (2015) notes that the average attention span of a goldfish is nine seconds, whereas a human (today) is now only eight seconds. Demonstrating our ability to be present and focused has been significantly reduced.

“Mindfulness is deliberately paying full attention to what is happening around you and within you (in your body, heart and mind) in the present moment. Mindfulness is awareness without criticism or judgment” (Chozen Bays, 2011). Paying attention in a particular way, on purpose, in
the present moment and non-judgmentally (Siegel, 2010; Kabat-Zinn, 1994). The need of focus and be present is ever growing in order to develop the capacity to address today’s challenges. There are very few academic models that demonstrate mindful leadership. One of the most emphasized models by Hawkins (2011) explains the difference between charismatic leaders and mindful leaders. Mindful leaders are able to be quiet, reflective, and intentional, whereas charismatic leaders are visionary and have a focus and sensitivity on others rather than themselves. Focusing more on the application of mindful leadership, the Attending, Reflecting, Inquiring, Expressing, and Synthesizing (ARIES) framework by Dunn (2008) provides tools in order to to apply mindful leadership in the context of our work. These models and the university-wide initiative created an opportunity to implement a course on mindful leadership. The course’s foundation is built on the history of mindfulness and leadership theory, then provides practical application through experiential learning. Our collaborative and interdisciplinary approach offers a unique perspective in the design and implementation of the course. The support and culture of the university campus and willingness of the department housing the course provided a means to aid future leaders in gaining experience in mindful leadership.

**Review of Related Scholarship**

The National Leadership Index revealed that 69 percent of those surveyed believe there is a leadership crisis in the U.S., with politicians, media, finance, and business leaders getting the lowest ratings (Rosenthal, Moore, Montoya, & Maruskin, 2009). In the past two decades, far too many leaders have been selected more for charisma than character, for style over substance, and for image rather than integrity, leading in many cases to failed leadership (Seagal, 1997; Langer, 2014). Authentic leadership seems to be challenged. Northouse (2016) references the idea that authentic leadership is “genuine and ‘real’”, referring not only to the concept of leadership, but to the actual leader as well.

In a public lecture William W. George (n.d), a Senior Fellow at Harvard Business School wrote:

> Many failed leaders seem to lack an awareness of themselves and their actions. Often they do not have a deep understanding of their motivations, and they have not fully accepted their crucibles – fears and failures emanating from earlier experiences. These characteristics often cause leaders to lose sight of their values, especially when they are under pressure to sustain their success.

By merging the Western understanding of leadership with Eastern practices developed thousands of years ago to increase self-awareness and self-compassion (Gore, 2014), we can successfully create a framework for contemporary mindfulness practice. Mindfulness enables leaders to be fully present, aware of themselves and their impact on other people, and sensitive to their reactions to stressful situations (McCown, Reibel, & Micozzi, 2010). Marturano (2014) states that through the process of becoming more self-aware, leaders learn to accept their weaknesses, failures, and vulnerabilities, just as they appreciate their strengths and successes. In so doing, they gain compassion for themselves and the ability to relate to the world around them in authentic ways (Marturano, 2014; Perlman, 2015). Williams (2010) and Tuleja (2014) state that mindful leadership will encourage the new generation of authentic leaders to restore trust in their
leadership and to build sustainable organizations known for their harmony. Its ultimate goal is to create a more harmonious and peaceful world for all to live in (Tuleja, 2014).

Research conducted with the Institute for Mindful Leadership in 2009 and 2010 indicated that participants in a mindfulness retreat observed positive outcomes on their performance (Perlman, 2015). 80 leaders from 12 organizations were surveyed and reported the following: 93 percent said the training had a positive impact on their ability to create space for innovation; 89 percent said the program enhanced their ability to listen to themselves and others, and nearly 70 percent said the training made a positive difference in their ability to think strategically. Therefore, researchers have begun to establish benchmarks for linking mindfulness practice to improved cognitive functioning. “Informed Mindfulness” connects mindful self-awareness and self-regulation with educated decision making (Langer, 2014). Thus self-awareness needs to be coupled with knowledge, skills, values, and wisdom. We need to know what to do with our awareness once it is developed (Seagal, 1997).

Knowing oneself can aid in addressing the wicked problems of our time. Miller and Page (2007) address this challenge and assert that in order to meet the needs of our future, is it important to understand the complexity and growing needs of our workforce and organizations (Miller & Page, 2007). Leadership is at the core of our organizations as it helps organizations and individuals transform, adapt and even fail. Therefore, having leaders who adapt and change are the leaders which will change the world (Marturano, 2014; Miller & Page, 2007).

**Description of the Practice**

An instructional design plan was utilized in order to create a three (3) credit hour, one semester, undergraduate course on Mindful Leadership. Campus stakeholders and content experts were included in the design in order to identify the content needed for the course. The course format was designed as a three-credit hour face-to-face course. Two days were designated as lecture style with content instruction and the third day was an experiential learning ‘lab day.’ The lab day engaged students to actively participate in different forms of mindful leadership activities and practices. These included, but are not limited to, guided meditation, concentration and focus lessons, and breathing and listening practices.

The course begins with the history of mindfulness, then follows with applicable leadership theory as it relates to mindfulness, and concludes with the practical application of mindful leadership within diverse industries. Self-reflection and authentic leadership are at the core of mindful leadership; therefore, reflection is utilized through weekly journal entries. Students also apply critical reflection through weekly discussion posts online with peers. Students have three exams in which they are evaluated on their knowledge retention for content knowledge and understanding. Two are in-person exams and the final exam is a comprehensive electronic exam online. There are several projects which the students apply their knowledge and experience, including a historical leader paper, leader interview, observation session, creation of a toolkit, and poster presentation.

The students of this course leave the course with content knowledge, skills, tools, and practical application methods in which they can utilize mindful leadership in their future professions.
Course objectives:
Describe the philosophy and theory underlying mindfulness and mindful leadership.
Identify resources in which they can use to practice mindful leadership.
Create a tool kit to practice mindful leadership in their profession.
Create a case scenario and apply mindful leadership.
Develop a plan of action to utilize mindful leadership.

Discussion of Outcomes/Results

The paradox of our modern time is that mindfulness is inherently simple, human, and available anytime and anyplace; yet many of us have forgotten about it. This project aims to reconnect us to ancient truths, breath-by-breath taming the anxious mind (Vision, n.d).

Students in this course have the opportunity to practice mindful leadership and develop their authentic self. This is evaluated through self-reflection and a pre-post course assessment. Students gain content knowledge of philosophy and leadership theory, identify resources in which they can use to practice mindful leadership, and develop a plan of action on how to utilize mindful leadership. Lastly, they will create and develop a tool kit to practice mindful leadership for their chosen field of study or future industry. Multiple forms of mindful practice and then are able to weave these mindful practices into their authentic leadership.

Guiding future leaders to gain understanding of the history and current contexts of mindful leadership has become more prevalent and mainstream. Through this course, discussion, and practice course participants had the opportunity to gain understanding and share their knowledge.

Reflections of the Practitioner

The idea of this course was derived from the development of a campus mindfulness program established over the last several years. The interdisciplinary team comprised of different university colleges, departments, and disciplines aimed to integrate silos of mindfulness and co-create mindful spaces that facilitate mindful communication and listening. The goal of the collaborative team is to emerge mindfulness in the campus culture.

The goals for the mindfulness program are to (i) infuse mindfulness practices in existing courses and curricula at the university, (ii) offer new cross-disciplinary short courses, trainings and workshops, and (iii) serve as a catalyst sparking mindful moments to create a healthy campus culture.

Working with content experts was valuable and affirming. Support from the greater campus community by having an established program on mindfulness with the goal of integrating mindfulness into curricula and courses was beneficial for development of this course. This provides exponential opportunities for facilitators and resources.

By having an established campus mindfulness program, we have access to populations which may not have been enrolled into the leadership minor. We are able to market and connect with...
this niche population in order gain diverse interest and enrollment in the course. A doctoral student who routinely practices mindfulness conducted research on mindful leadership over the course of the semester. As a result of this research, he/she presented a presentation for a final project on mindful leadership, which included the history of mindfulness and the emergent theories related to mindful leadership. The same doctoral student then took an instructional design course, whose course project required the creation of an event, program or course. This graduate student was encouraged and supported to connect with the greater interdisciplinary team to develop a mindful leadership course which would be taught in concert of undergraduate leadership minor for the institution. The course is also open to any student not enrolled in the leadership minor program. This provides an opportunity to generate additional revenue for the host department. If this was a split course the revenue would be split amongst the two or more departments offering the course sections. Having the host department established from the start was beneficial.

Stakeholders, students, and instructional design experts were sought out to identify needs and content delivery preferences. The course was developed to be offered in person with the opportunity for online adaptation in the future after it has been taught several times. Since the curriculum has been developed, components of this course can be gleaned and repurposed for other trainings and activities within campus community. There are requests to the mindfulness program for sessions and now that there has been additional exposure to the campus population through this course there will continue to be a growing knowledge of mindful leadership. Opportunities also exist to further the reach outside of this campus community (other universities, practitioners, researchers, etc.) which provide an avenue to share, evaluate, and discuss mindful leadership. The needs or challenges with curriculum development and resources can be evaluated in order to expand this area of leadership.

Recommendations

As the pace of life and work changes for our students and future leaders, it is important to take time to reflect and be present and calm. Mindfulness was studied to see its effectiveness on cognition, emotion, and restlessness (Centre for Mindfulness Research and Practice, 2015). Having an understanding of relevant literature, scholarly articles, and news media resources plentiful in describing this every growing need is beneficial for establishing a need. Utilizing mindfulness as a tool to practice is an opportunity to support the ever growing need within higher education’s increasing populations which have anxiety, stress, or depression. Combining mindfulness with self-authorship and authentic leadership education, student are able to focus on who they are as leaders for the future.

Understanding and realizing that these ideas and principles may be challenging to implement on college campuses is key. Considerations of campus climate, politics, support, and resources should be considered. Other considerations include student interests and buy in, as well as partnerships with areas on campus that may already provide mindful practice are opportunities for support and leverage.

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Appendix A

Sample ‘lab day’ activities for the Mindful Leadership course.

*Cultivating Attention:* We can focus with our eyes, our ears, our sense of touch, our breathing, our tasting. An exercise (5 min. or longer) may focus on opening our attention nonjudgmentally, watching our thoughts, emotions, sensations pass by us. In a science class an exercise may invite students to focus their attention on a science experiment, taking in all the steps, watching attentively how the experiment proceeds, and noting the outcome.

*Pause and Stop:* When rushing to class, squeezing in another assignment in the busy work schedule, near exhaustion after hours of work without a break. Simply S: Sit still – silence; T: Take three deep breaths; O: Observe your body and mind; P: Proceed with kindness, compassion and joy. Experience the rejuneration of a silent moment reconnecting to yourself. Feel re-energized through slowing down, relaxing into the moment.

*Mindful Writing:* Instead of copying and pasting text and rush to finish an assignment I can take a deep breath, focus my attention on the breath, relax, connect with my body, listen carefully, let go of thoughts and focus deliberately on the writing assignment. I ignore noise and mindfully write. Journal writing is another way to contemplate and self-reflect. It allows to connect to what’s inside; what may hold you back. Close your eyes and center yourself. Be open whatever wants to surface and write it down.

*Meditation Practice:* Meditation on the cushion is a traditional mindfulness practice. A fixed time to meditate (e.g., in the morning or evening) for a certain length (e.g., 10 min., 30 min. or longer) allows to get to know your mind and yourself. Regular meditation practice has a positive effect on your day-to-day life because it makes you less reactive, enhances your ability to be mindful whatever crisis or stressful event you face (e.g., exam).

*Mindful Communication:* Having an authentic and meaningful conversation is fulfilling. It builds on deep listening to oneself and another, trust, asking question and meeting the other. The opposite of a mindful communication occurs through interruptions, pushing one’s own agenda (superimposing thoughts and beliefs onto others), others not listening to the discussion (e.g., distracting mannerism like attending to a smart phone in the middle of a conversation). *Contemplation and Reflection:* Deep reflection means looking thoughtfully at something for a long time. Contemplation involves opening to what is bothering us without being emotionally swept away, holding on to a belief. Instead we befriend it from different vantage points. Paradoxically, leaning into something instead of ignoring or rejecting it often dissolves the issue, event or relationship we have been ruminating.

*Touching the Earth:* A mindful walk in nature bathing in the beauty of a slow flowing creek in a wonderful landscape with flowers blossoming, trees so green and butterflies in the most beautiful colors. Mindful nature walks allow us to connect with the Earth and natural elements. It refreshes our senses touching the Earth, distresses and allows to enjoy the beauty of this world.
Changing Lives and Building a Better Future

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Abstract

With expected support from the United States Department of Education’s Experimental Sites Initiative, the Second Chance Pell Pilot Program which allows incarcerated Americans to receive Pell Grants to pursue postsecondary education, and a mini grant through the Association of Leadership Educators, the Evelyn T. Stone College of Professional Studies at Roosevelt University will exponentially expand its commitment to social change and community development by reconstituting a program that offers a flex-track Bachelor of Arts degree in organizational leadership to incarcerated individuals in Illinois. Data collected over a span of 13 years during a previous iteration of the program revealed that recidivism dropped to approximately 5% for inmates who participated in the program and received bachelor’s degree and they became self-sufficient, actively engaged members of their communities.

Introduction

It cost Illinois taxpayers $22,655 to incarcerate each of the state’s 48,921 adult prisoners in 2014 (“Impact,” 2014), $1.1 billion per annum. By 2015, the cost increased to $1.3 billion (“Executive Order,” 2015) per annum for adults and another $121 million to house juvenile offenders. Of the current adult prison population in Illinois, 14.5% are convicted murders, 25% are serving time for Class X felonies (e.g. aggravated assaults), and 17% were convicted of Class 1 felonies which includes criminal sexual assaults and narcotics related convictions. Ninety-four percent of the state’s prisoners are male, 58% are Black, 29% are White, and 12% are Hispanic. The average age of incarcerated adults is 37. The majority of prisoners are single but 14.5% are married and 10% are either divorced or separated. Regardless of marital status, 62% have children. Ninety-five percent were born in the United States (U.S.) or its territories and 2% are veterans. More than half, 55%, have a high school diploma (or its equivalent) and 9% have attended college but only slightly more than 1% have college degrees (“Annual Report,” 2014).

The prison population in Illinois has increased 700% over the last forty years even though the crime rate during the same time has dropped by 20%. Further, the corrections facilities are operating at more than 150% of their design capacity (“Executive Order,” 2015). Ultimately 97% of the adult prisoners in the overcrowded Illinois facilities will be released from prison (“Executive Order,” 2015) and that means that each year tens of thousands of prisoners are returning to their communities and many of those communities are among the state’s most vulnerable and impoverished (Marin & Mosley, 2014). Unfortunately, many of those who are released from prison will find themselves back behind bars within a few short years. Recidivism, a person’s relapse into criminal behavior, is measured by criminal acts that result in re-arrest, reconviction, and a return to prison with or without a new sentence during a three-year period following the prisoner's initial release (NIJ, 2014). Illinois’ recidivism rate is considered by Governor Rauner to be “dangerously high” at 48% for adults and more than 54% for juveniles (“Executive Order,” 2015). Even so, Illinois’ recidivism rate is lower than what appears to be the
national average. Cooper, Durose, and Snyder (2014) tracked a sample of former prison inmates from 30 states for five years following their release in 2005 and discovered that an estimated two-thirds (68%) of the 405,000 prisoners released were arrested for a new crime within three years of their release from prison, and three-quarters (77%) were arrested within five years. The recidivism rates were highest among males, Blacks, and young adults (age 24 and younger). Among the key reasons for higher rates of recidivism are a lack of job skills and a lack of education (Davis, Bozick, Steele, Saunders, & Miles, 2013).

Review of Related Scholarship

“Policy makers and the general public may view prison educational programming as a waste of tax dollars to an undeserving population, but these programs may offer public safety benefits and future savings in corrections spending” (Duwe & Clarke, 2014, p. 455). In fact, Batiuk, Lahm, Mckeever, Wilcox, N., & Wilcox, P. (2005), among others (Chappell, 2004; Hall, 2015; Nally, Lockwood, Ho, & Knutson, 2014) found that inmates who completed college programs had significantly lower rates of recidivism than their counterparts who didn’t. Further, Lahm (2009) found that inmates who were enrolled in college programs while incarcerated, as opposed to non-college educational programs while incarcerated, were less inclined to be reprimanded for misconduct while still in prison.

Prison educational programs are critical (Bidwell, 2013; Davis, Bozick, Steele, Saunders, & Miles, 2013; Grant, 2014; “Justice and Education,” 2013; Travis, Western, & Redburn, 2014). Educational programs provide inmates with a greater chance of a successful reentry into society because those inmates tend to be more thoughtful and better life decisions. These programs also provide inmates with the necessary interview and job skills they will need to secure gainful employment upon their release (Grant, 2014). In fact, prisoners who participated in academic or vocational education programs had a 13% higher chance of becoming employed as compared to their peers who were not involved in educational programs (Davis, Bozick, Steele, Saunders, & Miles, 2013). Additionally, for each dollar spent on funding prison education programs incarceration costs are reduced by $4 to $5 during the first three years after an individual is released (Bidwell, 2013; “Justice and Education,” 2013).

Former U.S. Secretary of Education, Arnie Duncan, has stated “Correctional education programs provide incarcerated individuals with the skills and knowledge essential to their futures. Investing in these education programs helps released prisoners get back on their feet—and stay on their feet—when they return to communities across the country” (“Justice and Education,” 2013). Similarly, former Attorney General, Eric Holder, has said, “These findings [lower rates of recidivism] reinforce the need to become smarter on crime by expanding proven strategies for keeping our communities safe, and ensuring that those who have paid their debts to society have the chance to become productive citizens” (“Justice and Education,” 2013).

Davis, Bozick, Steele, Saunders, & Miles (2013) have affirmed the benefits of prison education by conducting a meta-analysis of 71 effect size estimates from 50 studies of correctional education programs that spanned 32 years of research. While the studies ranged in methodological quality and rigor, the majority of studies showed lower rates of recidivism
among inmates receiving correctional education than among inmates who did not. Their findings were consistent with the most recent meta-analyses published by Wilson, Gallagher, and MacKenzie (2000); Aos, Miller, and Drake (2006); and MacKenzie (2006).

**Description of the Practice**

As an institution of higher education founded on the principles of social justice and inclusion, Roosevelt University (RU) demonstrated its commitment to ensure equal access to quality educational opportunities in 1989 by partnering with the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) and Lake Land College, a two-year college that serves seventeen correctional facilities throughout the state. The collaboration unfortunately ended in 2002 when funding for such programs was cut at the state and federal levels. Nonetheless, the program as it was at the time produced more than 500 graduates with bachelor’s degrees. The graduates maintained a near five percent recidivism. A study of program’s alumni documented the achievements of the previous program through 2009:

- More than 2,289 degree seeking students were served between 1989 and 2002;
- Eighty percent (80%) of the students were from underrepresented and underserved populations;
- The program produced 538 graduates, 527 of whom were released from prison;
- The 527 graduates who were released from prison have maintained a 4.6% recidivism rate since 1990;
- Eighty (80) of the 527 graduates finished their degrees after their release;
- The net savings to taxpayers by providing quality education and awarding degrees to incarcerated and paroled inmates is estimated at more than $10 million a year.

As a result of the expected funding by the U.S. Department of Education’s Experimental Sites Initiative (ESI) funding, the availability of Second Chance Pell Grants, and a mini grant from the Association of Leadership Educators (ALE), the Evelyn T. Stone College of Professional Studies (ETSCPS) at Roosevelt University will be able to renew its previous commitment to social change and community development by offering courses in its Bachelor of Arts in Organizational Leadership (BA in OLED) degree program (a flex-track model for non-traditional, adult learners) to incarcerated individuals. Two low-security correctional facilities in Illinois (Hill and Taylorville) have each identified a cohort of 35 students who will be served in the first year of the program. All of the students in each of the cohorts hold an Associates’ degree from Lake Land College. Each course in the program is eight (8) weeks long and there are two eight-week sessions offered during each semester.

The BA in OLED provides a multi-disciplinary approach to leadership by combining management science, humanities, social sciences, research science, communication arts, technology, and ethics. The university has entered into an articulation agreement with Lake Land College that will provide a seamless process of credit transfer to Roosevelt University. It is important to note that all of the courses in the BA in OLED program are also offered online so that incarcerated students who are released will have full access to this educational opportunity and will be able to complete their studies (see Appendix A for course offerings).
Aside from a lack of education impacting recidivism rates, another factor leading to recidivism is a lack of employment therefore, it is extremely important for people with a criminal history to secure gainful employment. This is easier said than done inasmuch as many employers do not want to hire former prisoners because of their criminal history, and in other cases, people with felonies are legally barred from receiving certain occupational licenses. There are, for example, 118 kinds of professional, occupational, or business licenses in the state of Illinois that either must be or may be denied to felons. There are two categories of denials; nondiscretionary meaning that the licensing agency must deny a license to anyone with a felony record and discretionary that means the licensing agency takes into account a person’s felony record and then makes a case-by-case decision as to whether a license will be issued. Currently mandatory denials of licensure include but are not limited to teachers, healthcare workers, child care providers, debt collectors, lottery agents, and pyrotechnic distributors. Discretionary denials include (among many others) licensure for a dance hall operator, insurance sales and service, funeral director/embalmer, roofer, interior designer, deaf interpreter, and shorthand reporter (Kroner, 2012).

Of the courses being offered in this reconstituted prison education program, two are new and were specifically designed to meet the needs of the population being served by this initiative; OLED 388 – Entrepreneurial Leadership and OLED 389 – Financial Issues for Leaders. These two courses are designed to provide incarcerated people with the necessary skills to start their own business – for many ex-convicts, this is the only option they have to earn money and make meaningful contributions to their communities. OLED 388 – Entrepreneurial Leadership focuses on leadership concepts, theories, traits, skills, and practices necessary for effectiveness in varied entrepreneurial settings. The course will address key components of venture start ups including innovation and opportunity identification, developing a business plan, selling the venture to funders and/or clients and consumers, operational management, and long-term sustainability. The other course, OLED 389 – Financial Issues for Leaders, provides an overview of basic economics and examines difference market structures, fiscal policy tools, monetary policy options, monetary and policy constraints, and the complexity of long-term planning for leaders to ensure fiscal security. The courses will be offered initially at two low-security prisons in Illinois, the Hill Correctional Center and Taylorville Correctional Center.

Hill Correctional Center

In 2014 a new virtual high school equivalency computer lab was opened at Hill Correctional Center in Galesburg, IL. The educational programs include Adult Basic Education (ABE), General Education Diploma (GED), and special education. Hill Correctional Center currently partners with Lake Land College (a community college) to provide college courses to qualified offenders including two certification programs. One certification program in horticulture provides training in landscaping, plant production and greenhouse operations and the other, in custodial maintenance provides job training and hands-on experience (forty-three students completed their Custodial Certificate in 2014). As a result of the robust schedule of community college courses offered at Hill Correctional Center, 36 students received an Associate degree in Liberal Studies degrees last year (“Annual Report,” 2014).

Taylorville Correctional Center
An Adult Secondary Education (ASE) lab was recently added to the Taylorville Correctional Center which enables offenders to pursue i-Pathways curriculum. i-Pathways is a non-profit technology based high school equivalency test preparation program that was developed in partnership between the Illinois Community College Board and the Center for the Application of Information Technologies at Western Illinois University. The facility also added a career technology instructor to its complement of instructors and program staffing in order to resume college academic programs.

Discussion of Outcomes/Results

Established in 1989, the Department of Human and Community Renewal (DHCR) at Roosevelt University is housed within the ETSCPS and has contracted with the IDOC since 1995 to provide reentry services to formerly incarcerated individuals returning to the Chicago and Cook County area. The primary focus of the department is to reduce the prison populations while at the same time decreasing crime in the local community. This is accomplished by interrupting the cycles of crime by improving the quality of life of former offenders through program activities and individualized attention during the critical reentry process (DHCR, n.d.). The DHCR’s Life Skills Reentry Program networks with local community organizations to provide transitional services to recently released inmates and the OLED program will be partnering with DHCR to collect quantitative and qualitative data from program participants and we will be able to effectively track recidivism as well as the accrued benefits of earning an BA in OLED including entrepreneurial endeavors.

Faculty in the ETSCPS will be evaluating the effectiveness of the reconstituted prison education program by using the university’s current Program Improvement Plan (PIP). The PIP was rigorously vetted, approved, and implemented in 2011 and assures compliance with the university’s mission and the college’s goals. Additionally, the PIP tracks four specific student learning outcomes within a matrix of measures and methods. We are optimistic that this collaborative effort to help educate incarcerated people will prove successful and that the data we collect can be used ultimately to identify even more prisons with similar characteristics that can be added to the program in the future. We hope to put particular emphasis on the inclusion of women’s prisons in the future.

Reflections of the Practitioner/Scholar

“The growth in incarceration rates in the United States over the past 40 years is historically unprecedented and internationally unique” (Travis, Western, & Redburn, 2014, p. 335). In 2012, close to 25% of the world’s prisoners were held in American prisons even though the U.S. accounts for only about five percent of the world’s population and the rate of adult incarcerations in the U.S. are five to ten times higher than rates in Western Europe and other democracies (Travis, Western, & Redburn, 2014).

Those who are incarcerated in U.S. come largely from the most disadvantaged and disenfranchised segments of the population as per (Travis, Western, & Redburn, 2014, p. 2):
They comprise mainly minority men under age 40, poorly educated, and often carrying additional deficits of drug and alcohol addiction, mental and physical illness, and a lack of work preparation or experience. Their criminal responsibility is real, but it is embedded in a context of social and economic disadvantage… The emergence of high incarceration rates has broad significance for U.S. society. The meaning and consequences of this new reality cannot be separated from issues of social inequality and the quality of citizenship…

Travis, Western, and Redburn (2014) conclude that the consequences of incarceration extend far beyond the millions of people who have served time in jails or prisons and the families and communities they have left behind; there are broader effects on society and those effects impact civic and political participation, fundamental notions of citizenship, the allocation of public resources, and on the functioning of the polity and government. As society we expect that people who committed crimes will be punished. But sadly, we are doing far little to support them once they are released. In fact, in many ways we make their lives worse once they are released by limiting opportunities for success.

Early in the twentieth century, rehabilitation of offenders was central to mainstream thinking about the purposes of punishment but by the 1970s skepticism about the appropriateness and effectiveness of rehabilitation was growing. Ultimately, the “emphasis on rehabilitation was replaced by an emphasis on punishment as a symbol of moral accountability and as a means to control crime” (Travis, Western, & Redburn, 2014, p. 342). Clearly the later has not served the country well with “little evidence of a sizable reduction in crime that is attributable to a more than 4-fold increase in incarceration…and with the possibility of real social harm from excessive use of incarceration” (Travis, Western, & Redburn, 2014, p. 343).

Educational attainment should not be the exclusive domain of the privileged. When the principles of social justice are overlaid, there is an additional requirement for the penal system to avoid adding to the current social inequality and reduction in opportunities. Aside from reducing the negative effects of incarceration, efforts to ambitiously help former inmates to provide order and predictability in their daily lives is imperative (Travis, Western, & Redburn, 2014). There is no one, perhaps, better equipped to facilitate this goal than the leadership educator. Leadership educators are uniquely positioned to help students, be those traditional students or non-traditional students, to recognize and capitalize on their strengths and strategize in an attempt to live up to their full potential. “Education and training are designed proximal processes intended to accelerate and direct development toward a specific end” (Carvan, 2016, p. 6) and that is precisely what is necessary to change the trajectory of former inmates’ lives.

**Recommendations**

Travis, Western, and Redburn (2014) contend that the effects of prison education are only beginning to receive the necessary scholarly and analytical attention. Prison education programs have been demonstrated to be cost-effective, but according to Davis, Bozick, Steele, Saunders, & Miles (2013), there are some questions that remain (p. 61), for example: Do results vary for different types of students? Who benefits the most from prison education programs? What types of correctional education programs are associated with the highest post-release returns? What factors moderate or mediate the effect of correctional education? How effective are peer tutors
compared with credentialed instructors? What is the right balance between in-person instruction versus self-study or computer-based learning? What principles from adult education and learning may be applicable to correctional education?

If these questions were to be answered and the missing information was found, “correctional education might have the potential to yield even greater returns on investment” (Davis, Bozick, Steele, Saunders, & Miles, 2013, p. 61) and they have suggested improving the evidence base for stronger research designs, identifying program characteristics, and examining proximal indicators of program efficacy. As reported in Travis, Western, and Redburn (2014), U.S. Supreme Court Justice, Anthony Kennedy, in a keynote speech to the American Bar Association in 2003 warned that if we were to look closely at America’s prisons, “we should be startled by what we see…Our resources are misspent, our punishments too severe, our sentences too long.” He ended his speech by reminding his audience that “the more than 2 million inmates in the United States are human beings whose minds and spirits we must try to reach” (p. 378).

Indeed, it is by and through innovative programs such as the prison education program that is being implemented by the ETSCPS at RU that healthy and sustainable social change can be instigated and vibrant and resilient communities can be nurtured. By sharing details related to the creation and implementation of this program with the Association of Leadership Educator’s membership at their annual conference, in journals, and via a variety of platforms, other institutions of higher education who wish to combat the impact of mass incarceration on their communities can work to replicate this program in order to help change lives and build a better future.

References


## Appendix A

### Year One

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<th>Spring A</th>
<th>Spring B</th>
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<td><strong>PLS 202 – Information Literacy &amp; Research Writing</strong></td>
<td><strong>PLS 360– Natural Sciences Seminar I</strong></td>
<td><strong>PLS 361 – Natural Sciences Seminar II</strong></td>
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<td><strong>OLED 320 – Organization Communication I</strong></td>
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### Year Two

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POSTERS

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*North Carolina State University*

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Barriers to Inclusive Leadership Learning Environments

Jackie Bruce & Katherine McKee
North Carolina State University

Abstract

It is essential for practitioners to model inclusivity in leadership education settings in order to develop inclusive leaders for the future. Intentionality is key in creating an inclusive environment. Understanding some first steps is the entry point to developing positive practice. This practice poster describes some common roadblocks to an inclusive learning environment in four non-curricular areas: communication, course structure, instructor social location, and assessment. Everything we say or do in our learning environment contributes to how our students experience a sense of belongingness; thus, an examination of non-curricular practice is important.

Introduction

Imagine that every department event is a pig picking and you keep kosher or halal. Would you feel that you belonged? Imagine that your instructor gave your class extra days off mid-semester to celebrate Christian holidays, but did not acknowledge your Jewish traditions? Would you feel like you were valued? Imagine that your religion forbade you to be alone with someone of the opposite sex. Would a group work policy requiring males and females on each team be unjust? Imagine being in a classroom where jokes went unchecked, jokes that made you feel unsafe. Would you feel like everyone was sharing in the goal of learning?

Background

These practitioners believe that every instructor of leadership education has the ability to build a toolkit for creating inclusive learning environments. An inclusive instructor values the uniqueness of each student while creating a sense of belonging, recognizes and addresses injustices, and helps all classroom participants develop a shared vision that reflects personal goals in order to develop an inclusive learning environment (Lambert, Walker, Zimmerman, Cooper, Lampert, Gardner, & Slack, 1995; Pelled, Ledford & Mohrman, 1999; Kugelmass & Ainscow, 2004; Ryan, 2007; Echols, 2009; Rayner, 2009; Cherkowski, 2010; Shore, et al., 2011; Boekhorst, 2015). While the inclusive learning environment is valuable in all fields, it is essential for educators to model inclusivity in leadership education settings in order to develop inclusive leaders for the reality of the 21st century (Bennis, 1999).

Description of Methodology

The non-curricular components of a course can communicate as much, or more, to students as the set curriculum does about how we see them (Wortham, 2006). Transforming our classrooms into inclusive environments requires that we take risks with our how we participate in the course going beyond the course materials we select (hooks, 1994). To build inclusive learning environments, we propose a deeper look into four distinct non-curricular components:
communication, course structure, instructor’s social location, and assessment.

**Communication.** The words we use and the avenues of communication that we open provides the blueprint for inclusivity in our classrooms. We propose the following:

1. Students may not identify with the name provided by your course roster.
2. Students may not identify with the pronoun provided by your course roster.
3. Instructors have the tendency to default to male pronouns.
4. Instructors have the tendency to default to Judeo-Christian terms and traditions.

**Course Structure.** How we structure our educational environments is an often overlooked yet key piece to the perception of inclusivity.

1. Students who depend upon financial aid do not necessarily receive their funds before the semester starts.
2. Not all students feel comfortable meeting with mixed-gender groups or in private spaces.
3. Instructors have the tendency to default to Judeo-Christian terms and traditions.
4. Course readings do not always reflect the possible variety of voices and experiences (eg. race, gender, sexual orientation, religion).

**Instructor’s Social Location.** Acknowledging your own social location as an instructor helps to bracket your classroom and office expectations that may not take into consideration the greater socio-cultural issues.

1. Not all students feel comfortable meeting with mixed-gender groups, or in private spaces.
2. In some cultural traditions students are not encouraged to discuss in class.
3. Students’ visa restrictions for courses that incorporate travel.
4. Cultural differences in the power dynamic between instructor and students and how it is enacted in the classroom - for example: feedback, discussion, course evaluations.

**Assessment.** Intentionally acknowledging the role cultural differences may play in how able a student is to complete an assessment on a given day provides each student with an equitable opportunity for course success. In this section, we will discuss ways to be flexible for cultural considerations.

1. Not all students feel comfortable meeting with mixed-gender groups or in private spaces.
2. Exam items may test students’ cultural knowledge instead of course content.
3. Some students’ nationality or citizenship prohibits them from having access to technologies or software required for coursework and research.
4. Semester schedules tend to respect the Judeo-Christian calendar.

**Current Results**

Common classroom practices may not reflect the diversity of the student body. Careful inspection reveals four areas of non-curricular practice - communication, course structure, instructor’s social location, and assessment - through which instructors may be putting students at a disadvantage and making them feel as though they don’t belong.

**Conclusions/Recommendations**
Educators who choose a “way of speaking that is informed by the particularity and uniqueness of whom we are speaking to or with,” are able to engage their students as active participants with shared responsibility for their courses (hooks, 1994, p. 11). By modeling inclusive leadership, leadership educators demonstrate their interest in students which allows for excitement and shared leadership in the learning process (hooks, 1994). Everything we, as educators, do or say communicates something to the students about who we believe they are and can be (Wortham, 2006). Therefore, it is imperative that we attend to the non-curricular pieces of our learning environment. Reflecting on our own social location and how it influences our teaching will lead us to refine how we communicate, how our courses are structured, and how we assess students in order to be inclusive for all of our students.

References


Military Teens HELP
(Higher Education Leadership Preparation)

James C. Johnson
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Harriett C. Edwards
North Carolina State University

Introduction

Transitioning from high school to college is a complicated and stressful experience. This is especially true for military teens, who have already met challenges like extended deployment separations from one or both parents, reunion/reintegration stresses of returning service members, geographic isolation from peers, multiple relocations, and an array of other stresses associated with military life. While these youths are accustomed to continuous change, the transition to college is one that requires preparation and planning that may not be within control of the young people most impacted. Exposing these youths to the resources available to help them make informed decisions helps ease the transition, while exposing them to leadership opportunities for which they can prepare prior to arrival at campus gives them confidence to make the transition even more successful.

Background

The United States is engaged in the longest war in our nation’s history. Years of continuous combat require America’s military forces to endure repeated deployments with longer durations (House Armed Services Republicans, 2011). The impacts on our military personnel are great – with increased operational readiness and shortened rest times between deployments there is a growing mental and physical strain on our fighting forces. However, the impact is felt across a larger audience. Family members also encounter similar stressors resulting from increased absences.

The host state is home to over 840,000 active duty, National Guard, Reserve and retired military members. Further, there are 446,000 youth in military families, with over 107,000 between the ages of 13-18 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015; ICF International, 2014). Many Reserve Component families do not live in close vicinity to their supporting military base or, in many cases, other military families. Therefore, in addition to the rigors of an increased deployment schedule, they often encounter geographical separations resulting in feelings of isolation.

Military youth may have an opportunity to attend one of the 343 Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) schools located throughout the United States, Europe, the Pacific, or the Americas (Department of Defense Education Activity, 2016). When DoDEA schools are not available or when families live too far away from the military installation, youth will attend civilian schools. If the schools are close to a military installation, there is likely to be a larger military youth population providing a sense of community among military youth and an increased knowledge level of civilian teachers. However, Reserve Component families often
live in geographically separated locations where the sense of military community is low or non-existent. This lack of community often results in feelings of isolation (Clever & Segal, 2013; DePedro, et al., 2011) and can result in military youth facing challenges similar to other minority groups (Easterbrooks, Ginsburg, & Learner, 2013; Kitmotto, et al., 2011).

The effects of communal or educational isolation can have long lasting, negative developmental impacts on youth. Encountering such feelings during emotionally volatile times such as prolonged or repeated deployments greatly enhances the odds of emotional and behavioral upheaval. Military students encounter increased academic issues during military related deployments (Chandra & London, 2013; DePedro, et al., 2011). The combined impacts of isolation, academic and emotional upheaval during the formative teenage years when college readiness and considerations should be underway enhances the potential for making uninformed decisions with lifelong ramifications.

**Description of Program**

The Military Teens HELP program is built upon two theoretical foundations; experiential learning theory and collective/collaborative learning. Kolb’s revolutionary experiential learning theory (ELT) posits learning is a process whereby knowledge is created through the application of transformational experiences. Knowledge is the result of the combination of grasping experience and transforming it (Kolb, 1984). Therefore, Kolb’s theory could explain a scenario whereby two individuals engage in a shared activity yet gain different outlooks and perspectives from the experience. Individual learning styles, cultural influences, and personal experiences all factor into the final translation and application of new information.

![Figure 1: Experiential Learning Model (Kolb, 1984)](image)

In building this program, Experiential Learning Theory played a major role in the curriculum development process as well as any reflective, critical thinking concepts following the lessons or activities. Cumulatively, all educational segments take into consideration the elements of the Experiential Learning model to better position the participants for a deeper, more meaningful experience from which to draw their individual learning and growth.

The second, complementary theoretical framework included in the program is collaborative learning. Collaborative learning can generically be defined as learning situations whereby participants share their experiences and insights so as to enhance mutual learning of the larger
whole (Jannsen, Kirschner, Erkens, Kirschner, & Paas, 2010). It is about forming environments whereby learning occurs within small sub-groups as well as throughout the larger inclusive group. O’Donnell and O’Kelly (as cited in Jannsen et al, 2010) discussed the beneficial effects of social cohesion created by working interdependently on group tasks. The group process provides strong learners the flexibility to continue growing throughout the interactions while allowing learners who may not be quite as advanced the opportunity to gain from the collective whole while still being provided the latitude necessary for personal learning.

Cumulatively, integrating the concepts of experiential learning and collaborative learning theories will provide the platform necessary to allow personal growth and exploration while simultaneously supporting a great collective process. Both theories involve the need to recognize the personal experiences and opportunities that each learner brings to the group. The nature of a smaller, more succinct group of teens that represent a microcosm of the larger societal structure is an ideal match for programs built on the premise of individual and collective learning.

**Methodology**

The inaugural four-day experience included 36 youth from 3 states representing 5 military components (Army National Guard, Marine Corps, Active Duty Air Force, Air Force Reserve, and Air National Guard) with youth ranging in age from 14 to 18. Youth applied to participate based upon personal interest and scheduling availability.

**Procedures**

The Military Teens HELP leadership and college experience provided an in-residence experiential learning opportunity for military teens to gain practical knowledge of the steps necessary to prepare for college. As described by Schreiner (2013), the experience addressed intellectual, social, and emotional elements necessary to thrive in a college environment. As such, it provided a solid footing upon which to begin an individual culture of college readiness or augment an already existing college-going culture.

The event featured information on financial aid and scholarships to fund college, how to develop winning essays, how to ace the college entrance interview, and how to manage time so studying as well as social activities can be included. Student ambassadors from multiple colleges (Design, Engineering, Education, Humanities, Agriculture & Life Sciences) assisted by conducting campus tours, informal conversations, formal presentations, and supporting activities. Leadership workshops were included in an effort to focus primarily on communications, teamwork, collaboration, and self-efficacy.

Throughout the week, students completed journaling entries and small group processing conversations with team leaders (adult chaperones). In addition, summative evaluations were completed on the final day of the event. Students also participated in the creation of group videos to reflect on the overall experience and to share personal perspectives of the various activities.
Data are still being calculated. With this mixed method approach, additional time has been required in assessing keyword themes for the various qualitative data collected.

**Preliminary Results**

Students indicated that their knowledge was “enhanced” or “greatly enhanced” in the following areas:

![Program Impact](image)

*Figure 2: Comprehensive categorical improvements*

Teen comments included desires to make the event longer to provide more opportunities to add reflection time and a more social or “free” time into the tightly compressed schedule. Their journaling indicated that they felt more prepared for college life and were more aware of the questions they needed to be asking as they complete their high school careers.

**Conclusions/Recommendations**

Future campus experiences will include additional, more in-depth leadership experiences utilizing trained facilitators. While leadership was an underlying focus at the inaugural experience, future sessions will more prominently feature facilitators and curricula structured to better expose participants to leadership constructs.

Further research is needed to more specifically identify the longer-term impact of the experience. Additional research is also needed to assess differences between active duty military youth and youth living in geographically dispersed families of Guard and Reserve service members to better plan for appropriate interventions and resources. The geographic isolation experienced within Guard and Reserve populations is not as prevalent an issue in active duty families, and the resulting impacts therefore, warrant additional focused attention.

This experience was designed for and limited to military youth. By incorporating specific sessions targeting issues identified as more unique or prevalent within the military community, the event employed a very targeted strategy for these families. An examination of other college readiness and leadership experiences to ascertain their relevance would be appropriate.

Ultimately, the event was a success and there are plans to provide the experiences again in 2016.
with a longer experience for teens and an added component to help military parents better understand available resources and financial aid options.

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An Examination of Agricultural Leadership Program Practices with Respect to Millennials

Valerie Lynn McKee & Hannah S. Carter
Wedgworth Leadership Institute for Agriculture and Natural Resources

Kevan W. Lamm
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Abstract

Since the 1960s, agricultural leadership programs have sought to develop industry leaders through study and experiences. With the torch of adulthood being passed from Generation X to the Millennial generation comes the need for an examination of current agricultural leadership programming practices. Based on what is known about the characteristics of Millennials, how they learn, and how they compare to generations before them, an agricultural leadership program is examining 1) how participants are selected for the program, 2) how participants want to obtain information, 3) how participants want to learn, and 4) how participants will utilize what they have gained from the program to impact their organization and industry. Program changes for future cohorts are listed along with recommendations for other agricultural leadership programs.

Introduction

Agricultural leadership programs aim to expand the horizons of leaders involved in the agricultural industry through both study and experiences (Carter & Rudd, 2000). Agricultural leadership programs have an impressive potential to initiate change because of their longevity and production of lifetime leaders and learners (Johnson, 1998). Participants of these programs are exposed to a wide range of state and national issues that are not commodity or sector-specific. Additionally, these programs give participants an overview of other related issues such as the environment, interpersonal relationships, the political system, and urban interface.

Faced with ever-growing global challenges that both effect and are influenced by the agriculture industry, it is vital that agricultural leadership programs continue to reach the next generation in order to meet these challenges. As the Millennial generation (b. 1982-2000) enters adulthood (Howe & Strauss, 2000), it is important for program directors of adult leadership development programs to note the androgogical differences between this generation and the generations before them.

Background

Generational theory provides perspective on the social identity of today’s leadership learner. Howe and Strauss (2007) describe the Millennial generation as having seven distinct traits. Millennials consider themselves special because they “absorbed the adult message that they dominate America’s agenda” (p. 60). In contrast, Generation X (b. 1961-1981), seek little attention and are considered more pragmatic than their successors (Howe & Strauss, 2000). Howe and Strauss (2007) also assert that Millennials are sheltered by their “helicopter parents” (p. 63) who provide them with the extra care they did not receive as children. Millennials are
thought to be extreme optimists and team-oriented, which is starkly different from the doubtful and individualistic style of many members of Generation X (Howe & Strauss, 2000, 2007). Also in contrast to Generation X, Millennials are considered conventional, seek to reestablish rules, and rebel for the sake of “moving to the ordered center, rather than pushing the anarchic edge” (Howe & Strauss, 2007, p. 69). Finally, the Millennial generation is thought to be pressured and achievement-focused, having characteristics of anxiety, fear of failure, and desire for feedback before completing a project or exam (Howe & Strauss, 2007).

Other notable characteristics of the Millennial learner include their desire for technology and multimedia teaching in the classroom (Berk, 2009) as well as their understanding of the power of technology for communication (Downing, 2006). Millennials also show differences in their commitment to having a work-life balance compared to previous generations. While Baby Boomer managers (b. 1940-1960) first identified the need for balance in their careers and personal life and then Generation Xers continued to emphasize this balance, it is Millennials who indicate that they will hold true to their values regarding work-life balance (Downing, 2006; Howe & Strauss, 2000). Millennials are also drawn to having a higher purpose in their work, making contributions to the greater good, and seek to make global connections (Downing, 2006). This generation is considered very goal-oriented in both academic and work settings (Oblinger, 2003).

The National Leadership Education Research Agenda identifies seven priorities for leadership educators to apply and focus their efforts in their respective programs (Andenoro, Allen, Haber-Curran, Jenkins, Sowcik, Dugan, & Osteen, 2013). Priority II—Program Assessment & Evaluation articulates recommendations “for exploration with respect to the programmatic assessment and evaluation of Leadership Education” (Andenoro et al., 2013, p. 9). Likewise, Priority V—Influences of Social Identity encourages leadership educators to consider social identity in leadership research, teaching, and practice (Andenoro et al., 2013).

Critical examination of agricultural leadership programs with regard to how the leadership learner’s social identity is considered is key for the progression and evolution of such programs. Furthermore, as agricultural leadership programs look to effectively address evolving issues in agriculture and the world, the upcoming generation of leaders must be intentionally prospected.

**Description of Programs**

Agricultural leadership programs were developed in the 1960s as a need was recognized for rural leaders to be trained in social science skills so they could utilize their increased leadership capacity in solving the increasingly complex problems within the industry (Kaufman & Carter, 2005; Kaufman, Rateau, Carter & Strickland, 2012). Currently there are 41 agricultural leadership programs, with 36 of them in the United States (Kaufman et al., 2012; Lamm & Carter, 2014a).

These programs still operate under the premise “to provide young agricultural and rural leaders with a broader view of society, as well as a greater sense of the world and how they fit into the bigger picture” (Helstowski, 2001, p. 1). It is interesting to note, that while these programs supposedly target “young leaders,” demographic information recently obtained on alumni of
these programs indicated that the average age upon graduation of the program was 39.52 and the average age of the survey respondents was 50.68 (Lamm & Carter, 2014a). As a note, according to the 2012 Census of Agriculture, the average age of a farmer in the United States is 58.3 years old (USDA, 2014).

The Wedgworth Leadership Institute for Agriculture and Natural Resources is one such agriculturally based leadership program. This program began in the late 1980s with the goal to develop and improve the capabilities of young leaders so that they might be prepared to be involved in policy formation, whether that may be policy that directly applies to all segments of Florida agriculture and natural resources or public policy that affects the future of Florida agriculture and natural resources in a direct or indirect manner (Wedgworth Leadership Institute for Agriculture and Natural Resources, 2016). Demographic information on this program indicates that the average age of participants upon program graduation was 38.7 (Lamm & Carter, 2014b).

This program has graduated nine classes with approximately 270 alumni who have had a similar program experience of participating in eleven study travel seminars over 55 days in a two-year period. Seminars occur around the state, another region of the country and internationally with the program culminating in an 18-day international experience (Wedgworth Leadership Institute for Agriculture and Natural Resources, 2016). From Class I to Class IX the program has not initiated major changes to the structure or content of the program, but with the recent research indicating respondents rankings of key leadership attributes and competencies (Lamm & Carter, 2014b) and the known characteristics of the upcoming adult generation of Millennials (Berk, 2009; Downing, 2006; Howe & Strauss, 2000), it is time for the program to examine the following: 1) how participants are selected for the program, 2) how participants want to obtain information, 3) how participants want to learn, and 4) how participants will utilize what they have gained from the program to impact their organization and industry.

**Current Results**

Wedgworth Leadership Institute for Agriculture and Natural Resources is preparing to begin the process of selecting participants for Class X of the program. Understanding the need to target upcoming Millennial leaders, the program is making the following changes:

1. All nomination and applications materials will be completed online. This reflects Millennials’ understanding of technology as a powerful source of communication (Downing, 2006).
2. Information about the program, solicitations for nominations and the announcement of recruitment for this new class will be disseminated through social media channels. Again, this reflects Millennials’ use of technology for communication and proficiency with social media (Berk, 2009; Downing, 2006).
3. Based on what is known about Millennial students’ desire for multimedia technology (Berk, 2009), short video clips featuring the program, outcomes of the program and interviews with alumni will be made available to potential applicants.
4. The seminar schedule has been completely rearranged. Seminars themselves are shorter in length and the start and end times have been adjusted so that participants
will have more time to spend at home with their families. This reflects the Millennial generation’s desire to maintain a work-life balance (Downing, 2006).

5. Social media will be utilized throughout the program, not only to keep participants connected, but also to keep alumni informed and connected to the program and to this new class. This also reflects Millennials’ understanding of technology as a source of communication (Downing, 2006).

6. The content of the seminars will be updated. Lamm & Carter (2014b) indicated that alumni of this program reported their skills around the competency of change were the lowest. With this, and with Millennials having a desire to change the world (Downing, 2006), the program should examine how the concept of change is conceptualized.

7. Tangible goals of individuals and of the class need to be developed and focused on throughout the two-year experience. The Millennial generation is known for being goal-oriented and for desiring to see the effects of their efforts (Oblinger, 2003).

**Conclusions/Recommendations**

Much of the changes to be made to Wedgworth Leadership Institute for Agriculture and Natural Resources are geared towards the identified characteristics of the up-and-coming generation of adult Millennials. These characteristics include a general competence with technology and social media, a desire for work-life balance, and aspirations to engage in work with a higher purpose and defined goals. Further research is to be conducted with the newest cohort of the program to gage the effectiveness and results of these changes as well as what other changes can be made to the program to engage Millennial leaders.

With the goal of agricultural leadership programs to develop “young” leaders to address complex, modern issues and with these programs being in existence for decades, the question must be asked: are they truly meeting the needs of both the leaders and the industry they were intended? These programs were established with one generation in mind. Yet, throughout their existence, the programs have not necessarily made many changes to meet the needs of subsequent generations. Now is the time to critically examine all aspects of agricultural leadership programs—from participants to content, from application to impacts. This examination will help to determine how programs need to evolve to account for the needs of Millennials just as the agricultural industry must to engage, equip and encourage this generation to step up and apply their leadership to the complex problems of today.

**References**


The Evolution of Organizations: What Makes an Effective e-Leader?

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**Abstract**

Technology has provided organizations with the ability to reach more customers and increase operational outputs. As technology evolves, organizations are seeing a shift in process and procedures and thus a need for a different set of leadership skills; leaders must be aware of the stress that shifts in processes have on their organization and the need to use their leadership skills to ease their followers’ anxieties. In the face of emergent technologies and new ways of leading, we build a model of effective e-Leadership highlighting: 1) both servant and transformational leadership styles to build a strong relationship with followers and connect them to the organization; 2) technology skills of e-Leaders, 3) support for follower training in technology, and 4) use of the most up-to-date devices.

**Introduction**

As organizations continually function in increasingly dynamic environments (D’Aveni, 1994), one of the key changes that challenge organizations today is the constant integration of technology that can create a shift in process and procedures. There is no doubt that technology is changing the way organizations operate and function. On one level, technology is revolutionizing work and building vast opportunities where there were none, and on another level, it is transforming how leaders interact and manage; leaders must be aware of the stress that any shift in process has on their organization and the need to use their leadership skills to ease their followers’ anxieties. Consequently, skills, abilities, and knowledge that help leaders excel in this ambiguous setting are increasingly important as leaders must find ways to lead beyond the constraints of physical locations. Today’s leaders need to be well-versed not only in normal expected leadership capabilities, but also be able to deal with organizations spread all over the world. With this evolution of the changing nature of leadership, we wanted to build a model of effective e-Leadership, defined as leading people mainly through IT-mediated and supported interaction (Avolio & Kahai, 2003). Specifically, this study’s major purpose is to clarify what makes an effective e-Leader.

**Background and Description of Research Model**

As noted above, technology is changing the way we do work in the organization, yet the use of organizational applications is only available if leadership states their clear goals for implementation (McLester, 2012). These types of software are also seeing an acceptance from leaders where the term “technology” is being redefined. If software continues to be developed in support of organizational technology, we will see a cultural shift where the followers “will be in the driver’s seat where they can have access to information that will help them learn at their speed (Kamenetz & Caplin, 2010, p.74).” It is important to note that using technologies to communicate with leaders and followers at the organizational level could have the “potential to lead to increased productivity and a decrease in the knowledge gap (Meloni, 2010, p.24).”
Further, Avolio and Kahai (2003) suggest that there are four lessons to be learned about communication between virtual teams that use technology for their work. First, everyday messages, mundane or otherwise, exchanged between team members represent the essence of the relationship between team members. Additionally, feelings of personal closeness that characterizes strong relationships in face-to-face teams do not appear to be precipitated by communication with personal content; coworkers with the strongest personal relationships exchanged significantly more task related messages than did coworkers with the weakest personal relationships. Third, team members with strong relationships communicated more often, but the length of their messages were short, perhaps attributable to the degree to which they had developed a shared understanding or shared assumptions about the meaning that was being conveyed. Last, virtual teammates developed and strengthened relationships by proactively focusing on problems or challenges related to work (Avolio & Kahai, 2003, p. 334). Although these four lessons assist leadership in producing an effective virtual team, the authors also stated that the optimum leadership style used is based on the individual leader’s personal choice.

We argue here that leadership style does matter for effective e-Leadership. There are many leadership theories that researchers and practitioners rely on from behavioral leadership theories (e.g. Northhouse, 2010) and contingency leadership theories (e.g. Kerr, Schriesheim, Murphy, & Stogdill, 1974), to more contemporary transformational leadership theory (e.g. Bass & Avolio, 1994) and servant leadership theory (e.g. Greenleaf & Spears, 2002). In our model described in the following sections, we draw on servant and transformational leadership theories in order to build an effective model of e-Leadership. We first discuss technology characteristics required of an effective e-Leader and conclude with implications for theory and practice. Please see figure 1 for our complete model.

**e-Leader Technological Knowledge and Follower Technological Support**

A critical change in processes for e-Leaders is the use of technology. When leadership integrates any new process or procedure, it is important to show how constituents are included in the future vision of the leadership. It is therefore critical for leaders to understand all aspects of the current technology. Leadership technology training courses can help leaders “in implementing Information and Communication Technology (ICT) into their profession (Abuhmaid, 2011, p. 195).” Leaders now need to become more aware of their ability to communicate with team members and clients via technology (Do-Hong, Wilkins, & Dunaway, 2011). For many organizations, the preferred means of communication is virtually-based, and is most prevalent in the frequent use of email to communicate organizational strategies. Leaders that do not begin to see the change that ICT brings to their company could possibly see institutional failure due to the lack of leadership transformation (Ghilic-Micu, Maracine, Stoica, & Ciocan, 2011).

In addition to ensuring that e-Leaders understand and can use the technology tools, it is also important to make sure that the followers trained to use new technology feel like they can develop a “personal philosophy of teaching/learning” so that the followers become true practitioners of the proposed technology (Johnson, Wisniewski, Kuhlemeyer, Isaacs, & Krzykowski., 2012, p. 66). Leaders are responsible in reviewing training to match those constituents being enlightened with new technology such as prior knowledge of technology (McKay & Vilela, 2011, p. 311). Even if
leadership surveys their followers, “the most difficult barrier to overcome, however, may be technology anxiety (Johnson et al., 2012, p. 63).” If leadership can work to minimize any type of technology anxiety, it could be possible for leadership to have an increased acceptance of technology.

Servant and Transformational Leadership Style

We propose that in order to be an effective e-Leader, the leader needs to rely on both a servant and transformational leadership style. First, servant leadership theory builds on the leader’s ability to focus on their followers’ needs.

Specifically, Greenleaf (1977) states that “servant leaders shape their employees’ views and values to encourage them to become servants and servant leaders themselves (as cited in Rivkin, Diestel, & Schmidt, 2014, p.55).” Further, Finley (2012) states that leaders may also find that their leadership abilities while practicing servant leadership can be more effective than a title when establishing communication and authority (p.136). Understanding follower needs and building communication and authority are critical when working virtually through technology. Leaders have to capitalize on opportunities to connect with their followers in different ways, and servant leadership will help enhance this connection.

Using a servant leadership style, leaders can build the mutual respect between leader and follower which can also build social capital through goal congruence and social interactions. Leaders can build their social capital by increasing their personal knowledge between leader and follower (De Clercq, Bouckenooghe, Raja, & Matsyborska, 2014). Once leaders have built their social capital, the leader can begin to understand and utilize the unique qualities that each follower possesses creating a positive and safe environment for followers’ ideas and their high level of engagement in the organization. The safe environment created by a leader through goal congruence and social interaction also creates concrete terms that contribute to a larger understanding of the organization’s goals and ways each follower’s unique abilities can contribute to the organization (De Clercq, Bouckenooghe, Raja, & Matsyborska, 2014; Shinsky & Stevens, 2011). This connection will build a stronger sense of trust between leader and follower, a characteristic found to be a needed feature in effective eLeadership (Savolainen, 2014).

In addition to a servant leadership style, effective e-Leaders must also rely on transformational leadership qualities. Transformational leadership theory suggests that a leader “engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower (Northhouse, 2010, p.172).” Research by Smith, Montagno, & Kuzmenko (2004), suggest that “servant leadership tends to cultivate a more static approach to the external environment than transformational leadership,” and “transformational leader’s motivation is directed more toward obtaining success for the organization, which will reflect on his/her abilities, and the success of these leaders is measured by the extent to which they obtain organizational rewards (p. 89).” Currently, the skills learned in leadership theory are still applied in e-leadership such as people centered, interpersonal skills, risk taking, and transformational leadership traits (Gurr, 2004, p.116). The successful e-Leader needs to remember to build relationships and trust at a faster pace than when traditional face-to-face communication (Avolio & Kahai, 2003, p. 331). To further engage followers, leaders who exhibit transformational leadership can promote followers
by empowering the human potential. In the end, the transformational leadership behaviors help the effective e-Leader create a culture that should feel like a family atmosphere where organizational members feel as if they can debate and engage in discourse for the betterment of the organization.

**Contemporary Technology Devices**

A final part of our model highlights the crucial need for an effective e-Leader to use utilize the most up-to-date devices. As the Millenial generation begins to join the workforce across the United States, there is an increase of an even younger generation adopting the use of technology. Recent research suggests “75% of all 12-17-year-old students own their own cell phones, and 66% of those students owned a cell phone before they turned 14 years old (Hill, 2011, p.23).” As generations of employees join organizations with increased intrinsic knowledge of technology, the potential need and ability to use technology devices to enhance organizational demands could grow. In studies conducted by Alzaidiyeen, Abdullah, Al- Shabatat, and Seedee (2011), results show that younger populations are accepting of technology through both gender and age variations. More importantly, “mobile learning (m-learning) enables learning independently of place and time, ubiquitous, through wireless networks and mobile devices, such as personal digital assistants (PDA), cellular phones, smart-phones, and mp-3 devices (Gafni, 2009, p. 359).” If leadership intends on using technology to communicate with the Millenial generation, they will need to have intuitive applications that require little training and take full advantage of the software. Information such as schedules and organizational communication need to be readily accessible (Gafni, 2009). Technology will “allow continuous access to resources for situated, responsive, and reflective learning” once leadership learns the technology applications (Akkerman & Filius, 2011, p. 339). Thus, effective e-Leaders will utilize the newest contemporary technology devices.

**Conclusions**

One major theoretical contribution of our model is the development of the antecedents of effective e-Leadership. Most prior studies have emphasized the need for e-Leadership because of the emergence of an emphasis of more IT-mediated work, and our model helps clarify what makes an effective e-Leader. Specifically, our model highlights that e-Leaders need to utilize both servant and transformational leadership styles in order to build a strong relationship with followers and connect them to the organization. In addition, effective e-Leaders should be well-versed in technology use, support follower training in technology, and use the most up-to-date devices. Practically, our model is important for today’s e-Leaders because they must find ways to lead beyond the constraints of physical locations. As we note above, today’s e-Leaders need to be well-versed not only in normal expected leadership capabilities, but also be able to deal with organizations spread all over the world. This model helps clarify how e-Leaders can manage their organizational members in order to build successful relationships and organizational effectiveness.

Future research needs to be conducted to properly measure e-Leadership competencies. Although there are many instruments that measure the e-Leadership theory as a construct, a single instrument needs to be constructed which measures e-Leadership from both leader and follower perspectives. Finally, follower anxiety towards e-Leaders and technology needs to be measured to increase the efficacy of developing ICT. The increased data collected by use of valid instrument could increase
not only leader-follower efficacy, but also adoption of both required and experimental technologies.

References


Figure 1
Model of Effective e-Leadership
Establishment of the Teen Excellence in Leadership Institute (TELI)

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Virginia Tech

Abstract
A planning team was coordinated to envision, plan, and implement a new teen leadership program for [State]; the Teen Excellence in Leadership Institute (TELI) was the result. Outstanding teens, nominated by 4-H agents or FFA advisors/agriculture teachers, were selected through a competitive process. The institute design encompasses in-person events and interactive virtual meetings. Institute goals are to: 1) understand self and develop a personalized action plan for engaged leadership, 2) network with teens interested in learning about issues facing youth and communities, 3) design a team project to address community leadership needs, 4) learn about advocacy and outreach. Topics include: Strengths-Based Leadership, problem solving style, group facilitation skills, youth-adult partnerships, team building, project collaboration, peer feedback and evaluation, leadership principles, and critical reflection.

Introduction
Adolescents are barred by constraints and threats that serve as obstacles for sustaining personal and self-regulatory growth (Larson, 2006). Recently, positive youth development efforts and the demand for soft skill development of new professionals entering the workforce has called for a reform in the way we think about youth leadership development programs (Lerner, 2005; Crawford, Lang, Fink, & Dalton, 2011). Positive youth development requires the growth of the Five Cs: competence, confidence, character, connection, and caring (Lerner, 2005). In addition, leadership, communication, problem solving, and decision making skill development is crucial to foster career readiness (Rutherford, Stedman, Felton, Wingenbach, & Harlen, 2004). Worker (2014) acknowledged leadership development of youth as a proven strategy to create experiences that foster essential elements of youth development, including: a sense of belonging, mastery, generosity, and independence. With this in mind, youth leadership programs that incorporate soft skill advancement can lead to positive youth development.

Various youth organizational programs, such as 4-H and FFA, have addressed these issues, but are generally context specific and geared towards youth with similar interest and access to specific programs (Radhakrishna & Sinasky, 2005). Further, program leadership in [State] identified the need to better integrate motivated youth from both 4-H and FFA organizations under the pretense of collective capacity building. Therefore, we have created a leadership development opportunity for teens with this challenge and purpose as the foundation. By engaging and developing outstanding teens, we are actively working to identify and address global issues that face communities today. TELI combines two face-to-face weekend retreats with virtual sessions for team project development and updates. Supplemental content on peer feedback interactions and political process engagement are integrated in recorded and archived virtual learning. In addition, youth-adult partnerships are incorporated based on previous research that demonstrates the effectiveness of these partnerships in positive leadership growth for teens (Anderson & Sandmann, 2009). Overall, the experiences fuse a well-rounded lineup of
topics that lead youth towards a more holistic consideration of their personal leadership skills and philosophies.

**Background**

The TELI program seeks to accomplish the following goals: 1) to understand self and develop a personalized action plan for engaged leadership, 2) to network with other teens interested in learning about the issues facing youth and communities, 3) to design a team project to address community leadership needs in [State], 4) to learn more about advocacy and outreach that will improve the lives of others. Several frameworks and models reflect the overarching goals of the program and aided in the creation of the TELI Model. Ricketts and Rudd (2002) conducted a meta-analysis of youth leadership development and established a conceptual model that included five dimensions: leadership knowledge and information; leadership attitude, will, and desire; decision making, reasoning, and critical thinking; oral and written communication skills; and intra and interpersonal relations. With this model in mind, Chickering’s (1993) Theory of Identity Development, which is commonly utilized within FFA, provided guidance for the development of the seven vectors: developing competence, managing emotions, moving through autonomy toward interdependence, developing mature interpersonal relationships, establishing identity, developing purpose, and developing integrity. In addition, this program utilizes the 4-H Citizenship Framework by incorporating the key focus areas of civic engagement, service, civic education, and personal development (4-H National Headquarters, 2011). The incorporation of these models and frameworks provided a solid foundation for youth leadership development.

**Description of Program/Methodology**

In the fall of 2013, conversations began about the need to have an integrated and dynamic statewide youth program that would be roughly modeled after the adult agricultural leadership development program in the state. Recognizing two youth development organizations that address leadership (4-H and FFA), an articulated attempt was made to develop novel programming to provide high-caliber experiences that were different than the opportunities available to youth in their respective organizations. A program planning committee was formed for deliberate discussions about program objectives and theoretical influence.

In order to establish a high benchmark for program participation early on, a decision was made to require program applications to be accompanied by a written nomination from either a 4-H agent or FFA advisor. Both of these positions lend themselves to being mentors and role models for young leaders. Selected participants each receive a partial scholarship to attend two face-to-face weekend events (fall and spring) and interact via two virtual sessions (winter). Attendees benefit from a full curriculum that includes personal assessments, skill development, guest speakers, and team- and project-based learning. Topics include: Strengths-Based Leadership, problem solving style, group facilitation skills, youth-adult partnerships, team building, project collaboration, peer feedback and evaluation, leadership principles, and critical reflection. Such topics and skills are typically offered through adult programming. Previous research and planning team members believe that exposing teens early is an advantage for developing young leaders.
To further explore the impact that participation in TELI has on our youth, several aspects of program evaluation and learning assessment are implemented. Each participant completes a personalized action plan at the first session to be revisited and implemented on program completion. Pre and post surveys based on the 4-H Citizenship common measures were used to measure any gained knowledge and confidence. Members of each program team participate actively toward the identification of a problem to address, plan for implementation, and preparation for presentation. Opportunities for constructive peer feedback are provided throughout.

Project teams present their work to an invited panel of stakeholders. This provides an opportunity to further develop presentation skills. Participants are encouraged to incorporate insights gained as they reflect on the entire experience and how personal and group dynamics, strengths, and diversity of thought factored into the success of their experience. Feedback from the first cohort of TELI participants was taken into consideration by planners as the program outline and content were further developed and refined before planning the second cycle.

**Current Results**

The 2014-2015 TELI cohort included 23 youth accepted for full participation. The institute convened for a weekend in November 2014, a virtual meeting in January of 2015 and the closing weekend in March 2015. The opening weekend focused on content delivery and identifying team project topics, while the virtual meeting was used primarily as a check-in for group project work. The final weekend centered on the team project presentations to an invited panel of experts and reflection and a recap of the institute. Project team topics focused on addressing issues such as low rates of youth involved in community organizations, education (including career and technical education), bullying, lack of community pride, and a need for increased club/chapter involvement.

At the conclusion of the inaugural program, participants were surveyed and asked to indicate their agreement with 16 4-H Citizenship common measures using a four-point Likert scale. Participants reflected on their views before TELI and after TELI. 4-H Citizenship common measures were chosen in order to begin uniform data collection suitable for ongoing studies and sharing with youth practitioners. Paired t-tests were used to examine whether statistical differences existed between pre- and post-survey results. Respondents indicated a statistically significant change in 15 of the 16 common measures evaluated.
Table 1. 4-H Common Measures Results, Year One (N=15)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Before TELI</th>
<th>After TELI</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I set goals for myself.</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a plan for reaching my goals.</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have the confidence to speak in front of groups.</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am willing to consider the ideas of other even if they are different than mine.</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know community leaders who support me.</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have talents I can offer others.</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like to work with others to solve problems.</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am able to lead a project that will make a difference in my community.</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I pay attention to new events that affect my community.</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I hear about an issue, I try to figure out if they are just telling one side of the story.</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can contact someone that I have never met before to get their help with a problem.</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I plan to work on projects to better my community.</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After high school, I will continue to work to better my community.</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I help make sure everyone gets an opportunity to say what they think.</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I treat everyone fairly and equally when I am in charge of a group.</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am able to lead a group in making a decision.</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at $p < .05$ based on a paired samples t-test for differences between responses for before and after TELI.

Conclusions/Recommendations

After a successful inaugural program, TELI was replicated and is currently in a second year of programming reaching more than 40 youth participants in total. 4-H Citizenship common measures survey data yield that TELI is an effective programming process to increase teens’ ability to plan, set goals, solve problems, and to lead community projects. Although these measures were developed for use in 4-H programming, the implications of them on engaged citizenship and youth development are not limited to 4-H alone. As TELI includes participants from both 4-H and FFA, we conclude that reported improvements in these measures positively impacts all youth in the TELI program and, therefore, holds implications for all youth practitioners.

In year one, a survey was administered at the conclusion of the program and participants were asked to indicate their agreement with the common measures, self-reflecting on perspectives for before TELI and after TELI in the same survey (N=15, March 2015). In order to improve the strength of the measures for participants in the second cycle year, a pre- survey was administered before the beginning of the first weekend (N=16, November 2015), and a post- survey will be administered at the conclusion of the final weekend (N=16, April 2016).

Future recommendations include developing a program manual for implementing teen leadership
training using the TELI model, so that replication in other states can be successfully facilitated. We also plan to implement a sustainability/transition plan for ongoing leadership of the current program, holding true to program planning methods incorporating continuous evaluation for improvement. Additionally, given acquisition of adequate resources regionally, teams could be empowered to implement their issues-based team projects in their communities. At present, the project solutions are presented by the teams but not enacted, due to the geographically disperse nature of each project team and limitations imposed by resources and liability.

References


Narrative Approach to Leadership Identity Development through Family Storytelling

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Abstract

This project explores emerging leaders identity development by applying a narrative framework through retrospective family storytelling. Emerging leaders have different experiences and come to a new awareness of themselves in a leadership context in a variety of ways. By using a narrative/storytelling framework, participants told stories of family history events and invoked the life stories of other family members (i.e. parents and grandparents). Themes of agency and communion were salient among the participants’ stories. Application of these themes on identity may help students understand who they are as leaders and recognize the process of their leadership identity development. Furthermore, leadership educators may use narrative/storytelling as a method of best practices for teaching leadership identity development.

Introduction

In order to develop future generations of leaders it is important to understand the influences of leadership identity development. One way to understand our identity is through storytelling. Family members share in creating stories together as a way to construct individual and family identity and family culture (e.g. Koenig Kellas, 2005; Stone, 2004; Thompson, et al., 2009). Family storytelling becomes important to identity development, specifically in emerging adults (McAdams, 1997). As children develop into adolescents and adulthood they begin to establish their own motivational patterns. These patterns of desire are reflected thematically in their personal myths (McAdams, 1997). The interest of this project is to explore how or if retrospective family stories influence individuals’ values and motives that construct approaches to leadership.

Background

Leadership scholars have examined how leader’s biographies are influential to followers and important to leadership styles (Shamir, Dayan-Horesh, & Adler, 2005). Sharmir and Eilam (2005) used life stories as a way to examine the development of authentic leadership. They suggest “leaders acquire these [authentic] characteristics by constructing, developing and revising their life-stories.” (p.396). Sternberg (2008) presents an acronym WICS (wisdom, intelligence and creativity synthesized) which is used to show “how successful leadership involves the synthesis of three qualities.” (p. 360). Sternberg’s approach includes a storytelling component when discussing creativity. He asserts, “leaders generate stories that appeal in various degrees to their followers.” and these “stories provide much of the content of creativity in leadership.” (p.362).

Brungardt (1996) conducted a review of literature to explore what was known about how leaders are developed, educated, and trained; he found two main areas of focus when looking at the development of leaders: leadership development constructs and learning leadership theory. The
foundation of leadership development is supported by early childhood and adolescent development, the role of formal education, professional experiences, and specialized leadership education. Brungardt (1996) explains, “‘leadership development’ refers to almost every form of growth or stage of development in the life cycle that promotes, encourages and assist in one’s leadership potential.” (p. 83).

Komives, Owen, Longerbeam, Mainella and Osteen (2005) argue the majority of leadership development focuses on skill-building and short term programs, “rather than on the process of how leadership capacity or leadership identity is created or changes over time...understanding the process of creating a leadership identity is central to designing leadership programs and teaching leadership” (p. 594). Understanding identity development is beneficial for leadership educators and leadership program designers in developing emerging adults as future leaders.

To add to the field of leadership education and narrative research, this project explores how family stories aid in leadership development for future student leaders. Rather than looking at the leader’s personal story, this project looks deeper into the family culture to see if certain stories resonate as having a leadership message. Specifically, the purpose of this project is to explore how or if certain family stories shape an individual’s awareness of their own leadership identity. Therefore, the following research question is posed:

RQ: How, if at all, do family stories aid in constructing individual leadership identity?

Methodology

This project was conducted as a pilot study with limited participants for the purpose of directing future research. Participants (n=4) were purposefully recruited with differing levels of leadership theory and experiences. Two participants were recruited from an undergraduate introductory leadership course. The focus of the course is on interpersonal leadership skills and developing emerging adults as leaders. The course serves to meet a university wide general education requirement and is open to all students across the university. Two additional participants were recruited from a doctoral program in Human Sciences with a Specialization in Leadership Studies. The four participants offered a diverse perspective on leadership by exploring undergraduate students with little leadership theory and two graduate students with a more complex understanding of leadership theory and education.

Participants were first given a short explanation of the project goals explaining they were to think of a well-told family story (with a beginning, middle and end) that made them think of leadership. Next, there was a short discussion of leadership and its focus for the project. For the purposes of this project leadership is defined as “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal.” (Northhouse, 2013, p. 5). This definition is broad and indicates anyone can have leadership characteristics if they exert influence on others. Third, participants engaged in a semi-structured interview designed to elicit a family story that helped shaped their approach to leadership. Participants were given the prompt: Can you recall any stories in your family (preferably told to you) that help you construct your approach to leadership? Follow up questions included: Was this story told to you? By whom? When? Why has this influenced your leadership identity?
The interviews were audio recorded and listened to multiple times for analyzing the content of the family stories to establish themes that constructed leadership identity. First, the situation or event of the story was analyzed to identify what types of family stories elicit a leadership theme. McAdams (1997) defines a story theme as, “a recurrent pattern of human intentions” (p.67). Next, McAdams’ imago types were used to see if there were common characters in the personal stories that resonated with leadership identity. “Imagoes give voice to individual and cultural values.” (p.129). McAdams explains a person’s identity is a story regarding certain imagoes.

Results

Participants told family history events and invoked the life stories of other family members (i.e. parents and grandparents). In invoking the life story of their parents or grandparents the participants used common character types described by McAdams (1997) of agentic and communal imagoes. Agentic types are described as ambitious, adventurous, clever, courageous, daring and resourceful; agentic characters “tend to proceed vigorously through the world.” (p.134). Communal types are “characters who act, think, and feel in communal ways.” (p.148). These character types relate to constructs of leadership by their drive for power and achievement (agency) by having a relational focus (communal).

Agentic Characters

According to McAdams (1997) these characters “experience challenges and obstacles as being manageable.” (p.135). A participant shared her father’s life story describing how he ‘stepped’ up into different positions and roles even though he was not trained for the specific job. “Dad didn’t have the experience to be a principle but stepped into that role because it was needed. It’s interesting to me that he was willing to step up and be the principle which he never really had any training in administration.” The participant describes how this story influences her leadership identity. “When I think about that story I just think that, uhm, for me personally, it’s a lot about you might not have the perfect training to do certain things but you need give things a try. You may just be an able body, or people look to you for leadership and you don’t really know it or think that you’re capable of it but that it’s worth giving it a try.”

Another example of agentic character type was the warrior imago.

My dad told me a story about my grandpa. When my grandpa was like 13 years old his dad passed away. And a couple months later his mother died so my grandpa was left with two sisters when he was thirteen. And then his family rejected them…and so, like the family, took all the wealth that my grandparents had, so the kids were left by themselves. And so my grandpa was like, I’m the oldest, and I have two sisters, and I have nobody to take care of us, no family, so I just have to do my best to raise my sisters. And he did what he could like going to the farm and working for other people doing just any kind of job so he could have food on the table for his sisters. So it was really difficult. Once his sisters are old enough to marry he goes back to school, now he wanted to take care of himself too. So, he goes back to school to enroll, and they ask him his birth date. He’s like, I don’t know what my birth date is and he didn’t even have anybody
to ask since his parents died and his family rejected him so who knows when he was born? And then, he as kind of clever, so what he did, he went to see his dad’s friends to find out when he was born. They didn’t know the exact date but they knew around the time he was born. He knew the year but didn’t know the month and date so he just made that up. And he went back to school; he got his nursing degree and became a nurse.

In hearing this story the participant has incorporated in strong and independent identity in terms of her approach to leadership. “And so I think the whole story has helped me like to be strong and independent, like no matter what comes…just be strong and don’t depend too much on other people. Just knowing everything my grandpa faced he was still motivated to be able to go to school and get his degree. So he had a goal and he perused his goal with the obstacles that come.”

**Communal Characters**

Other themes there appeared resonated with the *caregiver imago*.

Let me think about this, my parents are from the south of Vietnam and it was during the Vietnam War and they were part of the boat people. So uhm, part of my family, my dad’s family went to Holland, they like split off and my dad came to California first and then they had camps there and then they moved to Lincoln later. I just know they had to wait a while and his family; his siblings were his first responsibility. Making sure they know what to do and taking care of them, I guess during the transition with school and jobs it was really difficult for him to get a part-time job and I guess the language for school was very difficult for him. He’s always like I know I’m not the smartest and brightest person but it takes a lot of effort to try to get through it and just be there form family especially.

Another participant recounted a story told by his dad about his military experiences. The influences of his father’s story resonated with the family member in looking out for and serving others in leadership roles. “And so for me it’s always been about, whether something impacts me or not isn’t as important as to whether it impacts, negatively the people that are subordinates too. And so that has always resonated with me when it comes to being in leadership roles, your main priority is gunna be the people who report to you. It’s always been a thing in my family that your job is to look out for those who can’t look for themselves.”

**Conclusions**

In exploring the research question, how, if at all, do family stories aid in constructing individual leadership identity, participants were able to share a family story that influenced leadership in some way. Participants invoked the life stories of parents or grandparents focusing on narratives about overcoming challenges and adversity, serving others and stepping up into roles. The imago character types most salient in the family stories were agentic and communal. Research in the field of leadership studies has mainly focused on how leaders’ stories affect their leadership style or influence followers. This project aimed to dig deeper into how leadership identity is first
established by examining retrospective narratives told in the family.

Research on leadership development has supported early adolescent development, educational programs, and adult experiences aid in the development of leadership identity. However, the gap in leadership literature is empirical research that explores how emerging adults develop a sense of leadership identity through their family culture. By using a retrospective storytelling method scholars and educators may gain a deeper understanding into how family stories help emerging adults create and make sense of their identity as a leader.

References


An Examination of Perceived Leadership Development and Growth of College Students through an Undergraduate Professional Collegiate Organization

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Abstract

This study examined how membership in a professional collegiate organization (PCO) aids in the development of the five practices of exemplary leaders. Analysis of the student reflections revealed most students scored highest on the practice of enabling others to act and the PCO allowed them to develop this practice through career fairs, recognitions, and working on service committees. Most students scored lowest on the practice of challenging the process. Reasons given for why this practice was lowest resulted in two themes: no changes needed and not my job or role within the organization (Kouzes & Posner, 2014).

Introduction

As stated in the National Leadership Education Research Agenda (NLERA), there is a need for “research to address the development of adaptive leadership that can be promoted at all levels of the organization” (Andenoro, 2013, p. 16). This can include collegiate organizations such as a PCO. As leadership development has been shown to enhance the ability for college students to make a meaningful difference throughout their lives, “a great need exists to better understand the unique nature of college student leadership development and how the collegiate experience contributes to that process” (Dugan & Komives, 2007). Research indicates that college students increase their leadership skills during their college years through leadership development, which “enhance(s) self-efficacy, civic engagement, character development, academic performance and personal development of students.” There is a significant lack of literature on the relationship between theory and practice in the assessment of leadership development in college students (Dugan & Komives, 2007).

The PCO serves as a liaison between the students of the college and the faculty, staff and Dean of the college. It is a professional organization serving nearly 8,000 students by providing service, networking, professional development and scholarship and grant opportunities. Its purpose is to unify and serve its students by promoting communication and personal development as well as providing opportunities for social interaction to foster leadership as a process in the college. Every college within the university has a student council and most other universities use a similar system. Beyond this, there are thousands of student organizations that govern universities and facilitate a relationship between students and faculty members. Priority number four of the NLERA relates to the “application of the individual within the group, team and organization contexts.” Priority number four is the Sociological Development of Leaders, Followers and Learners (Andenoro, 2013, p. 16). This study addresses priority four by identifying how students in the PCO perceived how their leadership experiences were shaped by the PCO.

Background
The Student Leadership Practices Inventory (SLPI) was created by Kouzes and Posner and is designed to measure how often an individual uses each of the five practices of exemplary leadership (2014). It is made up of a set of statements used to describe five identified leadership practices: modeling the way, inspiring a shared vision, challenging the process, enabling others to act and encouraging the heart. The SLPI measures the frequency a leader engages in 30 behaviors corresponding to the five practices. Scoring uses a ten point Likert scale. The SLPI views leadership as a “measurable, learnable and teachable set of behaviors” allowing for the belief that everyone can be a leader (Kouzes & Posner, 2014). If members are presented with more opportunities to use a particular practice, they will be more likely to use this practice. In this way, everyone has the opportunity to grow as a leader. This observation by Posner is the premise for this study. Also, the more frequently student leaders are seen engaging in the five practices, the more positively the organization and leaders are viewed, which is beneficial for the overall effectiveness of leadership (Posner, 2012). Furthermore, any uncertainty about the influence of collegiate organizations may be tested using reflection questions (Dugan & Komives, 2007).

**Description of Methodology**

This study examined how students that participated in the [PCO] perceived the [PCO] to have effected their development of the five practices of exemplary leaders. A basic qualitative study design using content analysis was used to understand how individuals make sense of their [PCO] experiences (Merriam, 2009). Students that took the SLPI assessment represented a criterion type purposive sample as they were current members of the [PCO] and were present at the meeting when assessment was presented (Patton, 2002). The SLPI assessment was presented to 32 [PCO] members. They were then shown a PowerPoint presentation with information regarding the SLPI as recommended by the creators of the SLPI (Kouzes & Posner, 2014). Finally, the group received a reflection questionnaire to consider their results and answer questions. Data were coded with number 1 through 32 before being compared using a constant comparative method (need citation).

**Results**

All five practices from Kouzes and Posner, 2014 were listed as the highest score by at least one [PCO] member. The highest scoring practice for the majority of [PCO] members was enabling others to act. The lowest scoring practice for the majority of [PCO] members was challenging the process. Students related opportunities to use the highest practice of enabling others to act and focused on three main themes: career fairs, recognitions, and working on service committees. The most common theme was the annual Career Fair put on by the [PCO]. Member number seven said:

“I developed this practice by allowing others to utilize their specific strengths while following their passions.”

The member went on to say this was especially true in allowing the Finance Committee to plan and facilitate the Career Fair. Members also stated that [PCO] provides opportunities to
encourage individuals through recognitions such as Member of the Week. Member number 21 discussed how one responsibility helped to enable others:

“I post the weekly [PCO] member highlights to show the social media world how great our members are.”

This member believes this helps members feel validated and so they are more likely to act within [PCO]. Lastly, members discussed the annual Shoes of Love shoe drive put on by [PCO]. Member number 17 said:

“Serving on the Service Committee allowed me to be part of a group and help others step out of their comfort zones” to then be able to “come through for a community in Africa” that was benefitted by the shoe drive (Kouzes & Posner, 2014).

Students that scored lowest in challenging the process based this result on two themes: no changes needed and not my job or role within the organization. Member number 22 identified with both of these themes and said:

“I have had few experiences that I felt needed changing or that I was in a position to help change.”

Others, like member number 29 did not see need for change in the [PCO] and therefore did not feel the desire to challenge the process. Member number 29 said:

“I believe in the process. The structure and organization of the [PCO] allows for ingenuity and change by those who seek it.”

Other members believed it is not necessarily their job to challenge the process and would prefer that [PCO] officers take that responsibility. Member number 13 said:

“The only process I challenge is merchandise sales” which is that member’s specific task within [PCO]. (Kouzes & Posner, 2014).

Member number 23 felt that the low scores in challenging the process could be remedied. This member said:

“I believe this could be remedied by implementing practices where we don’t just do what we have to do, but we go above and beyond the standard.”

Conclusions

In relation to the purpose of [PCO], the student’s scores seem to reflect that [PCO] members are indeed fulfilling their purpose. The [PCO] mission states that part of their purpose is to foster leadership as a process. Reflections gathered from this study suggest that there are opportunities to do so. Their scores show that they excel at enabling others to act, which in turn encourages the personal leadership development of all students within the [college]. While this appears to show
that the [PCO] does fulfill at least part of their purpose, the organization may ultimately become stagnant due to their lowest scoring practice of challenging the process. It appears that [PCO] members have opportunities to develop and use each of the five practices but they predominantly feel they have developed the practice of enabling others to act (Kouzes & Posner, 2014). The recommendations for [PCO] based on these findings include encouraging members to think analytically about ways to challenge the process and make the [PCO] a better organization. By creating more opportunities for growth in this particular practice will help members to become more likely to use it more often (Posner, 2012).

References


Using Social Network Analysis to Identify Potential Volunteer Leaders in Nonprofit Organizations

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Abstract

“Volunteer leadership remains a vast untapped resource for nonprofits...these leadership roles, if properly supported, cultivate the consciousness, capabilities, and commitment in volunteers, and create lifelong advocates for causes and the change that citizens seek to make in their communities” (Cooperation, 2007, p. 15). Social network analysis was used to identify volunteer leaders in three groups at a nonprofit organization. ForceAtlas2 analysis was used to generate networks of nodes (volunteers) and edges (connections) to determine leaders within each group. The identified leaders were compared to leaders identified by the volunteer director of the organization. Overall, the volunteer leaders selected by the director matched those identified by the social network analysis with the exception of one outlier in one of the volunteer groups.

Introduction

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2015), 62.8 million people volunteered through or for an organization between September 2013 and September 2014. Among those millions of volunteers there are individuals who go above and beyond to insure the organizations they are involved with achieve their goals. Yukl and Van Fleet (1992) note leadership is defined by “individual traits, leader behaviors, interaction patterns, role relationships, follower perceptions, influence over followers, influence over task goals, and influence over organizational culture (1992, p. 148)”. Moreover, Yukl and Gardner (1992) suggest great leaders possess many relevant personality traits including but not limited to; flexibility, capacity to motivate and inspire, inclusiveness, courage, self-confidence, and a willingness to accept responsibilities. Volunteers can serve as communications liaisons between organization directors and other volunteers, coordinate and organize projects and volunteers, and serve as a representative of the organization to the community. Leaders answer the question -“How will you accomplish this?” with “I will do whatever it takes” (Bass, Dobbs, Nanus 1999). A leader in a nonprofit organization is the “direction setter” for the organization. (Bass, Dobbs, Nanus 1999) Better management and leadership within nonprofit organizations directly contribute to an improved quality of life for millions of individuals (Connors 2012).

In nonprofit organizations across the globe, there is a need to identify and train leaders to increase volunteer and organization potential. Once volunteer leaders are determined, they can be better utilized within the organization. Volunteer leaders in nonprofits have the potential to develop their skills, increasing their productivity within the organization. In addition, volunteer leaders have the potential to increase many aspects of the nonprofit organization including: improve program quality, design the infrastructure of the organization, provide active community leadership, and measure the effectiveness of the services offered (Bass, Dobbs, Nanus 1999).
“Volunteer leadership remains a vast untapped resource for nonprofits...these leadership roles, if properly supported, cultivate the consciousness, capabilities, and commitment in volunteers, and create lifelong advocates for causes and the change that citizens seek to make in their communities” (Cooperation, 2007, p. 15). Nonprofit organizations can give identified volunteer leaders additional responsibility to better complete the objectives of the organization and minimize some of the responsibilities of other leaders. Nonprofit directors should provide opportunities within the organization for volunteer leaders to develop and practice their leadership skills.

**Background**

This study utilized social network analysis to identify volunteer leaders within three volunteer groups at Starkville Habitat for Humanity. Social network analysis is a tool available for modeling, visualizing, and analyzing the interactions between individuals within a group or organization (Springer & Steiguer, 2011). Social network analysis allows researchers to create a visual representation of connections between individuals. Leaders are identified based on their communication habits within their respective groups. “The higher the level of leadership, the higher the demand for communication competence” (Hackman & Johnson, 2013, p. 21). The results of social network analysis can be used to determine if there are leaders in a group of volunteers who have not been identified.

This research is part of a larger study. The purpose of this study was to identify social interactions between volunteers in a volunteer organization. The volunteers identified by the social network analysis were compared to those identified by the executive director at the nonprofit organization. The following research questions guided this study:

1. How frequently do volunteers interact with other individuals in their volunteer group?
2. Which volunteers are identified as leaders based on social network analysis?
3. Does a nonprofit director identify the same leaders as the social network analysis?

**Methodology**

Social network analysis can be used to identify interactions and informal leaders within a group (Gretzel, 2001). The relationships are presented as a web of nodes (individuals) that are linked together by connections visually displayed as a map (Warfield, 2009). Moreover, statistical analysis can be used to measure the interactions between participants and potentially identify an alternative organization structure than originally designed (Warfield, 2009; Balkundi & Kilduff, 2005; Cross & Borgatti, & Parker, 2002; Scott, 2000; Wasserman & Faust, 1994).

The social network analysis portion of this study involved a convenience sample including three subgroups at Starkville Habitat for Humanity in Starkville, Mississippi. Group one consisted of nonprofit board members ($N = 21$), group two consisted of resale store volunteers ($N = 18$), and group three consisted of work site team leaders ($N = 6$).

The instrument utilized a matrix design with the names of the participants in each of the three groups written across the top of individual columns and each question and responses to those
questions as individual rows. A 7 point Likert-type scale was used to assess how often each respondent contacted each member of the group, and how often each member of the group contacted them, with 1 indicating never and 7 indicating all the time. The social network analysis instrument was administered using paper surveys distributed by the researcher in person. IRB approval was obtained before the study began. Participants were first provided with an informed consent document explaining the components of the study. Those who agreed to participate in the research were asked to complete the instrument that was attached.

Data were interpreted using the Gephi software program and ForceAtlas 2 analysis. Gephi is a network analysis and visualization software. The ForceAtlas algorithm is derived from force-layout algorithm for graph clustering (Noack, 2007) “ForceAtlas is a force directed layout: it simulates a physical system in order to spatialize a network. Nodes repulse each other like charged particles, while edges attract their nodes, like springs. These forces create a movement that converges to a balanced state.” (Jacomy, Venturini, Heymann, & Bastian, 2014). This algorithm pushes the most connected nodes (hubs) away from each other, while aligning the nodes that are connected to the hubs in clusters around them (Paranyushkin 2011). The nodes positions are compared to the other nodes for it to be interpreted.

“Betweenness centrality measure for each node indicates how often it appears between any two random nodes in the network” (Paranyushkin 2011). The higher it is, the more influential is the node because it is a junction for communication within the network (Freeman, 1977; Brandes, 2001). It’s possible that a node is connected to a lot of other nodes within a certain cluster, but has few connections to the other clusters in the network (Paranyushkin 2011). “It will then be influential within its cluster, but will have less influence than a node which has fewer connections but links different communities together” (Paranyushkin 2011).

“The result depends on the forces applied but also the initial state and even the approximations of the algorithm. The process is not deterministic, and the coordinates of each point do not reflect any specific variable.” (Jacomy, Venturini, Heymann, & Bastian, 2011). The nodes are not readable, but comparable to the position of the other nodes. This technique enhances the visual interpretation of the graphs (Jacomy, et al., 2011). Moreover, this method can be used to identify the leaders and interactions within a certain group. Interestingly, this structure may in fact be different than the original intended organizational structure (Warfield, 2009; Balkundi & Kilduff, 2005; Cross & Borgatti, & Parker, 2002; Scott, 2000; Wasserman & Faust, 1994).

Results

Volunteers from three groups participated in the social network analysis. The graphical outputs produced from the Gephi software program are depicted in Figures 1-3.
The volunteers selected by the volunteer director can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1
Director selected volunteer leaders in each group (N = 45)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Director Selected Leaders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Board Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>325 391 371 335 310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resale Store</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>507 545 531 598</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Site Team Leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Participant 173 was selected as an alternate to participant 159

The volunteer director selected five leaders (325, 391, 371, 335, and 310) from the board member group (Figure 1). When comparing his selection to the results of the social network analysis, each volunteer is depicted as a large node within the group indicating they currently interact frequently with other volunteers in the group. Volunteer 335 is the most centrally located in the group indicating he or she is connected with the greatest number of individuals. Volunteers 507, 545, 531, and 598 were selected as leaders of the resale store volunteer group. Interestingly, the largest node (indicating greatest frequency of communication) in Figure 2 (512), was not selected by the director as a leader of the group. Moreover, the most centrally located node (538) in Figure 2 was also not selected by the volunteer director.

For the work site team leader group (Figure 3), the largest nodes were 159, 142, and 194; while the most centrally located node was 160. However, the director identified 173 as the leader of this group. Although volunteers 159, 142, and 194 are all represented by relatively large nodes they are not centrally located indicating they are communicating frequently among themselves excluding volunteers 179 and 173.

Conclusions/Recommendations

The social network analysis revealed prominent leaders within each group based on communication habits. Overall, the identified leaders matched those identified by the organization director, with the exception of the work site team leader group. There are multiple explanations for the discrepancy between the social network analysis identified leaders and
director identified leaders. In this particular nonprofit organization, the volunteer director is more closely involved with the board member group potentially explaining the accuracy of leader selection for that particular group and the differences in selection for the resale store and work site team leader volunteer groups. Alternatively, the volunteer director could have selected the volunteers he identified as leaders based on leadership skills other than communication. The researchers suggest providing leadership training to the volunteers identified by the volunteer director, followed by a post social network analysis to determine if the outlying volunteer leaders have moved towards the center of the volunteer group networks. With this reevaluation the researchers hope to find the value of leadership training to nonprofit organizations who are already restricted on time and resources.

References


Like Mother, Like Daughter: The Double Bind and the Richards Family Leadership Legacy

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**Abstract**

Women in leadership face complexities in definitions of role and role congruity (Eagly & Karau, 2002). The pressure on women leaders to exhibit both agentic and communal behaviors results in a double bind (Carli & Eagly, 2012). This study provides analysis of the leadership legacy within one family and the connection between three generations of women leaders. Role congruity theory, as understood through traits and behaviors, gives context to three women’s leadership story. Future implications for research and leadership development are discussed.

**Introduction**

Through exploration and analysis of Cecile Richards’ leadership style, this research aims to provide insight into the enduring leadership traits and behaviors that exemplify the successful leadership attributed to the high-profile women leaders in the Richards family, and the mediating effect of gender on leadership. Richards has skyrocketed in visibility nationally as a leader since becoming President of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America, an organization that has garnered increasing controversy surrounding its activities. Accounts of Richards’ handling of controversy has provided a great deal of fodder for discussion of her leadership. Further, the Richards’ leadership legacy provides insight into leadership behaviors through the generations from grandmother, Ann Richards, to granddaughter, Lily Adams.

**Background**

When leaders fail to successfully navigate the double bind, they risk placement in an outsider group and jeopardize their perceived leader legitimacy (Eagly, 2005). Analysis of leadership style using secondary sources produced both by and about the study target provides insight into both leadership traits and behaviors as well as others’ perceptions of the leader’s legitimacy. In this study, traits and behaviors were examined within the leader trait paradigm framework of Judge, Piccolo, & Kosalka (2009), and then further identified as either communal or agentic. As the study unfolded, data evidenced that appearance influenced perceptions of leader legitimacy, and subsequently these instances were included in the analysis.

The family connections in this study provided insight into the contribution of family legacy to leadership style, particularly as it relates to coaching of leadership behavior. A legacy of leadership exists in the Richards family that provides a foundation for leadership from early childhood onward. Considering that the bulk of leadership development literature focuses on those who are near or who have reached adulthood (Murphy & Johnson, 2011), implications for future research and practice are many.

**Methodology**
Inquiry involved content analysis coding using secondary sources. Texts were analyzed from a variety of media outlets including online news venues, magazines, podcasts, and speeches in an effort to provide a balanced perspective of a very visible leader of a large, controversial organization. The study focused on pieces that contained descriptors of Richards as a leader rather than the issues with which she has been involved. Sources that included Richards’ own words, such as interviews, social media, and pieces that she has written, were purposefully incorporated so as not to exclude her voice. Vitriolic sources were excluded in an effort to focus on leadership and not divisive political issues. Each source was scoured for clues, words and phrases that spoke to traits, qualities, and behaviors that illustrate Richards’ leadership style, which were examined and coded for leadership themes as described in Judge et al. (2009). For the purposes of this study, traits that contributed to rather than detracted from leadership effectiveness were the priority. Sources were distilled down to six Facebook posts and six Twitter posts from Richards’ profiles, 24 articles on Richards, five articles on Ann Richards, an interview with both Richards and Lily Adams, and two articles about Lily Adams.

**Current Results**

**Leadership Themes**

Throughout the secondary sources consulted for this study, similar traits, qualities, and behaviors emerged that spoke to Richards’ leadership style. Some were inherent in her own actions and words, while others were descriptive and came from external sources. Each trait, quality, and behavior was then grouped into a leader trait category as outlined by Judge et al. (2009). The most prominent theme to emerge in the data was that of **dominance**. For example, one source depicts Richards as “a formidable fan of ‘kick-butt’ politics” (Kaplan, 2015), while another author describes her in a similar fashion: “The Planned Parenthood boss carries on the fight late into a Washington night, armed with talking points and her mother’s lucky ring” (Fromson, 2011). Analysis of the data showed a similar theme of dominance in the behavior of her mother, Ann Richards, who once commented on how things may have been different had she known that her governorship was only going to last one term: “Oh, I would probably have raised more hell” (as quoted in Associated Press, 2006). Upon Ann Richards’ passing, her daughter reflected, “She was tough in every way. She was a fighter, and she expected me to be one too” (as quoted in Yarrow, 2012). While these combative terms point to conflict-seeking, a dark side of this dark trait, most of these descriptions refer to commanding influence.

Further evidence of the bright side of the dominance trait comes from the effects of Richards’ charisma, which render her “attractive to willing followers” (Judge & Long, 2012). Yarrow (2012) observed “staff who gush as if she’s a rock star when she’s not around.” Dunham stated, “She is fighting for every one of us. I would follow her into a burning building and still not be half as brave as she is” (as quoted in Field, 2015). It is also likely that, considering Richard’s ambition and ability to inspire others to show such devotion, extraversion plays a role.

Another common theme was **agreeableness**. One source described Richards as “gentler” than her mother, with a “protective instinct” and demonstrating “maternal” behavior (Mitchell, 2012). Another source described her as “honest” and also that, as a feminist, Richards is “tame
compared to others” (Lopez, 2010). When asked to describe her leadership style, Richards replied, “In the early days, I organized garment workers so I spent most of my time trying to help folks help themselves get a better lot in life. And I think that I learned early on in life to really listen to folks and understand where they’re coming from” (as quoted in Schnall, 2013). Richards demonstrates an authenticity and concern for others that translates into leader benefits such as “more positive interpersonal interactions and helping behavior” and “lower conflict” as pointed out by Judge and Long (2012, p. 189).

Finally, a recurring theme was emotional stability. Richards leads an organization that has received a great deal of media attention and rests at the center of highly polarized issues, some of which led to a congressional hearing. Data indicate that Richards shows evidence of emotional stability, a trait that contributes to composure under pressure and contributes to leader success (Judge et al., 2009). U.S. Representative Duckworth was quoted regarding Richards’ performance in the September 2015 Planned Parenthood testimony before congress: “I wasn’t surprised in the least to see Cecile take it in stride. She has exhibited great leadership, remaining focused on one true mission: providing high-quality health care to low-income families across the country” (as quoted in Field, 2015). Page, a reproductive rights advocate, noted that “Cecile chooses her battles. She’s very focused” (as quoted in Yarrow, 2012). In context of leadership within the family, during a recent interview with Richards and her daughter, Lily Adams, Richards asked Adams how it felt to deal with a recent verbal attack from conservative Rush Limbaugh (Friedlander, 2014). Adams replied,

On this stuff with people not liking you, it's just the cost of doing business. I certainly don't take the same kind of beating that you or other folks that run for office do. It's so important that the rest of the stuff rolls off your back. And I think part of that I learned from you and watching Mama [Ann Richards] before. I think at the end of the day you just have to stay grounded and, you know, keep doing what you're doing.

**Gender as a Mediator**

Two leadership themes emerged in the data that share traits with the concepts of agentic and communal behaviors as they relate to the double bind- dominance and agreeableness. Dominant individuals maintain high levels of influence, garner attention and respect, are likely to ascend to powerful positions, and are “attractive to willing followers” (Judge et al., 2009, p.870). Similar behaviors and characteristics appear in the description of agentic behaviors and characteristics, such as ambitious, dominant, competing for attention, and influencing others (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001,p. 783). Agreeableness manifests in behaviors and traits such as empathy, helping behaviors, attractive role models, cooperative, and “genuine concern for the well being of others” (Judge et al., 2009, p. 865). Analogous communal characteristics include a “concern for the welfare of other people,” helpful, sensitivity to interpersonal relations, and gentle (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001).

Analysis of the data also showed a persistent trend of describing Richards’ appearance. Mitchell (2012) noted her “cropped blonde hair, bright red nails, short black dress and black sling-back shoes.” Conniff (2012) commented that Richards was “looking glamorous as ever with her short, blond hair and stylish suit” (p. 34). Toobin (2013) went into detail: “Richards is tall and thin, and
her hair is nearly as distinctive as her mother’s white bouffant; Cecile’s cut is more blond than white, worn short, and she’s constantly tucking stray pieces behind her ear. Decked out in an orange dress, hastily acquired for the occasion.” Further, data provided examples of guidance on this aspect of leadership within the family, such Adams’ account of advice from grandmother Ann Richards: “never wear patterned clothes on television” and “never wear white shoes” (as quoted in Friedland, 2014).

Conclusions and Recommendations

This case presents a real-world example of women who are faced with two prototypical leader types working against each other, also known as the double bind (Carli & Eagly, 2012). This is evident in the dichotomy between dominance and agreeableness observed in Richards’ leadership traits and behaviors. Dominance is associated with agency, which is typically associated with men and more generally, leadership (Carli & Eagly, 2012). Women are expected to be “communal- warm, supportive, kind, and helpful” (Carli & Eagly, 2012, p.453), which connects to agreeableness. Combined with the pervasive focus on appearance and fashion, this study provides an example of how women leaders must strike a careful balance in order to uphold expectations of how a leader should behave as well as what a leader should look like. In the case of the Richards family, the data demonstrates that role congruity theory applies not only to traits and behaviors, but also to appearance and fashion sense. While these women leaders share some traits and differ in others, a large part of their success as leaders is due to a tradition of walking the line and managing the dissonance inherent in role congruity.

Avenues for future research are many. The role of appearance in the double bind as a mediator of leader legitimacy and influence (Flicker, 2013) merits significant inquiry rather than remaining an implicit actor in the leadership process. The current research also reinforces a need to identify pathways for a long-range view of leadership development that encourages leadership development from childhood onward (Murphy & Johnson, 2011) and fosters the development of leadership identity at an early age, which is consistent with the identity theory view of the family as a socialization agent (Carter, 2014). Research on family influence in leadership development is largely lacking except in the area of family business succession. Finally, this research also has implications for inquiry into mentoring practices and how women mentor each other in all stages of life in preparation for the many roles they will occupy throughout their lives.

References


Perceptions of International Graduate Students toward the Advising Relationship in US Academic Settings

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International students from all over the world come to the United States to gain expertise in their chosen fields of interest. Unfortunately, they have to face challenging situations, partially because of failed collaborative work effort with their academic advisors. This unsuccessful mentoring relationship might be because of the existence of a cognitive gap between the advisor and the international student created by a difference in preferred style of problem solving. This poster explores international students’ perceptions about their working relationship with their advisors. Results revealed a connection between cognitive preferences for solving problems and satisfaction with the advising relationship.

Introduction/Need for Research

Gaining proper education is very important for students in developing countries to lead their nation toward further development. With that in mind, thousands of international students come to the United States for quality education in their chosen areas of interest (Lee & Rice, 2007). To be precise, one-third of post-graduate students in the US, especially in the field of science and engineering, are international (Han, Stocking, Gebbie & Appelbaum, 2015). Unfortunately, international students face multiple challenges during their academic pursuits, which negatively affect their academic achievement and professional growth (Brown & Holloway, 2008; Curtin, Stewart, & Ostrove, 2013). This goes against the intent of institutions of higher education to deliver quality educational experience. As a global leader, US institutions of higher education should take the initiative to address challenges faced by international students in order to create a more inclusive environment.

Background

Andrade (2006) writes that one reason why international students struggle in US academic settings is because of unstable and inconsistent relationships with their academic advisors. Even though international students place a high value on their relationship with their academic advisors (Rose, 2005), there exist many instances where a state of inconsistency in this mentoring relationship is observed (Andrade, 2006). This inconsistency is often interpreted as cultural misunderstandings (Stewart & Bennett, 2011). However, differences in their cognitive style of problem solving, which is operant in this solution-focused relationship, may also be a factor affecting productivity and work satisfaction. However, since cognitive processing of problems is not as apparent as cultural differences, literature on this topic is sparse.

Considering support from the academic advisor is vital for student success (Ku, Lahman, Yeh, & Cheng, 2008), the purpose of this study is to determine the factors that encourage or thwart the relationship between advisors and their international graduate students. More specifically, are cultural or cognitive differences toward problem solving present? Which differences are more salient in defining the advising relationship? Are coping behaviors being employed and by
whom? The objectives of the project are to describe the characteristics of the student pertinent to the framework (e.g. educational and professional background, intercultural competence, and A-I score), and to identify themes consistent in positive versus challenged advisor-student relationships from the viewpoint of international students.

Theoretical Framework

According to Kirton’s Adoption Innovation theory, each person is creative and solves problems in their own preferred style (Kirton, 2006). This preferred style is innate, different from intellectual capacity, and highly resistant to change (Kirton, 2006). Therefore, even if the working dyad is similar in terms of intellectual capacity, differences in cognitive style for problem solving (evolutionary versus revolutionary) will be noticeable. The greater the difference in preferred style between the dyad, the more challenging working together will become (Kirton, 2006).

KAI theory is supported by a psychometric personality inventory that measures cognitive style for problem solving on a continuum between highly adaptive and highly innovative (Kirton, 2010). Theoretically, the score ranges from 36 to 160 with an arithmetic mean of 96. People who are more adaptive, scores range from 60 to 90 and those who are more innovative, scores range from 91 to 140 (Kirton, 2006). It has been observed that categorizing a person as more adoptive or more innovative is relative and depends on the person’s preferred style of working with whom they are compared to (Kirton, 2006). Additionally, a difference in KAI scores of 20 points or more will create a noticeable cognitive misalignment, which will impair the dyad’s efficiency and productivity unless coping behaviors are employed (Kirton, 2006).

Methodology

Seventeen international graduate students participated in the study. They were provided the Kirton’s Adoption-Innovation (KAI) Inventory, a tool consisting of 32 questions used to measure their preferred style of problem solving. The score ranged from 32 (highly adaptive) to 160 (highly innovative). KAI inventory as a measure of personality has a high internal validity of 0.84 to 0.89 (Kirton, 2006). To address researcher bias, the interviewer was not made aware of the participants’ KAI scores prior to the one-hour, semi-structured interviews. The interview responses were recorded, transcribed, coded, and analyzed for themes (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Further, the responses of the participants were matched with their individual KAI scores to glean insights on the relationship between their preferred cognitive style and their satisfaction with the advising relationship.

Results/Findings

The participants’ scores ranged from slightly innovative to more adaptive. The Figure 1 below shows the participants’ scores and their location on the KAI inventory scale.
According to the scores of the international students on the KAI inventory, they are categorized into two broad categories. The students whose scores ranged from 80 to 107 were categorized as mid-ranger and those whose scores ranged from 64 to 76 were categorized as adaptive (see Table 1). A relationship between participant’s cognitive style and their expectation from advising relationship was observed. Students who fell in the mid-range appreciated constructive criticisms and wanted their ideas to be acknowledged. They liked open door policies and always preferred proper communication with their advisors if any issue arose. On the other hand, students who were more adaptive expected their advisors to know them very well. They expressed their wish to be guided by their advisor at every step and wanted their advisors to provide them with new ideas. Example expectations from advising relationship are listed in Table 1.

Table 1.  
Perception of international students about adviser-student relationship based on their KAI scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mid-Range</th>
<th>Adaptive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KAI scores (80, 83, 85, 86, 87, 89, 90, 95, 97, 103, 104, 107)</td>
<td>KAI scores (64, 65, 68, 75, 76)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectations from advising relationship are as follows:</td>
<td>Expectations from advising relationship are as follows:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Wants ideas to be acknowledged.</td>
<td>➢ Wants the advisor to guide them at every step even while choosing a job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Appreciates constructive criticism.</td>
<td>➢ Appreciates the advisor providing new ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Likes an open door policy.</td>
<td>➢ Expects the advisor to know them well personally and professionally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Prefers proper communication with the advisor specially when there is an issue.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusions

In general, international students appreciated flexibility, encouragement, cultural intelligence, and critical feedback from their advisors. They want their advisors to be approachable. The majority of the participants reported that trust was the vital component that encourages a stronger bond and more satisfaction with the advisor. A link between participants’ cognitive styles and their expectations for the advising relationship was observed. Very few participants identified cultural issues as a major factor in dissatisfaction with the advising relationship.

Implications/Recommendations/Impact on Profession
This study needs to be replicated with advisors of international students in order to get a comprehensive perspective on the factors leading to satisfaction or dissatisfaction between the advisor and the international student. Keeping in mind the huge influx of international students into US institutions of higher education every year, faculty advisors should be provided with professional development about KAI so that they can be better equipped to advise students even in a cross-cultural setting and manage adverse situations when cognitive gaps exist.

References


Searching for Gold: 2-Year/4-Year College Leadership Connection

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Abstract

Universities have expanded the student leadership development initiatives of the 1970s and 80s by creating undergraduate leadership courses, minors and majors as well as immersion experiences that provide significant leadership learning experiences. Employers and college development professionals embrace student participation in undergraduate leadership learning experiences for the readiness factor it brings to their workforce. Leadership skills have been described as necessary to the success of the team driven workplace of today. Yet, the opportunities for leadership development by community college students are not as robust or consistent across the many community colleges in the United States. Both students who enter the workforce after a two-year degree and students who plan to transfer to a four-year university have fewer opportunities to engage in leadership learning experiences.

This session will share descriptions of community college student leadership programs in the southeast. It will share the first year of an evolving partnership between Northeast State Community College and East Tennessee State University to create a bridge program that builds a path for those community college students to enter an academic minor in leadership as they transfer to the university.

Introduction

Community colleges are seen as the new path to affordable higher education by many states in the country. In Tennessee, scholarship money is now available across the state making the first two years of college free if begun at a community college. Given the importance of leadership development in undergraduate programs and the renewed emphasis on community colleges as a pathway in higher education, what is being done to strengthen leadership learning opportunities in community colleges?

Review of Related Scholarship

It is unclear whether the lack of literature about student leadership skill development at community colleges is a result of the lack of leadership skill development programs at community colleges or a result of neglecting the community college context for research in leadership development. Based upon the survey of leadership programs at community colleges in the southeast US, and the current literature reviewed, it is likely both. The literature about community college leadership programs is slender as are the professionals and programs listed in data bases such as ALE and ILA. An internet web site search of community college leadership programs found student organization leadership positions at every college. There were community service programs and student ambassador opportunities at over half of the community colleges. However, finding a leadership course is limited to some Phi Theta Kappa programs (https://www.ptk.org/Programs/LeadershipDevelopmentStudies.aspx) and a small
number of courses taught by the community college presidents. There were no opportunities to start an academic leadership minor in a community college.

The characteristics that make community college students unique make the development of leadership skills for those students unique as well. Leadership identity development theory suggests students’ leadership skill development may be impacted by previous leadership opportunities. Part of the mission of community colleges is to focus on the at-risk and underserved student. Other community college student characteristics include juggling longer work hours, being a first generation college student, commuting, and living at home (parents or spouse). If leadership identity development is dependent on previous leadership learning opportunities, the challenges and characteristics of community college students underscore the need for community college leadership programs. Waiting until those transferring arrive at a university and find their way to a leadership course or experience is a disservice.

**Description of Practice**

Frequently community colleges are expected to copy successful program designs from the universities. Leadership learning experiences most often duplicated are co-curricular programs such as community service centers, student ambassador, student government representatives, and serving as student organization officers. Leadership Honor Societies are common to universities (Blue Key, Omicron Delta Kappa, and Mortar Board) and community colleges (Phi Theta Kappa) offer leadership development programs. What else is working? Core courses and AA degrees may transfer, but what are we doing to connect transfer students to leadership learning opportunities at the university?

Through the Leadership Connection between Northeast State Community College and East Tennessee State University, community college students are getting a jump-start on their academic minor by taking a basic speech core course at the community college, completing a Strengths Finder Assessment and processing the results with the University advisor to the leadership minor, and taking the entry leadership course in minor the summer after graduating from the community college, prior to the fall start at the university. This provides two courses and a portfolio requirement completed in the minor and two opportunities to build a relationship with the community college students soon to transfer.

**Discussion of Outcomes/Results**

With a year to report on, the program is a first for Tennessee in creating a collaborative process for transitioning community college students to the university with an academic minor in leadership.

- Students have a curricular leadership program, new leadership skills
- Students have a jump-start on their academic minor
- Community college students are engaged in a smooth transition to the University
- Community college can point to a quality leadership development program
- University has community college students committed to transfer
- University has a new stream of students engaged in leadership programs
Reflections of the Practitioner

There are many win-wins in this collaborative program. They could not be achieved without a commitment by both institutions to seek collaborative means to offer courses and advisement such that program and enrollment numbers at each institution are respected. This initiative was built on the respect and trust established by leaders from both institutions. Planning took about 4 months with marketing for the new opportunity still underway. There are 2 other nearby community colleges watching this program with interest for possible duplication. The University is considering assigning some scholarship dollars to the student recruitment process. That will help offset student costs for a summer class.

Recommendations

- Leadership practitioners include the community college programs and students as study participants in the research on best practices in leadership education.
- Professional organizations in leadership education reach out regularly to community colleges and their administrators and faculty.
- Universities provide transition support to assist community college transfer students build on their leadership skills through both curricular programs and co-curricular experiences.
- Leadership development initiatives begin for two-year program community college students.

References


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Construction of Meaning of Practice in a Depressed Economy:
Community Development in Zimbabwe

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**Abstract**

Community development is necessary to address pressing needs and problems to improve the quality of life. Problems arise when economic hardships hinder communities from upgrading school infrastructure. In a study to explore construction of meaning of practice by secondary school teachers in Zimbabwe, findings indicated that the country struggled to sustain the model education system established in the 1980s to the mid-1990s. Teachers found themselves operating under difficult conditions. Infrastructure deteriorated. Teaching materials and equipment broke down. Under such circumstances, it was hard to understand why and how people could teach with limited government funding and low revenue from school fees and minimal community support. The conceptual framework driven by social constructivism helped design the study and capture concepts that constituted the construction of meaning of practice. Participant perspectives of school challenges were collected through interviews. Observations provided a view of the surroundings and the extent of the infrastructural damage. Document analysis provided means of verifying participant perspectives about construction of meaning of practice in schools faced with problems. NVivo software helped link the concepts that constituted construction of meaning of practice. The results of the study show examples of resilience that leadership educators could use to prepare practitioners to address tough issues in education and engage communities in school reconstruction.

**Introduction**

Community development is a process where community members come together and take collective action to respond to common needs and problems (Kobani, 2015). With the help of public, private, and non-governmental agencies, communities utilize available resources to strengthen social amenities and improve the quality of life (Cosser & Nenweli, 2014). There are instances where communities fail to support schools owing to financial constraints. Zimbabwe has struggled to sustain the model education system characterized by nonracial free primary education an expanded secondary education of the 1980s (Chitiyo, Chitiyo, Rumano, Ametepee, & Chitiyo, 2010). From the mid-1990s, Zimbabwe experienced economic problems that undermined school funding. Owing to limited government funding, school infrastructure deteriorated. Teaching technologies broke down. Difficult work conditions and poor salaries forced qualified teachers to abandon schools and seek employment in neighboring countries and overseas. Communities with rampant unemployment struggled to repair deteriorating infrastructure. The purpose of this study was to explore how secondary teachers made sense of challenging school conditions and performed assigned duties under given circumstances.

**Literature Review**
Literature showed that Zimbabwe had a model education system in the sub-Saharan Africa region from the 1980s to early 1990s (Chitiyo et al., 2010; Chiresh & Shumba, 2011, Kavanaugh, 2007; Mangwaya, Jeko, & Manyumwa, 2013; 2010; Pape, 1998; ). From the mid-1990s, the country faced economic hardships that reduced government revenue. With limited funding, schools could not restore deteriorating infrastructure (Angerame, 2015; Larochelle, Alwang, & Taruvinga, 2014; Mapolisa, & Tshabalala, 2013; Ranga, 2014). Studies conducted in other countries on schools with problems indicated that the involvement of communities could improve school conditions (Ohba, 2012; Al-Samarrai & Bennell, 2007). Study findings showed that communities channeled resources to support school reconstruction and raise standards of living (Pfrenger, 2015; Casto, McGrath, Sipple, & Todd, 2016). Schools guided by government policy would collaborate with communities influenced by various agendas to create safe and comfortable conditions for success (Coulter & Lester, 2011; Eilam & Trop, 2013). Effective management of school infrastructure rested in leadership educators who should prepare the practitioners to face the unknown, little understood, the unexpected, and tough work conditions to make a difference in students’ lives and uplift communities (Dyer, 2008; Jones, 2011).

**Conceptual Framework**

A review of the literature revealed problems plaguing the Zimbabwe education system, but there was no existing theory by Zimbabwean scholars to connect concepts constituting construction of meaning of practice. A conceptual framework helped specify and organize concepts, constructs, or factors to generate understanding of construction of meaning (Yin, 2009). The conceptual framework provided direction to connect related concepts that constituted construction of meaning (Miles et al., 2013). During data analysis, the interconnected concepts produced a coherent picture of construction of meaning (Fleury & Garrison, 2014; Yin, 2009).

The constructivist theory or social constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978) provided the foundation for the conceptual framework. Social constructivism helped shape research questions, defined the research design, and identified suitable data collection strategies to explore how teachers interpreted school problems, constructed meaning of the practice of teaching under the circumstances, and coped with day-to-day school problems (Coulter & Lester, 2011; Minahan & Norlin, 2013; Mishra, 2013). Social constructivism influenced community response to existing problems (Smith, & Hollihan, 2014).

**Methods**

The methodology driven by social constructivism provided a paradigm that helped identify methods required to capture teachers’ perspectives of existing school challenges, observation of infrastructure, and information about school challenges from a variety of documents (Mishra, 2013). The units of study were School 01, School 02, and School 03 rather than individual participants. Within three schools, fifteen teachers constituted the research population. The five teachers who volunteered to participate from each of the three schools made up a subset of the 15 teachers in the research population (Miles et al., 2013). Interviews, observations, and document analysis were appropriate methods used to collect data required to provide a theoretical overview of construction of meaning of practice. As Mishra noted, interviews allowed for questioning and
conversations during the study. Observations provided a view of the surroundings (Chu & Chen, 2010; Yin, 2009). Document analysis and interpretation of articles with the background information about the situation also provided means of verifying what participants said about the construction of meaning in schools faced with problems (Minahan & Norlin, 2013). The multiple sources of evidence produced concepts that combined to provide a clear picture of construction of meaning of practice.

Common themes and patterns emerged from teachers’ descriptions of classroom experiences, observation of school conditions, and documents analyzed to provide background information about schools and verify details from participants. Triangulation of data from interviews, observation, and document analysis developed the needed understanding of teachers’ challenges, construction of meaning of practice, and mechanisms teachers used to cope with existing problems (Anuradha, Srinivas, Singhal, & Ramnarayan, 2014; Leonardi, 2011).

Results

Multiple sources of evidence helped collect data about teachers’ construction of meaning of practice under given circumstances and teachers’ coping strategies to existing problems on a day-to-day basis. During data analysis, NVivo software helped unlock connections among concepts that constituted construction of meaning of practice. Such connections built themes emerging from interviews and observations corroborated by document analysis to provide understanding of construction of meaning of practice in schools with deteriorating infrastructure (Miles et al. (2013).

Theme 1: Construction of Meaning

Teachers explained what teaching meant under the circumstances. During observations, teachers responded to daily challenges thus connecting teacher perspectives with data documented about school difficulties. Participants at School 01, School 02, and School 03 accepted existing conditions. They incorporated individual beliefs to the situation to justify teaching under given conditions. Teaching was a source of survival, and a means of gaining financial independence. Teaching enabled adults to measure up to social expectations by keeping hope alive for the next generation. To make sense of ongoing complexity, teachers overlooked problems to see the big picture, and committed to meeting ongoing challenges.

Theme 2: Coping Mechanisms

Teachers indicated that they adjusted to the school and classroom problems in a variety of ways. Participants used human agency to improvise, sacrifice, and share resources to cope financially, to cope with lack of teaching materials, and cope with students.

Interviews. The comparison of coded nodes showed similarities and differences among schools. Given all the school complexities, participants articulated what it meant to teach under given conditions and how they coped with school and classroom challenges, and made suggestions to improve school conditions and the practice of teaching. In answer to the question, what problems do you face as a teacher? the results indicated that schools experienced problems to varying
degrees. All schools experienced critical shortage of teaching materials and equipment. Buildings were old with limited storage space for student textbooks, teachers’ reference materials, teaching equipment, and subject specific materials.

**Funding problems.** Participant perspective indicated that schools generated limited revenue from fees. School fee policy was difficult to enforce resulting in failure to maintain conditions conducive to teaching and learning. Without adequate community support and means to enforce school fee policy, it was difficult to generate income required to change teaching conditions.

**Making practice meaningful.** Participants discussed the need for continual adjustment as the economy shrunk and school conditions worsened. The majority of participants suggested that schools governance should be under local community control. There were suggestions for greater local community support for schools. Participants wanted local commercial activities integrated into school curricula. Professional development would be necessary to help teachers adapt to evolving school and classroom challenges.

**Observation.** Observations followed the *School Infrastructural Observation Protocol* to record the age, condition, and safety of school buildings. Physical characteristics of classrooms, teaching space, availability of teaching materials, problem solving, and utilities in classrooms observed were documented using the *Classroom Observation Protocol*. Also observed were school grounds, sports fields, and utilities.

**Teaching materials and equipment.** Teaching materials and equipment were broken and in short supply in all schools. Consumables were in short supply or unavailable. Bunsen burners were tubeless or had shortened tubes with leaking parts. There were no science laboratories and industrial subject workshops in School 02. Teachers taught science and industrial subjects in regular classrooms.

**Infrastructure.** Buildings across cases were old but maintenance of building structures varied among schools. Chairs at School 01 were broken and desks insufficient for increasing enrollment confirming participant concerns expressed during interviews regarding shortage of classroom furniture and textbooks. There were broken windows panes and doors opened and closed as required. Storage space leaked at School 01.

At School 02, about 75-100 percent of the buildings had structural faults and not painted. Roofs leaked. Floors had potholes posing safety and security concerns for students walking in classrooms or sitting on unstable chairs. Door handles were loose or missing. 25-50 percent of the doors had difficulty opening or closing. Windows in three classrooms out of ten were broken. Three students shared a desk and benches in classrooms. Desks had no space to hold student books. Chairs in six classrooms out of 10 were broken.

School 03 had very old (over 50 years) and old (21-50 years) buildings with no structural faults. Boarding facilities for boys and girls were secure with no structural faults. The school dining hall had modern catering facilities. The school also offered housing for teachers with electricity and piped running water. Observation of infrastructure at School 03 confirmed conditions of high standard expressed by participants during interviews.
**School grounds.** Grounds at School 01 were rocky and they posed safety concerns to students who walked barefooted. School 02 grounds were dry, rocky, and sandy. Rocky terrain created hazardous conditions for students who walked and played barefooted. Absence of piped water limited the quantity of flowers and plants growing on school grounds. Grounds had well-trimmed trees growing around the school. There was a clearly defined network of paths connecting classrooms and administration offices, dining hall, dormitories, and kiosk at School 03. Students and grounds staff picked and dumped litter in designated trashcans around the school providing a hygienic atmosphere. Students looked neat in school uniform enhancing the appearance of the school. Observation of school grounds concurred with participant views expressed about high standards of grounds maintenance prompting teachers to choose to make the school their home.

**Sports fields.** School 01 was located on rocky ground making it difficult to set up sports facilities within school premises. All other sports activities took place at the local community stadium equipped for a variety of sports activities. The problem was that School 01 shared the stadium with other schools and local sports teams leading to clashes among sports entities.

Sports fields at School 02 were of a poor quality on rocky ground. Students played netball on rocky area and volleyball over a soccer goal post without nets. The rocky nature of sports grounds ruined sports equipment. Balls were short lived and hard to replace owing to financial constraints. There was one ball for netball, volleyball, and soccer offered at School 02.

School 03 had modern sports facilities within walking distance from classrooms. Two basketball courts, two netball courts, and volleyball facilities were paved and safe for students. A soccer field with trimmed grass provided a safe playing environment. The school had enough balls for all extramural activities.

**Utilities.** Classrooms, science laboratories, and industrial workshops at all schools had no provision for Internet services even though telecommunication towers were available within 10-kilometer radius of each school site. Electricity was available to the schools but prone to frequent outages. School 01 and School 03 had piped running water to science laboratories and industrial workshops. The source of water at School 02 was a borehole situated about one kilometer away from the school. No school had harnessed abundant wind and the sun for energy.

**Document Analysis.** In this study, document analysis provided additional evidence to support interview and observational data to generate understanding of construction of meaning in challenging school conditions. Data from documents analyzed such as printed and electronic materials supported understanding of the economic context of school challenges and examples of problems found in different schools. The documents analyzed included academic articles, newspaper reports, statistical reports, photographs, and video images of schools (Bowen, 2009; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Documents analysis shed light on sources of problems experienced in schools. Information from documents converged with participant perspectives from interviews and the observation of school conditions (Yin, 2009).

**Results of Triangulation.** Independent measures; interviews, observations, and document analysis methods produced data that confirmed the presence of problems in schools.
Triangulation of multiple sources of evidence showed literal replication. The results of the study were similar to predictions (Yin, 2009). In some instances, the sources of evidence produced different results that contrasted predictions. Infrastructure varied from one case to another and such a finding reappeared in multiple sources of evidence. Interviews, observations, and document analysis complemented each other in showing that schools had shortages of teaching materials and equipment. The methods also helped establish that the underlying source of problems among the cases was lack of government funding and limited revenue from school fees. The same results reoccurred from different methods used one after the other (Miles et al., 2013). In agreement with Yin, multiple cases mitigated threats to validity to confirm that the methodology measured what it purported to measure.

Discussion

The interpretation of research findings follows to support the discussion of research results driven by research questions. Evidence collected through interviews, observations, and document analysis helped answer the following research questions (RQs):

RQ1. How do secondary school teachers in Zimbabwe construct meaning of the practice of teaching in given school conditions?

RQ2. To what extent, if any, do teachers face challenges in depressed economic conditions?

RQ3. What mechanisms for coping with difficult school conditions do teachers use to survive?

According to Mishra (2013), construction of meaning clarified how humans created knowledge, mastered skills, and made sense of reality (Echeverri, Paula, & Pérez, 2014). Knowledge creation or construction of meaning was a dialogic and co-constructed undertaking situated in a given contexts (Fleury & Garrison, 2014). Construction of meaning was a dynamic process of making sense of problems facing an individual or a group of people with diverse implications for different people (Anuradha, et al., 2014; Vygotsky, 1978). The process of constructing meaning involved asking questions to acquire knowledge about a situation, analyzing information to filter out acceptable and unacceptable aspects of the situation, and acting on the information to adapt to given circumstances (Leonardi, 2011). Construction of meaning called on actors to try out a variety of approaches to arrive at what made most sense to meet set goals (Coulter & Lester, 2011). By rationalizing over situations, people explored options and developed adjustments strategies likely to minimize the severity of the predicament (Bingham, 2014; Echeverri at al., 2014).

Construction of meaning was necessary to ensure that individuals engaged in activities that made sense under given circumstances. Activities that made sense evoked special significance motivating individuals to continue doing what brought joy and fulfillment. If an activity ceased to make sense, it lost its value and there was no reason to keep doing it. When an activity was no longer worthwhile, people disengaged from that activity (Anuradha et al., 2014). Construction of meaning allowed teachers to continue reevaluating their motives for doing such work ensuring
that they provided the next generation with requisite knowledge, skills, and dispositions for future success. Teachers sought alternative employment if it became meaningless to work in problematic school conditions while others continued regardless of existing difficulties (Echeverri et al., 2014; Gisbert, 1972).

**Construction of meaning in units of study.** Teachers at School 01, School 02, and School 03 constructed meaning of practice of teaching in a variety of ways. Individuals who chose to teach under such difficult conditions did so to pursue something of significance (Anuradha et al., 2014). Teachers chose to work in schools with broken, inadequate, and inappropriate technologies, with insufficient funding, and limited government support to make a difference in students’ lives. Teaching provided meaning and inspiration to keep hope for the next generation alive. Across the three schools, teachers accepted the situation as it presented itself. Teachers incorporated individual beliefs to the situation. Teaching was a source of survival in an economic environment where the majority of adults were unemployed. Teachers had opportunities to work as adults and measure up to social expectations. To make sense of school complexity, teachers overlooked problems, and committed to meeting ongoing challenges (Stephens, & Beatty, 2015; Echeverri et al., 2014).

**What does it mean to be a teacher in Zimbabwe today?** The practice of teaching in Zimbabwe meant making continual adjustments to teaching processes and reconfiguring technologies on a daily basis to meet ongoing challenges (Coulter & Lester, 2011; Leonardi, 2011). Being a teacher meant making a difference, caring, and equipping young people with competencies to be successful members of society regardless of problems (Perkowski, 2015). Teaching meant sacrificing time and money, bringing personal technologies to the classroom, and collaborating with fellow teachers to meet existing challenges (Mishra, 2014). In classrooms, teachers were role models encouraging students to realize their full potential and aspire for employment anywhere in the world (Anuradha et al., 2014; Echeverri et al., 2014).

Construction of Meaning as a Theme. Across the three cases: School 01, School 02, and School 03 construction of meaning emerged as a theme supported by the following sub-themes: acceptance, individual beliefs, financial independence, keeping the hope alive for the next generation, seeing the big picture, and commitment. The participants stuck with the practice of teaching because they had the skills and experience to respond to challenges and get the job done.

**Acceptance.** Participants at the three schools accepted the situation as it presented itself. Teachers accepted things they could not change such as mismanagement of the economy and funding problems leading to deterioration of school infrastructure and shortage of teaching materials (Minahan, & Norlin, 2013; Smith & Hollihan, 2014). Teachers accepted existing conditions to minimize frustration and promote effectiveness at managing their situation (Anuradha et al., 2014).

**Individual Beliefs.** Various factors motivated participants to work as teachers despite school and classroom difficulties. Some worked to earn money, hence industrial action for low teacher salaries (Ranga, 2014). Others driven by patriotism worked to make a difference in students’ lives (Anuradha et al., 2014). It was a patriotic undertaking to work under difficult conditions to
lead students to their future. The participants incorporated individual beliefs to the situation to influence decision-making and perform assigned duties to support students to cope with ongoing school challenges (Smith & Hollihan, 2014).

Financial independence. Participants chose to teach to gain financial independence for survival in a difficult economic environment. Teachers were able to support their families while guiding the next generation to the future (Echeverri et al., 2014; Sundal, 2012). Teaching was a source of survival and economic well-being. Teaching provided income when the majority of adults were unemployed. This position was in agreement with socio-environmental constraints theory postulating that a shrinking economy created limited choice of work (Anuradha et al., 2014).

Keeping hope alive for the next generation. Teaching enabled adults to touch student lives to meet social expectations. Hope motivated teachers to commit to guiding students to responsible adulthood (Minahan, & Norlin, 2013). Teachers felt that failing to contribute to student success meant that they failed to realize their full potential as adults (Sorensen & McKim, 2014).

The big picture. Teaching meant focusing on achieving student success rather than dwelling on classroom inconveniences. Teachers saw the big picture that provided opportunities for in-service training to cope with difficulties and for personal advancement (Flook, Goldberg, Pinger, Bonus, & Davidson, 2013; Helm, 2012). Teachers visualized students gaining knowledge and skills out of complexity leading to productive lives upon completion of secondary education. There was meaning and fulfillment in guiding students to realize their full potential (Smith & Hollihan, 2014).

Commitment. Participants of the study thought carefully before dedicating themselves to teaching. They chose to work under given conditions knowing well that they would face problems. There was no compulsion to work under given conditions. They chose to teach and obligated themselves to perform assigned duties and meet teaching goals (Sorensen & McKim, 2014). Commitment gave teachers strength to persevere under given circumstances. Teachers were dedicated to their work and they supported each other to keep schools running. Collegiality fostered by trust and care brought teachers together to guide students through problems. Teachers endured hard times and held out for rewards of student success (Echeverri et al., 2014).

RQ 2: To what extent, if any, do teachers face challenges in depressed economic conditions?

Teaching materials and equipment. Teachers at each of the schools experienced shortage of teaching materials and equipment. Classroom, science, and practical subject workshop equipment was old or in poor repair. Furniture was inadequate or broken in some schools. Students shared textbooks despite attempts by the “United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)” and the “Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education” through the “Education Transition Fund (ETF)” (Marques De Souza, 2011, p. 9) to distribute textbooks to primary and secondary schools in Zimbabwe.

School and classroom problems. While School 02 had problems with water, deteriorating classrooms structures, poor grounds, and hazardous sports fields, School 01 problems were less severe. Classroom buildings in School 01 were old but safe for teachers and students. Buildings
needed renovations to incorporate information technologies. School 03 had very old buildings of higher standards than other schools. The rocky terrain at School 01 and School 02 posed some physical risks to students who walked and played barefooted on school grounds and sports fields.

**School fees.** Schools studied also struggled with funding problems generated from school tuition and fees. The issue with school and tuition fees was that government policy set school fees at low rates consistent with the low cost of living. Income generated from school fees was inadequate to meet the cost of running schools. School budgets were insufficient to maintain infrastructure, repair or replace broken teaching equipment, furniture, and improve classroom conditions. With limited funding, the three schools could not afford computers for teacher and student use in classrooms.

**Coping Mechanisms as a Theme**

RQ3: What mechanisms for coping with difficult school conditions do teachers use to survive?

In spite of problems each school faced, teachers persevered and performed their duties. Teachers took deliberate action to adjust to overwhelming situations on a daily basis (Merç & Subaşı, 2015; Steward & Donald, 2006). School problems challenged teachers to consider improvising teaching materials to meet ongoing problems. Emergent sub-themes from coping with school and classroom complexities included human agency, coping financially, coping with lack of teaching materials, and coping with students.

**Human agency.** Teachers as human beings used their capacity to think, exercised control over their situation, and took action to influence change in themselves and their situation (Helm, 2012; Leonardi, 2011). The participants worked through the crisis and became better at what they did to manage the situation. They observed and learned from each other’s experiences finding no reason to leave and try something new in other employment sectors. With practice, teachers developed creative ways of solving problems without external intervention (Smith & Hollihan, 2014). Teachers changed the way they looked at the situation and did things differently (Coulter & Lester, 2011). They realized that wishing for change or taking industrial action would not alter conditions in schools (Ranga, 2014). Data showed that community involvement was necessary to transform school conditions (Helm, 2012; Leonardi, 2011).

**Adapting.** The desire to help students learn under difficult circumstances that existed challenged teachers to be creative at repairing or replacing old equipment with alternatives. Teachers thought ahead and sacrificed personal resources to manage ongoing challenges (Coulter & Lester, 2011; Echeverri et al., 2014). In agreement with Coulter and Lester, teachers learned from each other and experimented with a variety of technologies until they discovered what worked to support teaching (Leonardi, 2011). This meant improvising suitable teaching materials and equipment to cope with challenges (Mangwaya et al., 2013).

**Improvising.** Participants in all cases improvised tools to help students learn. They bought their own computers and reference materials for research to help students gain knowledge without reading textbooks in short supply. They repaired what they could and replaced old tools with affordable materials. Teachers modelled teaching materials out of whatever was available to get
the job done. Human agency allowed teachers to sacrifice personal resources to cope financially (Helm, 2012).

**Coping financially.** The income schools generated from school tuition and fees was insufficient to maintain and repair infrastructure or replace obsolete teaching materials and equipment. One strategy teachers used to meet ongoing challenges was to sacrifice their own resources (Leonardi, 2011). Teachers sacrificed their own money to purchase materials they needed to perform their duties. Individual teachers bought their own computers to use in their teaching. Teachers at School 01, School 02, and School 03 photocopied learning materials helpful to prepare students for examinations. Teachers also purchased their own books and reference materials to prepare for lessons. At the end of each term, teachers provided parents with lists of supplies student would need for the upcoming learning period.

**Coping with lack of resources.** Teachers supported each other to solve problems and resolve issues. They discussed difficulties and shared resources to cope with shortage of teaching materials and equipment. Newer teachers sought wisdom and guidance from those who had been teaching longer (Anuradha et al., 2014). After discussions, each teacher assumed control of their individual situation and implemented techniques that worked to achieve desired goals (Eilam & Trop, 2013; Dyer, 2008).

Teachers modified their practices and rearranged teaching materials and equipment to perform functions necessary to confront challenges (Leonardi, 2011). They experimented with available materials until they found what worked to achieve goals. Experiments allowed the teachers to discard old and inappropriate materials and embrace alternative technologies necessary to get the job done (Helm, 2012).

**Coping with students.** When students came to school, they already knew how to share available resources. Teachers had no problems teaching students to share learning resources. Families instilled the value of sharing in students at an early age (Pfrenger, 2015). Students readily shared limited textbooks and furniture in classrooms, laboratories, and industrial subject workshops. Students even shared sports equipment and succeeded in competitions. Positive student attitude allowed teachers to devote more time to rearrange technologies to support the practice of teaching and less time on student discipline. Themes in Construction of Meaning of Practice from NVivo are summed as follows:
Consideration of disconfirming evidence. The goal of this study was not to pursue literal replication only but gain complete understanding of the problem. The reoccurrence of the same finding such as the shortage of teaching materials and technologies from different measuring instruments mitigated threats to validity (Miles et al., 2013). It was equally important to consider the results from multiple sources of evidence that were contrary to predictions when drawing conclusions. Multiple methods measured what they were designed to measure in the study (Yin, 2009).

Results that contradicted predictions from different sources were dependable and the consideration of such data added meaning to the conclusion (Yin, 2009). Counter-examples provided viable alternative interpretations of data from multiple cases showing evidence of variations in the construction of meaning and coping strategies among schools (Yin, 2009). Infrastructure and sports fields for example, varied from one case to another when tested with different instruments. Miles et al. (2013) indicated that several possible or rival explanations produced compelling evidence. Documents selected for analysis showed that there were problems with infrastructure in secondary schools but observations at School 03 contradicted information disseminated in documents.

Observations revealed that buildings at School 03 were very old but of higher standards than other schools. Interview results also confirmed that the conditions at School 03 were of higher standard compared to other schools. Supporting and challenging perspectives of construction of meaning varied among cases based on existing school problems. Teachers at School 03 were satisfied with school conditions that they brought their families to live at the school unlike School 02 that had poor teacher accommodation.

Implications for Leadership Educators
The teachers’ construction of meaning and response to deteriorating school conditions had theoretical implications for leadership educators and future research. The research findings highlighted the complexity that future leaders would likely face in practice. Leadership educators should draw insight from the study and design training programs and models to prepare teachers for the unexpected, unknown, little understood, and difficult conditions (Dyer, 2008). Trainees and practitioners should develop the capacity to endure hardship and take appropriate action to uplift communities in which they work (Casto et al., 2016). Leadership educators should encourage practitioners to serve in challenging school conditions to make a difference in students’ lives and influence change in communities (Jones, 2011).

This study provides examples of resilience that leadership educators could use to prepare practitioners to address tough issues in various communities (Pfrenger, 2015). This study informs leadership educators about challenges students, teachers, school administrators, and communities wrestle with on a daily basis. With such understanding, leadership educators can prepare future leaders to make sense of their situations and engage local and international communities to make deliberate and targeted investments in school reconstruction (Stephens & Beatty, 2015).

Recommendations

Several recommendations offered to stakeholders, based on study findings can address school and classrooms conditions in Zimbabwe secondary schools. Local communities should assume greater control of schools. Stakeholders in local communities: schools, teacher unions, and government should be involved in determining school fee policy consistent with local needs to generate sufficient revenue needed to improve school conditions. Greater parent involvement in school governance and maintenance of infrastructure alongside support of international agencies should transform schools and uplift communities.

Local control

Empowerment of local communities to administer their schools and regulate school fee policy should lessen government burdens. Teachers’ unions and local communities should engage the government to bargain for targeted investment into school infrastructure to motivate teachers to perform assigned duties in safe and comfortable work environments. Parent communities should provide labor to repair broken furniture and buildings to create conditions supportive to teaching. Such a shift should allow government authorities to spend more time rebuilding the economy to revive education rather than attempt to control schools without adequate funding needed to improve teaching and learning conditions. Local communities should approach donors for support to improve school conditions and if possible engage international organizations for further assistance.

Engaging the international community

As participants suggested, local communities and schools could engage international agencies to supply modern classroom technologies. Like the “Education Transition Fund (ETF) textbook program under the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)” that supplied textbooks to primary and secondary schools, education leaders should seek international support to improve infrastructure, integrate information technologies to the classroom, replace old equipment, and
boost furniture supply to schools (Marques De Souza, 2011, p. 9). After delivery of needed technologies, schools and local communities should take charge and manage resources at higher levels. The problem is that international donors supply needed teaching materials but schools fail to manage donations responsibly resulting in textbook loss, equipment break down, and further deterioration (Mapolisa & Tshabalala, 2013). More professional development opportunities should help teachers share experiences and develop better ways of managing donated resources to lessen school problems.

Conclusion

School problems uncovered in this study included deteriorating classroom infrastructure, broken or lack of teaching materials and equipment, unsafe sports grounds, and hazardous sports fields. Utilities were unreliable in all cases. Some schools maintained old to very old buildings structures and managed school grounds and sports field at higher levels. The underlying source of problems in schools was lack of government funding and limited revenue from school fees. It was hard to understand why people would continue working without appropriate teaching materials and equipment in deteriorating infrastructure for low pay with minimal government assistance. It did not make sense to teach under such conditions. Scholars like Echeverri et al. (2014) found that when an activity ceased to make sense, people lost interest, and withdrew from the activity. Contrary to research findings by Echeverri et al., teachers studied did not lose interest in teaching or stop working but they continued performing their duties under existing conditions. Teachers made sense of problems under given school conditions and committed to serve the students they valued.

The participants worked as teachers for a variety of reasons. Teaching had personal significance to the participants that they would not trade their profession for any other occupation. Teaching had meaning. The practice of teaching made sense, met economic goals, promoted personal interests, and inspired individuals to continue performing their duties under given circumstances.

The participants worked to make a difference in students’ lives. As a social expectation, teachers as adults had to work somewhere. The teachers worked to perform a duty to society (Anuradha et al., 2014). In agreement with Anuradha et al., teaching provided income in an economic climate where most adults were unemployed. There was hope that the employer would periodically review and improve teachers’ salaries. The participants overlooked problems and saw the big picture to keep hope for the next generation alive. Commitment to work under given conditions gave teachers the inspiration to face hardship and equip students with knowledge, skills, and dispositions for success (Smith & Hollihan, 2014).

This study revealed that when faced with deteriorating school conditions, teachers became resourceful at re-evaluating and responding to existing problems (Coulter & Lester, 2011). To cope with challenges, the participants changed themselves and their circumstances (Helm, 2012; Leonardi, 2011). Coping strategies included modifying classroom practices, discarding ineffective teaching materials, and improvising more appropriate equipment to support construction of meaning in changing work environments (Minahan, & Norlin, 2013; Smith & Hollihan, 2014). Existing conditions could likely change with intentional community involvement (Casto et al., 2016). Collaboration of education leaders, local, and international
communities could secure targeted investment for school reconstruction (Eilam & Trop, 2013; Pfrenger, 2015). Leadership educators could also utilize the research findings to prepare practitioners to confront the unknown, little understood, and tough work conditions to make a difference in students’ lives and transform communities.

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Young Leaders Mindset toward Mature Employees’:
A Qualitative Transcendental Phenomenological Study

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Abstract

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to understand the daily-lived experiences of young leaders, ages 20-40 in the Phoenix, Arizona area who supervises mature employees, ages 50-75. The information from the interviews focused on the lived experiences and insights of young leaders’ concern with mature employees. The perceptions of these 10 young leaders who had firsthand experience of this phenomenon provided the data for analysis. The data analysis process revealed four themes that included (a) The primary contributor to enhancing comfort level between young leaders and mature employees is respect, (b) Leadership approaches young leaders display with mature employees, (c) Identifying personal needs and addressing potential concerns, (d) and Leading by example inspires positive change in the workplace.

Introduction

The era of mandatory retirement ages, an influx of physically demanding jobs, or a decline in technological advancements seem unlikely to emerge in today’s workforce (Quinn, 2010). The Employee Benefit Research Institute conducts a survey of 1,200 workers and retirees every January to explore the future labor supply and labor demand (Quinn, 2010). The shocking results of this survey give clear indications that workers do not plan on retiring at the traditional retirement age of 65. The astounding results of 11% in 1991 to 42% in 2010 indicate that workers will retire after the age of 65 or never (Quinn, 2010). The importance of appropriately managing this cohort will be the responsibility of the younger generations.

The increase of young leaders in the workforce reveals organizations promoting young leaders who have higher levels of technological skills, education, and strategic planning expertise rather than mature employees (Collins, 2009). The American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) defines mature employees as individuals age 50 and over (Collins, 2009). The supervision of mature employees by young leaders is on an upswing because of an increase with the aging populations and low birth rates (Billett, 2011). Using the experiences of mature employees is an essential element of successfully sustaining business operations (Timmons, 2011). With organizations emphasizing competitive advantages, valuing mature employees strong work ethic, knowledge, and experience is advantageous (Tacchino, 2013).

Organizations are making efforts to stimulate diversity in organizations from race, gender, and sexual identity; however, there has been an oversight regarding mature employees (Waldrum, 1997). Diversity acknowledgment could help create awareness of a serious phenomenon while generating best practices measures to further aid this phenomenon. Companies can gain a competitive advantage through enticing and retaining highly educated employees (Bell, 2007). Addressing age discrimination through hiring, evaluating, retaining, training, and managing are some of the ways to combat discrimination in the workplace (Waldrum, 1997).
According to Collins (2009), mature employees are not accustomed to taking orders from someone as old as their child or grandchild. Consequently, young leaders are not comfortable giving orders or providing advice to someone the same age as their grandparents (Collins, Hair, & Rocco, 2001). Mature employees believe that a younger leader is challenging because mature employees believe young leaders are less supportive (Leisink & Knies, 2011). However, young leaders tend to question the loyalty and contributions of mature employees (Collins, 2009). A positive relationship between mature employees and young leaders is not an impossible feat to accomplish if young leaders comprehend the generational differences of mature employees (Dychtwald & Baxter, 2007).

Leadership styles vary from individual to individual; however, a greater difference is noticeable with the generational gap that exists among mature employees with differing expectations (Stanley, 2010). Regardless of the age or gender, leadership styles vary among young leaders; however, understanding the style that compliments mature employees could be a crucial step toward retaining organizational knowledge of mature employees who may decide to retire or procure a position that aligns better with their needs (Stanley, 2010). Besides their tacit knowledge, mature employees of the Baby Boomer generation exhibit a strong work ethic that can be accentuated under suitable working conditions (Meriac, 2010; Stanley, 2010). Many organizations face an exigent need to retain the older generation because of an upsurge in the younger generation turnover and increases in the loss of organizational knowledge from older generations leaving the workforce (Hokanson, 2011). Understanding the generational differences and similarities will allow organizations to hone in on the diversity, creativity, and energy benefits they provide (Stanley, 2010).

**Literature Review**

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to understand the daily-lived experiences of young leaders, ages 20-40 who supervise mature employees, and ages 50-75. The social, economic, and cultural changes that young leaders face with supervising mature employees is the literature reviewed within this study. The literature review will also indicate the reasoning behind mature employees staying in the workplace beyond retirement age, organization retention methods, and young leaders’ leadership styles. With consideration to an aging population and low birth rates in advanced and developing economies, there is a need so sustain and retain mature employees (Billett, 2011). Young leaders’ in the Phoenix area supervising mature employees was the purpose of this phenomenological study. Young leaders present a unique opportunity to gain an in-depth perspective on how organizations can improve working condition to attract and retain mature employees.

The younger worker generation is on the rise, resulting in an increase of young leaders supervising mature employees (Collins, 2009). A focus on the interaction between young leaders and mature employees in the workplace, working condition preference among the multiple generations, retention methods, and an overview of the aging workforce cohorts form the foundation of the literature review. This study outlines the various leadership styles and preferences among mature employees that young leaders can learn to apply for further leadership development. The summary section will synthesize the retention methods of organizations and
young leaders, explanation why mature employees continue to remain in the workforce beyond customary retirement ages and the leadership styles of young leaders toward mature workers in an aging workforce. The review of the literature concludes with further advisement toward employees who choose to remain in the workforce and organizations that continue to focus on retaining them.

**Conceptual Framework**

An aging workforce, effective leadership, organizational culture, managing multi-generations, recruiting and retaining strategies to hold on to tacit knowledge reflect a broad overview of the conceptual framework for this study. These five factors were chosen because they form the core of the phenomena studied, and historical significance in previous research reflects a common theme. The belief is that if young leaders and organizations can provide a healthier working environment for mature employees their workplace will become the organization of choice and gain a competitive advantage (Macon, 2009). Understanding the essential formula for effectively leading multi-generations, specifically mature employees could lead to a universal guide toward comprehending the complex structure this generations presents in the workforce.

**Aging Workforce**

According to Allen (2011), out of approximately 309 million people in the United States one out of five will be 65 and over within the next year. In 2011, the eldest population of the Baby Boomer era reached 65 (Allen, 2011). Allen (2011) suspects that mature employees will choose to remain or return to the workforce, thus altering traditional retirement norms since 80% of Baby Boomers anticipate working past customary retirement age.

In 1935, the Social Security program was a social insurance program created to pay workers aged 65 and older an income once they retire (Soneji, 2012). Traditionally, individuals would retire at the age of 65 (Quinn, 2010). According to Quinn (2010), at the age of 65 Social Security regulations would require individuals to retire, and many were happy to do so. In 1983, Congress increased payroll taxes significantly to prepare for the long-term financial obligations. The tax growth rate went from 10.8% to 12.4% between 1983 and 1990 (Soneji, 2012).

The Social Security system is the largest social support system in America and has existed more than 75 years (Allen, 2011). A delayed retirement practice could provide a substantial reduction on the dependency of federal programs. Some factors that determine when individuals will retire come from their views on retirement, work, and leisure (Allen, 2011). Retirees who choose to wait on collecting benefits until full retirement age is reached will increase their benefits in most cases. Unfortunately, waiting for many is not an option with consideration for personal preference or health concerns resulting in a reduction of benefits.

**Effective Leadership**

Effective leadership is an instrumental aspect of sustaining employee loyalty. Chinsky (2011) asserted that good leadership is not dependent on the years of experience a person has, but the ability they have to guide others. A fundamental duty of leaders is to motivate followers to
achieve goals and objectives (Grant, 2012). Reaching these marks can be found with inspiring behaviors that create a clear vision, often found in transformational and charismatic leadership (Grant, 2012).

Transformational leadership may promote positive relationships between managers’, transformational leadership behavior, and individual performance (Camps, 2011). Young leaders who adopt the transformational leadership mindset may exhibit characteristics with mature employees who encourage positive relationships. Camps (2011) asserted that transformational leaders are both flexible and adaptable, both sound needs of a mature employee. Evidence supports the theory that transformational leadership enhances employee self-esteem and strengthens the bond with their transformational leader (Camps, 2011). The emotional bond Young leaders who use a transformational leadership style could create an opportunity to increase mature employee retention by creating an emotional bond (Camps, 2011).

Transformational leaders aim to motivate and articulate a vision that drives individuals to accomplish extraordinary things (Grant, 2012). According to Ruggieri and Abbate, (2013) transformational leaders increase the awareness of followers by alluring to greater ideals and values. These ideals and values promote equality, justice, and peace. Transformational Leadership within an organization is often a necessity to transform the direction of a company. Transformational Leaders are experts at expressing a passion toward a goal, vision, and creating a higher level of moral standards (Warrick, 2011). This model exemplifies the true meaning of motivation toward a common goal.

Organizational Culture

Puccio, Murdock, and Mance (2007) describe organizational culture as competitive and creative with a high-demand for leaders who can support creative thinking, foster teamwork, and operate inside the classifications of transformational leadership. According to Puccio, Murdock, and Mance (2007) organizations that face change must have the support of creative leadership; that oppose previous leadership styles of the earlier 20th century that treated employees as expendable and used strict transactional management techniques to gain efficiencies.

Organizational culture is the foundation from which behavior changes in the workplace appear (Piktialis, 2007). Organizational culture may have a significant effect on employee behaviors that have a direct reflection on enhancing employee skills (Keogh, 2009). The shift in organizational culture could be the driving force that motivates and encourages employees to participate in retaining mature employee efforts (Hokanson & Sosa-fey, 2011).

Managing Multi-Generations

In the years preceding the Baby Boomer generation consisting of workforce from the Great Depression and Second World War, the era saw a 29% increase of workers when the Baby Boomers entered the workforce (Dychtwald & Baxter, 2007). The Baby Boomer generation remains in the workforce today and continues to add to workplace diversity. Managing various generations is becoming a common occurrence for the younger generation. Young leaders in the Phoenix, Arizona area serve many purposes beneficial to the organization they represent that if
coupled with a greater ability to relate with the older generation cohorts would allow all sides to prosper.

**Recruiting and Retaining Strategies**

Financial security plays a large role in the decision of a mature employee to consider retiring over continuing in the workforce (Adams & VanDerhei, 2014). Hokanson (2011) indicates that retention efforts toward mature employees remaining at current employer may be beneficial because many mature employees face financial hardship with early retirement. According to Yeatts (2000), mature employees must calculate the cost and benefits of remaining on-the-job or retiring and indicate if retirement benefits are more lucrative than staying on-the-job, the ability to retain decreases. A competitive financial incentive for mature employees would help organizations demonstrate that they are serious about retaining organizational knowledge (Quinn, 2010). Once organizations implement proper incentive programs to retain and recruit employees, the next step will be assisting with adapting to current organizational needs (Timmons, 2011).

**Methods**

The lived experiences from young leaders between the ages of 20-40 supervising mature employees 50 years and older are the basis for this qualitative, transcendental phenomenological study. Qualitative research methods specifically focus on the lived experience of individuals (Moustakas, 1994). To capture the individual experiences, open-ended questions were used to obtain this information throughout the interview. With the use of a qualitative study to extract the lived experience from young leaders, data collection came from the perceptions of 10 young leaders who had firsthand experience of this phenomenon. A quantitative research study that analysis numerical data is not a suitable option for this study because this study sought lived experiences to explore the phenomena of young leaders who supervise mature employees (Sinkovics & Alfoldi, 2012).

The phenomenological research design is a form of a qualitative research method that targets a specific phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). A phenomenological study conducts research with participant experience that allows researchers to gain knowledge of the lived experience. Young leaders who deal with the aging workforce in the United States from the leadership perspective were the foundation for this study. The exploration of young leaders’ experiences supervising mature employees in the Phoenix, Arizona area is the purpose of this qualitative transcendental phenomenological study.

**Results**

The responses from the young leaders were overwhelmingly favorable in connection with the respect and appreciation they have for the mature employee’s life experiences. Many of the young leaders were able to identify the importance of diversity in the workforce and understand the need for mature employees in the workforce. If mature employees have the desire to remain in the workforce, even beyond the traditional retirement age, organizations and young leaders have the responsibility to ensure that they feel welcomed. In this study, the findings suggest that young leaders were very clear that they value mature employees and are respectful to their needs.
Four major common themes emerged throughout the interview process. The common themes included (a) The primary contributor to enhancing comfort level between young leaders and mature employees is respect, (b) Leadership approaches young leaders display with mature employees, (c) Identifying personal needs and addressing potential concerns, (d) and Leading by example inspires positive change in the workplace.

**Discussion/Recommendations/Conclusion**

The purpose of this qualitative transcendental phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of young leaders who supervised mature employees. The sub focus was to understand the perception young leaders have toward mature employees to enhance retaining and recruitment efforts to maintain valuable tacit knowledge. The study sample was comprised using 10 participants who met the study requirements. This study also includes the research problems, the purpose of the study, research study overview, limitations of the study, and a final summary. The data analysis process revealed four themes that included (a) The primary contributor to enhancing comfort level between young leaders and mature employees is respect, (b) Leadership approaches young leaders display with mature employees, (c) Identifying personal needs and addressing potential concerns, (d) and Leading by example inspires positive change in the workplace. The researcher was able to provide recommendations from the findings and from the themes that emerged.

The exploration of mature employees’ perspectives might further aid the discovery of what accommodations are needed to enhance the retention efforts. By exploring mature employees’ perceptions, a deeper insight into the leadership styles of young leaders may come to fruition. A quantitative perspective may help specify the percentage of young leaders in comparison to mature employees and document any increasing or decreasing trends in the workforce. Other studies might focus on more specific organization in varying industries.

Organizational stance toward mature employees warrants future exploration. With young leaders continuing to dominate the supervisory roles of today’s workforce, organizational opinions concerning mature employees might introduce ideas on what organizations can do to provide young leaders the tools to better handle mature employees. This method would be an alternative to young leaders’ perspectives of young leaders on mature employees. With exploring organizations views of mature employee’s retention strategies may develop to assist mature employees who choose to remain in the workforce.

A qualitative study in an industry specific search or another region using the same interview questions from this study may yield new information not mentioned in this study. This study used a focal point of participants only in the Phoenix, AZ area with no specific industry requirements.

**References**


Overconfidence, Humility and Leadership

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Abstract

One construct that has had an impact on leaders, teams, and organizations is humility. Although humility has received very little attention in the social science research, the construct has gained more attention lately in Positive Organizational Psychology and the study of leadership. The research presented in this paper explores the perceptions of individuals across the United States and the impact overconfidence and optimism bias has on individual’s perception of leadership and humility.

Introduction

Priority three of the National Leadership Education Research Agenda (2013, p. 13) suggests, “Leadership Education is critically grounded in the psychological development of those that it is created to impact… the Leadership Education landscape, the intricacies of personality and self-awareness, along with other variables, require continued development and additional research that will provide perspective for leadership educators tasked with preparing the next generation of leaders.” Research conducted by psychologists Ashton and Lee (2008) suggest that personality has six major dimensions. Among these six dimensions of personality is Honesty-Humility. The research using the Ashton and Lee’s HEXACO model has found that individuals high on Honesty – Humility tend to be, “modest and unassuming, view themselves as ordinary people without any claim to special treatment” (p. 1954) However, those who scored lower on the dimension of Honesty-Humility, “tend to see themselves as superior specimens who deserve special privileges” (Ashton & Lee, 2008, p. 1954). This may start to explain some of the research on overconfidence, over optimism and humility and the issues associated with leadership.

Although human behavior is complex and often unpredictable, one of the more consistent findings in social-psychological research is that people often see themselves to be better than others on different personal characteristics (Myers 1995). For example, in 2002 research conducted by Rowatt, Ottenbreit, Nesselroade and Cunningham found that significantly more than 50% of individuals estimated they were above average on desirable traits and below average on undesirable traits when comparing themselves to others. This is in line with Myers (1995) research who found that 90% of college faculty rated themselves as superior to their average colleague.

These findings are troubling, especially when they are compared to recent research supporting humility as an important personal and professional characteristic. Even though humility has received very little attention in the social science research, the construct has gained more attention lately in Positive Organizational Psychology and the study of leadership. Collins
(2001), in his book *Good to Great*, found that leaders in the most enduring successful companies demonstrated a blend of determination and personal humility. These “Level 5” leaders, as he called them, were better able to entertain different perspectives, manage others emotions, and connect back to the organizational goals than those who had low levels of humility. Furthermore, recent research suggests that humility predicts prosocial behaviors such as generosity (Exline & Hill, 2012; LaBouff, Rowatt, Johnson, Tsang, & Willerton, 2012) self-esteem (Exline & Geyer, 2004), better performance on the job (Exline, 2012) and forgiveness (Powers Nam, Rowatt, & Hill, 2007). The research presented in this paper explores the perceptions of individuals across the United States and the impact overconfidence and optimism bias has on individual’s perception of leadership and humility.

**Literature Review**

As Tali Sharot, Associate Professor of Cognitive Neuroscience in the Department of Experimental Psychology at University College London, points out in her research on the optimism bias, there are some really good reasons for being over optimistic or over confident (2011). First, no matter if you win or lose, individuals with high expectations always feel better. People with high expectations tend to take credit when they succeed, ultimately attributing the success to their ability, motivation and effort. On the other hand, those with high expectations also see their failures as a direct result of external factors such as bad luck, the team, or the impossibility of the problem. Whether it is athletes attributing losses to bad breaks or referee bad calls, CEOs suggesting it was the market, or politicians suggesting “dirty politics” for a loss, they find an external world to blame. This can be easily applied to other areas of our lives like driving, exams, job interviews, and dating.

Another reason Tali Sharot (2011) suggests that optimism is important is because it not only changes subjective reality but also changes objective reality. Acting as a self-fulfilling prophecy, optimism is not only related to success, it makes success more likely. In different contexts like academics, sports and politics, optimism leads to success. It can also have a profound impact on our health. If we believe our future will be positive and successful we are less likely to suffer from stress and anxiety. So if there are strong benefits to being over optimistic and over confident, why not just live in that reality? The truth is, there are also a number of issues and pitfalls that surface because individuals have these bias. It seems that on almost any dimension of socially desirable traits, people see themselves better than average. In fact, in those dimensions where we can be subjective about success, we tend to use greater self-serving bias than on objective measures of success. This means we rate ourselves as more ethical because we can define what constitutes “ethical goodness” to us and are less likely to give ourselves inflated scores in our level of competency using Power Point because it is a more objective measure. This poses an extremely difficult problem to our development of leadership and our own leadership success. There are few things in life that are as subjective as leadership effectiveness and success.

**Moral Overconfidence and the need for Humility: Are you Morris Braverman?**

Take a moment out and answer this question: In a difficult ethical situation what is the likelihood you would act in an ethical manner? Studies like the Stanford Prison Experiment and The
Milgram experiment are just two examples when individuals who are faced with a very difficult ethical decision, decide not to act in an ethical manner (Nohria, 2011). In fact, 65% of the participants in the Milgram experiment went all the way to deliver the 450-V shock (Milgram, 1974). The thing about these results is that they were similar to replication of the experiment at different times (over twenty years) and in different countries. Additionally, even though the first Milgram experiment consisted of just males, in 9 out of 10 replicated studies that included women and men, no gender difference could be found in the percentage of individuals who would deliver the highest level of shock (Milgram, 1974).

Our society has an unrealistic overconfidence in how “good” we will act in difficult situations. Nitin Nohria, the Dean of the Harvard Business School, in his TED X talk on moral humility suggests most individuals believe their moral compass will not fail them, however, we see in numerous examples that it does (2011). There are particular situations and conditions when our best moral selves will fail to guide us in the right direction and, like in the Milgram experiment, we will do something we never thought we could/would do (possibly go all the way to deliver the 450-V shock). This moral overconfidence can lead to anything from atrocities against humanity (individuals working in Concentration Camps) to corporate fraud scandals (executives at ENRON) to favoritism in the office. When Morris Braverman was asked a year later about his participation in the Milgram study he suggested, "What appalled me was that I could possess this capacity for obedience and compliance to a central idea, i.e., the value of a memory experiment, even after it became clear that continued adherence to this value was at the expense of violation of another value, i.e., don't hurt someone who is helpless and not hurting you. As my wife said, 'You can call yourself Eichmann,' I hope I deal more effectively with any future conflicts of values I encounter." (Milgram, 1973, p. 67).

Imagine that, comparing yourself to (or in this case having the person you love compare you to) Otto Adolf Eichmann who was a German Nazi and one of the major organizers of the Holocaust. In a difficult ethical situation what is the likelihood you would act in an ethical manner? Would you change your response now knowing about moral overconfidence? Most of the time, even after knowing about moral overconfidence, individuals are unlikely to think they will act in an unethical manner. This is why moral overconfidence is so dangerous, especially concerning leadership. As Nitan Nohria (2011) points out in his TED X speech, “character is as malleable as anything else. That we have to cultivate and nurture it over the course of our lives as we cultivate wisdom, intelligence or anything else.” Yet, as we set up leadership programs in schools and in corporate America we have not included the development of humility to cultivate our character and ensure a high level of moral humility (an appreciation that we are fallible) to prepare for those times or situations when we are susceptible to going astray.

There are also other areas of our lives where overconfidence and the optimism bias is both a blessing and a curse. Unrealistic optimism can have an impact our ability to manage and save money and effectively plan for a project in the future. As Tali Sharot (2011) suggests, our over optimistic view about our future life may positively impact our health (less anxiety and stress), however, being overconfident about our health can actually have a negative impact. This is especially true if overconfidence makes us believe we are immune to problems and don’t take the necessary precautions to protect ourselves. Whether it’s not using contraceptives, not wearing a seatbelt, smoking, texting and driving, or not getting regular checkups, we believe the negative
event won’t happen to us until it is too late. In these situations, we tend to take a reactive role, getting caught off guard after the issue takes place.

The Leadership Optimism Bias

Since subjectivity leads to an optimism bias it is very possible we have a leadership optimism bias. Contributing to this is the problem we (as scholars and practitioners) have in defining leadership. There are easily as many definitions as individuals who have written on this topic. Additionally, there are no shortage of “experts” writing on the topic. Everyone has figured out the 7 steps, 3 dimensions, 21 laws or seven minutes to be an effective leader. On top of the academic definitions and the leadership manifestos discussing leadership success, the context also dictates what is deemed successful. In politics its votes, in sports it's wins, and in business it is the bottom line. The more votes, wins, and/or money you have, the more successful your leadership. Instead of seeing our leadership with some humility, accurately understanding our own impact (both positive and negative impact) on a situation, the impact others have, and then the overall context/systems impact, we use subjectivity to enhance self-serving bias.

It is clear we define leadership success in our own terms, we perceive ourselves better on these subjective terms, then we use definitions, models, and images of successful leaders (and the traits they possess, which are similar to our strengths), to confirm the assessment of our leadership ability. Additionally, this lack of clarity and humility also impacts organizations. Since our department’s success is often best defined and achieved by us, we often see our area/department as being superior (or more important) than other departments in the organization. This may be the cause of much of the silos that form in organizations. This current study explores the perceptions Americans have of their personal characteristics, work performance, ethical character, leadership, and humility compared to the average person. If the overconfidence bias is true in leadership and humility as it is in other areas where individuals compare themselves to others, this might explain some of the issues we face in our leadership development programs.

Method

Participants

Two hundred and fifty five Americans (126 male and 129 female) with ages ranging from 18 to over 60 participated in the survey. Participants location ranged throughout the United States, however, through a text analysis it appears that the most represented locations included Orlando, Houston, New York, Chicago, Atlanta, Louisville, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, San Diego, Lancaster, Los Angeles, Cleveland, and Denver.

Design

The online survey tool Survey Monkey (www.surveymonkey.com/) was used to house the online survey and to gain access to a diverse population of Americans throughout the United States. The survey consisted of five demographic questions and eight questions comparing the perception of one’s own personal characteristics, work performance, ethical character, leadership and humility to the average person. Responses were measured on a Likert scale from 1-5, where 1 indicates
far less or far below average and 5 indicated far more or far above average on the individual questions. The questions and responses included:

1. Compared to the average person are you: Far less intelligent –Slightly less intelligent –About the same level of intelligence –Slightly more intelligent –Far more intelligent
2. Compared to the average person are you: Far less attractive –Slightly less attractive –About the same level of attractiveness –Slightly more attractive –Far more attractive
3. How would you rate your performance at work: Far below average –Slightly below average –Average –Slightly above average –Far above average
4. Comparing yourself to other people you work with, how ethical are you: Far less ethical –Slightly less ethical –About the same as those I work with –Slightly more ethical –Far more ethical
5. In a difficult ethical situation, what is the likelihood that you would act in an ethical manner: Very unlikely –Unlikely –Not sure –Likely –Very likely
6. How does your performance at work compare to others in a similar position (or at the same level in your organization): Much lower level of performance –Lower level of performance –Equal level of performance –Higher level of performance –Much higher level of performance
7. Comparing yourself to your immediate manager/supervisor, what type of leader would you be: A much worse leader –A slightly worse leader –The same level of leader –A slightly better leader –A much better leader
8. Compared to the average person, how humble are you: Much less humble –Less humble –About the same level of humbleness –More humble –Much more humble

**Results**

**Hypothesis 1: We are overconfident.**

In this study, overconfidence is addressed by comparing the perception of one’s own personal characteristics, work performance, ethical character and leadership to the average person. For the work performance and ethical items, more than 60% of the responses indicate overconfidence; see Figure 1 below for the percentage of participants that responded with a 4 or 5 on the 5-point scale for each item.

![Figure 1. Percentage of Overconfident Responses](image-url)

ASSOCIATION OF LEADERSHIP EDUCATORS
The following hypotheses were established to support H1 above:

$H_a$: People are overconfident about their own intelligence.

$H_b$: People are overconfident about their own attractiveness.

$H_c$: People are overconfident about their own performance at work.

$H_d$: People are overconfident when comparing their performance at work to others.

$H_e$: People are overconfident about their own ethics.

$H_f$: People are overconfident about their own likelihood to act ethically.

$H_g$: People are overconfident when comparing their leadership to their boss.

For this analysis, overconfidence is defined as a pattern rating of oneself above others. To establish overconfidence, the average response in each area is compared to the neutral value of 3. In each comparison, the number of respondents is 255. The data suggests that people are overconfident in all areas of personal characteristics, work performance, ethics and leadership.

![Average Responses from Overconfidence Measures](image)

**Figure 2.** Average Responses from Overconfidence Measures

A series of one-sample hypothesis tests were performed and in each case there is enough evidence to support the corresponding hypothesis (i.e. all p-values significant beyond the 0.0001 level for each of $H_a - H_g$; see Table 1 below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Test Statistic (z-value)</th>
<th>P-value for one-tailed test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Intelligence</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>15.72</td>
<td>&lt; 0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Attractiveness</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>&lt; 0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Performance at work</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>22.79</td>
<td>&lt; 0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Performance at work vs. coworkers</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>15.51</td>
<td>&lt; 0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Ethics</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>16.21</td>
<td>&lt; 0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f) Likelihood of ethical behavior</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>22.75</td>
<td>&lt; 0.0001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In addition, a variable was created in which participants that responded with a 4 or 5 on the 5-point scale on the first seven items in the questionnaire were characterized as overconfident - there are 40 respondents that can be classified as such.

**Hypothesis 2: We need to be more humble.**

In this study, humility is first addressed by comparing the perception of one’s level of humility to the average person. Respondents were asked to rate their own humility to the average person. Humility can also be defined as *not* consistently rating of oneself above others.

The following hypothesis was established to support H2 above:

- H₀: People are overconfident about their own humility (i.e. avg response > 3).
- H₁: Those who are characterized as *overconfident* are more overconfident about their humility than average.
- H₂: Those who see themselves as *overconfident about their own humility* will consistently rate themselves below others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Test Statistic (z-value)</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(h) Humility</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>8.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After performing a one-sample hypothesis test, there is enough evidence to support H₀ (i.e. p-value significant beyond the 0.0001 level); people are also overconfident about their own humility. Simple linear regression was used to investigate the observed positive relationship between overconfidence and perceived comparative humility; the results are significant (R=0.017; p-value=0.021) This means that people who can be characterized as overconfident are also overconfident about their humility.

To the contrary, a second variable was created in which participants that responded with a 4 or 5 on the 5-point scale on the humility item were characterized as being *overconfident about their own humility* - there are 118 respondents that can be classified as such. In Figure 3, the responses of these individuals was compared to the average values in Figure 2.
As shown, those who can be categorized as overconfident about their own humility (shown as “humble” in the Figure 3) are more overconfident about their personal characteristics, work performance, ethical character and leadership than overall.

Table 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>R²-value</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Intelligence</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>13.39</td>
<td>0.0005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Attractiveness</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>4.52</td>
<td>0.0152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Performance at work</td>
<td>4.34</td>
<td>19.30</td>
<td>0.0043</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Performance at work vs. coworkers</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>14.20</td>
<td>0.0022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Ethics</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>13.98</td>
<td>0.0007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f) Likelihood of ethical behavior</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>18.60</td>
<td>0.0381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(g) Leadership compared to manager</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>6.66</td>
<td>0.0314</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Simple linear regression was used to investigate the observed relationship between *humility-related overconfidence* and each of personal characteristics, work performance, ethical character and leadership; in each case there is enough evidence to reject $H_1$ for each of the areas, as shown in Table 4 (i.e. $p$-values significant beyond the 0.05 level).

**Discussion**

**Hypothesis 1: We are overconfident.** The intention of the analysis was to affirm that, as individuals, we believe that our own personal characteristics, work performance, ethical character and leadership are more or better than the average person. The results show that a small percentage of respondents (only 16%) consistently fall in this category. However, for the work performance and ethical items, more than 60% of the responses indicate overconfidence. This
means that *most* people feel overconfident about their own personal characteristics, work performance, ethical character or leadership in some way. The results also show that these same people are also overconfident about their humility.

So how do we both manage the perils of being overconfident (and the optimism bias) and still hold onto all the benefits of being over optimistic? Myers (1995, p. 203) suggests, “Optimism beats pessimism in promoting self-efficacy and persistence when facing initial failures. Nevertheless, a dash of pessimism can save us from the perils of unrealistic optimism…The moral: success in school and beyond requires enough optimism to sustain hope and enough pessimism to motivate concern.” It could be argued that Myers has the right idea, however, instead of a dash of pessimism, we all need a heavy dose of humility. This is especially concerning when it relates to our overconfidence in the way we perceive the job our immediate manager is doing. If we believe we would be a better leader than our immediate manager/supervisor this will have an impact on the dynamics of the leader/follower relationship.

**Hypothesis 2: We need to be more humble.** Humility can also be defined as *not* consistently rating oneself above others. The results show that almost half of respondents (46%) fall into the category of being overconfident about their own humility. Despite the above conclusion that most people feel overconfident in some way, essentially half of the respondents indicate that they are *not* consistently rating themselves above others. The data suggests otherwise - the data suggests that this 46% consistently rate themselves above others, across all of the areas of personal characteristics, work performance, ethical character and leadership.

Increasing our humility provides us the opportunity to become aware of our biases. “The good news is that becoming aware of the optimism bias does not shatter the illusion... And this is good because it means we should be able to strike a balance, to come up with plans and rules to protect ourselves from unrealistic optimism, but at the same time remain hopeful” (Sharot, 2012). This is exactly what humility allows us to do. It provides an avenue to manage the benefits and cost of being over optimistic. However, the question still remains, how do we get an overconfident society to turn towards humility to positively impact their lives and their leadership?

**References**


Self vs. Others: 
Influence of Unconscious Bias on Decision Making Need for Conscious-Introspection

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Iowa State University

Abstract

This study was designed to help identify the presence of any unconscious/implicit bias when rating others and self on the same variables. The participants of this study rated themselves favorably on all variables except one. More importantly, the findings show statistically significant differences in eight variables out of the fifteen. The findings clearly indicate the presence of unconscious bias when rating others. The results of this study show that these participants assumed that generally other people are: naturally lazy; motivated by fear; work mainly for money or reward; naturally dependent on others; they don’t think for themselves; need to be told or directed; need to be supervised/or watched; people resist change and need to be inspired/driven by someone other than self. These findings were handed out to these students in class, and they were asked to analyze/reflect on the findings and provide explanation(s) as to why these ratings show evident differences when rating others. These participants were somewhat perplexed by the rating differences and their own thinking process. This activity created a condition for these students to reflect on their own assumptions and become cognizant of pervasive nature of implicit bias and need for a deliberate introspection.

Introduction

The study was designed as an integral part of class activity with an intention to make students aware of the flaws of human thought process and potential pitfalls of our decisions and encourage self-introspection and application of the critical thinking process in decision making. This study was designed as a three-step class activity in a junior level college leadership course. First, students completed a short instrument rating others on transactional leadership variables. Couple of weeks later, the same students rated self using exactly the same instrument. Then, the two ratings were analyzed to see if there were any statistically significant differences between the self vs. others ratings. Finally, students were provided with the results and were asked to provide rational for the differences between the two ratings, self vs. others.

We all want/expect our leaders to make optimal decisions that deliver desired results. The pressure to make decisions that solve pressing problems and find quick and convenient answers to difficult/complex challenges may lead us to resorting to shortcuts and rely on limited and biased cognitive and environmental resources. Pronin (2007) pointed out that our decision making is distorted by cognitive, perceptual and motivational biases. People’s perceptions can be biased by their belief systems, context, expectations, motives, desires, etc. (Bazerman, 2005; Hastie and R.M. Dawes 2001; Gilovich et al. 2002). Biases compromise the accuracy and quality of human decisions, which may lead to misunderstanding and conflicts (Pronin et al., Gilovich et al., 2002; Thompson, Nadler and Lount, Coleman and Deutsch 2000).

The purpose of this study was to identify bias when rating others vs. self on transactional
leadership variables. The specific objectives of this study were to: 1) identify the participants’ ratings of *others* on transactional variables, 2) identify the participants’ ratings of *self* on the same transactional variables, 3) compare the ratings of *others* and *self* to identify presence of any bias, and 4) identify participants’ analysis, reflections and conclusions of the results.

**Literature Review**

Leadership decisions have been a part of human history from the very beginning. Van Vugt, Hogan, and Kaiser (2008) stated that decisions made by groups of our ancestors to collectively gather and hunt food; share labor; use collective defense strategies, etc. provided a shield against external threats. Furthermore, they stated that the need to manage conflicts within a group and/or conflicts with outside groups made central command necessity if they were to survive and flourish. Unfortunately, central command overtime consolidates power into the hands of one or a few individuals. Power consolidation in the hands of a few may be beneficial when dealing with the current existential threats, but it ends up creating conducive conditions for abuse of power.

Studies have revealed human disposition to abuse power; even leaders who started out with the best of intentions became corrupt, abusive and unresponsive to their followers’ needs. Zimbardo (1971) conducted a seminal study by assigning mock roles to subjects. By design, Zimbardo took power away from some individuals and made them prisoners. The prisoners had been put under the control of a few newly empowered/authorized subjects as supervisors/guards over them. The guards although known to be good and humane people when they were selected for this role, they quickly used abusive/coercive power mistreating and dehumanizing the prisoners to a point of extreme distress leading to an early termination of the study.

Several recent research findings in the same vein by (Galisnky, Magee, Inesi, and Gruenfeld, 2006 & 2008; Lammers, Stapel, & Galinsky, 2010) provide compelling evidence that status and power have distorting effect on peoples’ beliefs, resulting in disregard to other peoples’ perspectives; while rationalizing and justifying their own views and decisions. Furthermore, these studies pointed out that the higher the status/power of an individual, the more he/she is likely to lie, feel entitled to cheat, believe his/her deviant behavior is more acceptable than others, and more likely to diminish other people and see them as tools or instruments to be used to achieve his/her self-serving interests.

**Theoretical/Conceptual Framework**

Human perception is influenced by the totality of the generic knowledge structure-schemata, constructs, information, and beliefs, but the structure itself is an unreliable guide to the nature of reality because beliefs influence how individuals characterize phenomena, and see and/or understand the world (Pajares, 1992). The social psychology research on biases and stereotypes indicates that the human brain naturally categorizes similar objects together, which may result in cognitive biases, perpetuating a people’s implicit dependence on stereotypes. Once established, the stereotypes could operate mostly independent of individual’s conscious control.

People hold several types of self-enhancement biases that are encoded to produce stereotypical responses. Pronin et al. (2002) identified the following types of biases: 1) people’s tendency to
view self more in the positive light against the evidence. 2) people’s propensity to claim that their views as more objective than others’, which can be identified as “ego protective bias;” 3) people’s tendency to assume others as more selfish or self-serving, taking more credit, which could be identified as “self-enhancement bias;” 4) people’s propensity to choose and act in their self-interest, which can be identified as “self-interest bias” (financial, political, social, etc); and 5) people’s tendency to create and favor their in-groups, which can be identified as an “In-groups bias” – based on racial, gender, minority, weight, etc. differences.

This study was based on the Theory X assumptions developed by McGregor (1960), which suggested that managers typically assume employees possess unfavorable opinions about work, are incapable of self-direction, need top-down direction, must be coerced to work, and avoid taking responsibility for organizational outcomes; therefore, employees must be controlled, directed or threatened with punishment to put adequate effort to achieve the organizational goals. McGregor (1960) proposed that managers possessing a theory X orientation assume that employees usually seek to only meet lower-order physiological and safety needs through tangible rewards (e.g. pay and bonuses) as well as through the avoidance of disincentives (e.g. threats and discipline).

Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1958) proposed an autocratic-democratic continuum model, which suggests that leaders (decision makers) can employ a varying degree of employee/subordinate participation in decision making ranging from authoritative or boss-centered leadership to employee-centered (democratic) leadership approach.

According to Dijksterhuis and Nordgren (2006), the Theory of Unconscious Thought (UTT) posit that unconscious thought process has a vaster capacity and better when dealing with complex issues and decisions. They further state that unconscious thought process is applicable to decision making, problem solving, creativity, impression and attitude formation. They pointed out that contrary to the common assumption, conscious thought process has a limited capacity and works well with simple issues.

The Leader-Member Exchange Theory (LMX) by Dansereau, Graen, & Haga (1975), Graen & Cashman (1975), and Graen (1976) challenge an assumption that leaders treat followers in a collective way. They rather assert the presence of an in-group and an out-group in organizations. Northouse (2013) states that one of the strengths of the LMX Theory is that it provides alerts to leaders warning them to avoid the influence of conscious or unconscious bias when inviting followers to an in-group. The LMX Theory asserts the presence of reciprocally beneficial relationship between a leader and an in-group. However, on the contrary, the extent of a relation between a leader and an out-group is limited to only business-like or formal relationship. As a result, an in-group has a greater influence on the organization’s goals and ends up receiving added benefits, rewards and/or opportunities for advancements as opposed to the out-group. Nishii and Mayer (2009) assert that the LMX differential-relationships are more likely to be harmful to members of diverse background than homogeneous group members. Wasserman et al. (2008) suggest that leaders should be flexible, become self-aware, and should develop the capacity/willingness to be vulnerable, to promote inclusion.

Gender stereotypes are automatically activated and often lead to biased judgements (Fiske, 2000;
Kunda & Spencer, 2003). Gender biases can be particularly detrimental to the advancement of women leaders as the decision-making processes for selecting top leaders are generally unstructured, allowing biased decisions without accountability (Powell & Graves, 2003). Kanter (1977) points out that people prefer “similar others” and provide the most positive evaluations to people who are most similar to them, injecting biases into decision making processes that could disadvantage women when male leaders are looking for their replacements.

Informed, unbiased and well-thought-out decisions are not only good for the business profit and/or for human resource management, but optimal decisions are beneficial for individuals, families, governments, countries and the entire humanity. Milkman, Chugh and Bazerman (2009) posited that “errors induced by biases in judgment lead decision makers to …engage in needless conflict, and wrongly invade countries.”

Methods

The purpose of this study was to determine if unconscious bias influences how participants rate others vs. self on transactional leadership variables. This is a descriptive study. The population for this study consists of thirty undergraduate students who were taking a junior level leadership course. The Institutional Review Board at the state university approved this study. The participants of this study rated others using a fifteen variable questionnaire during the fall 2015 semester. Two weeks later, the same participants rated self using the same questionnaire they used to rate others.

The data were analyzed using SPSS to determine the means and standard deviations of each rating. The two sets of data were compared and analyzed using the t-test to determine if there were any statistically significant differences between the others vs. self-ratings. After analysis, the results were handed back to these students for their critical analysis, reflection and conclusions. The participants were asked to address the following question: “Why do you think or believe we rate ourselves so differently than others?”

Results

The first objective of this study was to identify how these participants rate “others” on transactional leadership variables. The participants were asked to rate “others” on 15 statements using Likert-like scale, where 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = disagree and 4 = strongly disagree. The findings indicate that the participants disagreed with statements that suggest that people are naturally lazy; have little interest beyond their material needs; need specific instruction; and people remain static and hard to change. The participants neither agreed nor disagreed with statements that indicate people’s productivity is mainly motivated by fear; people are naturally dependent on leaders; people don’t want to think for self; and people need to be watched and supervised at all times. However, the participants agreed with the statements that suggest people need to be told; people are naturally compartmentalized; people naturally resist change; jobs are primary – people need to be fitted to pre-defined jobs; and people need to be pep-talked or pushed. Participants strongly believed that people work mainly for money; and that people appreciate being treated with courtesy.
Table 1
*Descriptive Statistics for Ratings of “Others”*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements Description</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People are naturally lazy; they prefer to do noting</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>1.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People work mostly for money and status rewards</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The main reason keeping people productive in their work is fear of being demoted or fired</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People remain children grown larger, they are naturally dependent on leaders</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>1.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People expect and depend on direction from above; they do not want to think for self</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People need to be told, shown and trained in proper methods of work</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People need supervisors who will watch them closely enough to be able to praise good work and reprimand errors.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People have little concern beyond their immediate, material interest</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People need specific instruction on what to do and how to do it; larger policy issues are not any of their business</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>0.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People appreciate being treated with courtesy</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4.41</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People are naturally compartmentalized; work demands have no connections to leisure activities</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>0.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People naturally resist change; they prefer to stay in the old ruts.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jobs are primary and must be done; People are selected, trained, and fitted to pre-defined jobs.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>1.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People are formed by heredity, childhood, and youth; as adults, they remain static; old dogs don’t learn new tricks.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People need to be “inspired” (pep talk) or pushed or driven.</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>0.96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 = Strongly disagree  2 = Disagree  3 = Agree  4 = Strongly agree

The second objective of this study was to identify how these participants rate “self” on the same transactional leadership variables they used to rate “others.” The participants’ self-ratings show stronger disagreements with the following statements: I am naturally lazy; my productivity is motivated by fear; I naturally dependent on other leaders; I expects directions from above; I need to be watched at all times; I remain static, ...; and I need to be pep-talked or pushed. The participants’ responses indicate a neutral position on need to be told/shown and trained in specific methods of work; and on resisting change. However, the participants of this study agreed with statements: “I work mostly for money status reward;” and that “jobs are primary; therefore, I am selected and fitted to pre-defined jobs.” These participants have strong appreciation for being treated with courtesy.

Table 2
*Descriptive Statistics for “Self” Ratings*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements Description</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am naturally lazy; I prefer to do noting</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I work mostly for money and status rewards</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>0.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The main reason keeping me productive in my work is fear of being demoted or fired</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ASSOCIATION OF LEADERSHIP EDUCATORS
The third objective was to compare the “other” and “self” ratings on transactional leadership variables to see if there were statistically significant differences between the two ratings. The results show statistically significant differences in eight out of the fifteen variables, which reveals that the participants of this study viewed self favorably than others indicating that other people:

1. are lazier than self;
2. work mostly for money and status reward than self;
3. depend on others to make decisions for them than self;
4. expect directions from others than self;
5. need to be told, shown and trained to do their jobs than self;
6. need to be watched more closely by supervisors than self;
7. resist change and prefer to remain in the old rut than self;
8. are need to be inspired, pep-talked and pushed than self.
Table 3
Comparative Analysis for “Other” vs. “Self” Ratings on Transactional Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People are naturally lazy; they prefer to do nothing.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am naturally lazy; I prefer to do nothing.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People work mostly for money and status rewards.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I work mostly for money and status rewards.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People remain children grown larger, they are naturally dependent on leaders.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I remain children grown larger, I am naturally dependent on leaders.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People expect and depend on direction from above; they do not want to think for themselves.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I expect and depend on direction from above; I do not want to think for myself.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People need to be told, shown and trained in proper methods of work.</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I need to be told, shown and trained in proper methods of work.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People need supervisors who will watch them closely enough to be able to praise good work and reprimand errors.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I need supervisors who will watch me closely enough to be able to praise good work and reprimand errors.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People naturally resist change; they prefer to stay in the old ruts.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I naturally resist change; I prefer to stay in the old ruts.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People need to be “inspired” (pep talk) or pushed or driven.</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I need to be “inspired” (pep talk) or pushed or driven.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The fourth objective was to identify participants’ reflections and conclusions on the findings of this study. The results of this study were presented/handed to the participants for their analysis and reflections. Participants were asked to address the following question: **why do you think or believe we rate ourselves so differently than others?** Each student/participant addressed the questions independently and provided the following written responses as to why people tend to rate self in a more favorable light than others. Here are a few samples of direct quotes of the reasons/rationale for the rating differences given by the participants:

1. **Everyone viewed themselves more than the average person because we see the bad in society and ignore the good.**
2. **As individuals, we value our self-perception and what others perceive of us. We are often biased towards other people by making crude generalizations. We typically don’t think of ourselves in negative ways, but we will think of other people negatively.**
3. **I think it is because people are very competitive and we think we do things a certain way to make ourselves differently, to stand out or maybe to give ourselves an edge in this competitive world.**
4. **Because we think of ourselves as hard working persons like everyone else. Also we watch the news and shows that show other people aren’t doing anything and think**
everything should be handed to them. Which when we think of one-self, we don’t think of ourselves like that.

5. I think we judge everyone harder than ourselves and like to think of ourselves in a good light. I don’t think we realize how we truly would rate.

6. I think a part of it is that we simply know ourselves better than others. Another piece of it may be that a lot of the time, society trains us to have a negative outlook on the world around us which includes people.

7. I think we as humans are always quick to judge others and jump to find the negative things and how we are better. This has to do with society and how competitive our world is in these days.

8. I feel that we know ourselves better than anybody else, that gives a chance to properly rate ourselves, when rating other people we do not know their true characteristics so how can we properly rate them.

Discussion/Recommendations/Conclusion

The results of this study revealed the presence of unconscious bias in rating self vs. others on eight of the fifteen variables. The participants of this study assumed that “others” are: naturally lazy; motivated by fear; work mainly for money or reward; naturally dependent on others; they don’t think for themselves; need to be told or directed; need to be supervised/or watched; people resist change and need to be pep-talked, inspired/driven by someone other than self (themselves). These participants hold a self-enhancing bias, favoring self and unconsciously dimensioning others. Pronin et al. (2002) pointed out that “despite the well-documented role of self-enhancement bias in human judgment, people rarely recognize their susceptibility to it. … they rate themselves as ‘better than average’ on a wide range of traits and abilities.”

The results of this study were made available to the students who participated in this study for their analysis and reflection. When confronted with the data that show their own biases favoring self over others, the participants were perplexed and struggled to come up with any logical explanation. The differences were very clear to them, but the reasons for the differences were not. A question “Why do you think or believe we rate ourselves so differently than others?” The qualitative responses suggest that many of the respondents perceived that people have self-favoring bias, but they don’t seem to identify a clear cause for the bias. Furthermore, their written responses seem to imply the bias more as a conscious response than as an unconscious response.

Some did not seem to see bias and made attempts to give rationale as to why they rated others and self the way they did. Statements such as: “I think a part of it is that we simply know ourselves better than others” and “I feel that we know ourselves better than anybody else” suggest an insistence on that their self-ratings are accurate - not biased, despite the evidence. Pronin et al. (2002) indicated that contrary to the evidence, people see themselves in an overly positive light and claim that their views are objective and true. Furthermore, Pronin et al. pointed out that “…their unwarranted claims of objectivity persist even when they are informed about the prevalence of the bias and invited to acknowledge its influence.”

The lack of understanding of the pervasive nature of bias coupled with the difficulty to admit and
accept that we all are susceptible to it, poses a serious challenge to tackling and minimizing the influences of biases on our decisions. Bias isn’t a onetime phenomenon. It is an everyday experience. However, consciously or unconsciously favoring certain individuals or groups over others and/or applying coercive and abusive power to extract maximum profit while inflicting psychological and physical harm to subordinates becomes a concern if and when one holds a position of power – leader, boss, manager, etc. making decisions on resource allocation and/or access to opportunities for growth and advancements.

If a leader perceives that: people are naturally lazy, prefer not to work, need to be supervised, watched, pushed and be punished if necessary to achieve the necessary productivity, but he or she does not believe the same holds true about self, then naturally this person is likely to use a coercive methods on subordinates. The Theory X assumptions suggest that transactional leaders may practice or use reward, fear, threat and/or punishments on others to achieve their goals. Studies by (Galisnky, Magee, Inesi, and Gruenfeld, 2006 & 2008; Lammers, Stapel, & Galinsky, 2010) point out that even leaders who started out with the best of intentions could become corrupt, manipulative and abusive as they consolidate power overtime. Authentic leaders value, respect and advance human dignity as well as productivity. T. S. Eliot (1974) posited that “half of the harm done in this world is caused by people who have power and want to feel important. They don’t mean to do harm; they are simply absorbed in the useless struggle to think well of themselves.”

Ideally, we want and hope our leaders to be well-informed, unbiased/objective and deliberate in their decision making and transparent in their dealings. However, the reality is that as humans, we all have biases and make flawed and misguided decisions that affect our followers and/or the team as a whole. We can discuss, talk, write and argue about prejudice, bias and discrimination as much as we wish. However, progress can be made only if we understand first that biases involve both conscious and unconscious processes and that we all are susceptible to it; and commit to do something about it. First, we should start with a deliberate and genuine self-introspection to learn and become aware of our own susceptibility to an adulterating effect of bias on our own decisions and actions. This can’t be a onetime effort; it requires developing and practicing a habit of self-introspection.

Nespor (1987) contended that belief systems, unlike knowledge systems, do not require general or group consensus regarding the validity and suitability of their beliefs. Individual beliefs do not even require internal consistency within the belief system. Nespor further discussed that belief systems are also illimitable in that their relevance to reality defies logic, whereas knowledge systems are better defined and receptive to reason. Nonetheless, Nespor concluded that beliefs are far more influential than knowledge in determining how individuals organize and define tasks and problems and are stronger predictors of behavior. As leadership educators, we should design and integrate learning activities that advance critical thinking. Our role has to be encouraging and empowering students to have confidence to question their own assumptions, beliefs and admit human shortcomings/vulnerabilities to unconscious and conscious biases and persistently work towards making optimal decisions.

Making optimal decisions require careful and deliberate considerations, objectivity, and self-introspection. The purpose of leadership education is to enhance students’ interpersonal skills,
increase self-awareness, increase understanding of others, and learning from life experiences (Burbach et al., 2004). Leadership education offers a unique platform to improve critical thinking by cultivating self-regulatory judgment through the interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and inference of a leader’s own decisions and actions (Facione, 1990). Stedman (2009) contended that leadership classrooms should seek to develop the cognitive capabilities of students by enhancing critical thinking skills. Samuelson (2006) recommends that educators should challenge students to “practice making decisions where the ‘right’ answers don’t come from a spreadsheet. (p. 364).

Overall, this scholarly learning activity served as an educational tool throughout the process from data collection to analysis of findings and conclusions. Students were able to reflect on the results and their thought processes. We recommend designing and using similar learning activities in leadership classes. Bassham, et al. (2002) emphasized that individuals engaged in critical thinking discover and overcome personal prejudices and biases to formulate and present convincing explanations in support of conclusions and make reasonable intelligent decisions about what to believe and what to do. Both the process and the results of this study made it apparent to these students that human thought processes have hidden flaws and that it is essential to practice critical thinking and self-introspection if and when we are to make optimal decisions.

References


Finding What Works:  
Leadership Competencies for the Changing Healthcare Environment

Ann M. Herd, Brittany L. Adams-Pope, Amanda Bowers, & Brittany Sims  
*University of Louisville*

Abstract

As the world of healthcare changes rapidly, healthcare leaders and managers are needing to change to keep up. With changes such as the Affordable Care Act, increasing medical school costs, decreased graduation rates, and increased need for care, how are current and future healthcare leaders adapting? In light of the large-scale changes in the healthcare field in recent years, the purpose of this study was to investigate which NCHL competencies were referenced by exemplary healthcare leaders as most important for success in today’s changing healthcare environment. Interviews were conducted with 26 mid- and upper-level healthcare leaders identified by the C-level executives in their organizations as exemplary performers. Change leadership, self-development, talent development, and team leadership were the NCHL competencies most frequently referenced, with thematic analysis revealing many other underlying themes in the exemplary leaders’ dialogue.

Introduction and Literature Review

In the constantly changing world of healthcare, are healthcare leaders adapting to the “new normal” of dwindling resources, higher expectations, shortages of trained workers, and the overall “do more with less” persona? Much has been written about the evidence-based approach to healthcare management and the competencies that accompany this approach (Calhoun, Dollett, Sinioris, Wainio, Butler, Griffith, & Warden, 2008; Kovner, 2001; Kovner & Rundall, 2006; Stefl, 2008) but, how has the healthcare field evolved its ideals as the industry has changed? One of the most popular healthcare leadership competency models in use today is the National Center for Healthcare Leadership (NCHL) model, which was designed based on extensive research nearly a decade ago (Calhoun, Dollett, Sinioris, Wainio, Butler, Griffith, & Warden, 2008). While the competencies outlined in the model are acknowledged by experts to be robust (Calhoun et al., 2008; Garman & Scribner, 2011), the healthcare landscape has changed significantly in recent years (Franco & Almedia, 2011). Given the pervasive use of competency models such as NCHL used by healthcare organizations and educational institutions for a variety of human resource development and educational purposes (Calhoun, Vincent, Calhoun, & Brandsen, 2008; Campion, Fink, Ruggeberg, Carr, Phillips, & Odman, 2011; Clark & Armit, 2010; Kovner, 2001; Kovner & Rundall, 2006; McAlearney, 2010; Stefl & Bontempo, 2008), thoughtful inquiry is needed to explore the leadership competencies most needed for effective performance in the current healthcare environment.

NCHL Healthcare Leadership Competency Model

Since the turn of the century, there has been a growing need for an improvement in the quality of health care in the United States. A 2003, Institute of Medicine (IOM), report *Health Professions Education: A Bridge to Quality* argued that the desired standard of care could not be reached without major reform of education and professional development across all sectors of health
care. The report called for the creation of a core set of competencies that were broad enough to span across all segments of the health profession and would ultimately improve the overall quality of U.S. health care (IOM, 2003).

The National Center for Healthcare Leadership (NCHL, 2004) used a research-based competency modeling process to design a competency model delineating 26 competencies identified in the study as critical for healthcare leadership effectiveness (Calhoun et al., 2008). The 26 competencies are organized into the categories of transformation, execution, and people, as depicted in Figure 1.

![Figure 1. NCHL Healthcare Leadership Competency Model (www.nchl.org)](https://www.nchl.org)

The model has gained recognition and use across a variety of healthcare organization and educational settings (Clark & Armit, 2010; Fried & Fottler, 2013). While some organizations have used evidence-based research practices to determine the weighting of competencies most important for their organization’s work, many organizations use all the competencies identified in the model, equally weighted, for a variety of integral HR purposes (Fried & Fottler, 2013). In the years since the model’s design over a decade ago, the healthcare landscape has changed significantly.

**Changes in the Healthcare Field**

A study published in 2011 by the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) describes changes in the healthcare field that have critical implications for leadership effectiveness. The study authors analyzed leadership effectiveness data from over 30,000 people working in the healthcare field, and state that, “for decades, US-based healthcare providers…have been operating in a shifting landscape. Advances in technology and new standards of care, new business models, a growing population and changing demographics have propelled ongoing change in the healthcare sector” (Patterson, Champion, Browning, Torain, Harrison, Gurvis, Fleenor, & Campbell, 2011, p. 3). In light of these changes, key findings and recommendations derived from this study include the
need for increased opportunities for broad cross-functional and cross-organizational learning opportunities for healthcare leaders, as well as opportunities for the development of team leadership skills (Patterson et al., 2011).

Healthcare organizations in particular need to be “learning organizations” in order to keep up with the immense amount and rapid pace of changes occurring at all levels and in all areas of the organization’s processes (Franco & Almedia, 2011). Conceptualizations of learning organizations suggest that they build a culture of continuous learning among their members, thus encouraging perpetual transformation and adaptations to change (Castells, 2001; Schon, 1991; Senge, 1990). Learning organizations “intentionally develop strategies to promote learning” (Franco & Almedia, 2011, p. 785). With regard to healthcare leadership competencies, leadership styles in relation to the organizational learning characteristics needed in today’s healthcare organizations have received relatively little attention (Franco & Almedia, 2011).

In light of the pervasive use of the NCHL healthcare competency model as well as the growing recognition that healthcare organizations need to adapt to a rapidly changing environment, the purpose of the present study was to address the research question: How do the competencies described by current healthcare leaders as most necessary for leading in today's healthcare environment compare to the competencies in the NCHL (Calhoun et al., 2008) model? A qualitative methodology investigating exemplary leaders’ accounts relating to their performance as healthcare leaders was deemed as most appropriate for answering this research question, and is described below.

**Method**

**Sample and Procedures**

A qualitative research method was used to answer the research question (Berg, Lune, & Lune, 2004; DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006), in order to provide the researchers with contextual insights into the daily working lives of healthcare leaders in their organizations. The 26 participants in this study were exemplary healthcare leaders identified by 15 C-level executives who participated, by invitation, in university-sponsored healthcare leadership consortium, which was gathered to assist the university in developing a competency-based healthcare leadership undergraduate program. The participants were all employed by a variety of healthcare organizations located in [state] in the United States. The city was described by one study participant as a “healthcare mecca” (#14) because of the many healthcare organizations located within the city’s regional borders. A snowball sampling technique (Noy, 2008) was used, whereby the first exemplary leaders interviewed were then asked to provide the names and contact information of exemplary leaders in their healthcare organization.

The resulting sample of 26 individuals were identified as effective leaders within the local healthcare industry by peers and fellow leaders. The sample included 16 females and 10 males with a wide range in background, educational experience, and functional area of leadership. In terms of background, participants took a variety of paths to arrive at their present role, including work in the medical field as a nurse, nurse practitioner, doctor, or chaplain, as well as in other arenas such as nonprofit management, information technology, secondary and postsecondary
education, human resources, the armed forces, and business. The current position held by a study participant was labeled as “mid-level” (e.g. Manager or Department Director) or “high-level” (e.g. Senior Vice President or Chief Administrative Officer) by the research team, and 13 participants were assigned to each category. Education levels ranged from an associate’s degree to various terminal degrees, including the attainment of a B.S.N., M.S.N, DNP, M.D., MBA, MPA, PhD, or combination thereof, along with other certificates and certifications. While just over one quarter of the sample had only been in their current position for one year or less, participants generally had decades of experience in the healthcare industry. The least amount of time spent in the healthcare field was seven years, and four participants had over 30 years of experience. Current functional areas of practice were grouped into six major categories: Clinical Administration and Quality (6), Human Resources (2), Information Technology (2), Nursing Administration (5), Organizational Administration, Strategy, and/or Quality (10), and Technology Administration (2). With the wide array of experiences and organizational role and affiliation each participant contributed, a variety of perspectives emerged to fuel data analysis.

Participants were emailed an invitation to participate in the study, noting the healthcare leader who referred them as an exemplary candidate, and requesting an hour to an hour and a half of their time to discuss competencies needed by healthcare leaders. Interviews were scheduled at the convenience of the participants, and participants were also provided with details regarding their research study participation, including discussion of the informed consent form which provided the general purpose of the study, confidentiality parameters, and their permission to record the interview for data collection purposes.

**Interview Protocol**

In order to answer the research questions, participants were asked open-ended questions without specific reference to any of the NCHL competencies, in order to elicit examples and competencies upper-most in their minds regarding situations most relevant in their current healthcare leadership experiences. This interviewing technique aligns with that recommended for inquiry-based and ethnomethodological interviewing qualitative research (Baker, 2002; Have, 1999). The specific interview questions can be found in Appendix A.

**Results**

In order to address the research question regarding the 26 NCHL competencies (Calhoun et al., 2008) most important in the experiences of the exemplary leaders interviewed in this study, the researchers used NVivo Software (NVivo, 2012) to code the interviews according to the 26 NCHL competencies. Each of the NCHL competencies was organized as a “node,” and examples provided by the interviewee implicitly referred to a competency were coded as that “node.” Three researchers independently coded the interview transcripts according to the 26 competencies and then assessed the convergence of their coding on a sample of ten interviews. Convergence was found on 93% of the incidents recorded in the interviews. For the remaining 7% of incidents, the researchers discussed the measurement differences and decided upon coding criteria to resolve the differences.

Analyses revealed that coding differences pertained mainly to the following critical incident
topics and behaviors: conflict management (referred in the NCHL model under both “Collaboration” and “Team Leadership” competencies); counseling poor performers (referred in the NCHL model under both “Accountability” and “Team Leadership” competencies); organizing team meetings (referred in the NCHL model under both “Team Leadership” and “Communication” competency descriptions); delegation (related to descriptions under both “Accountability” and “Talent Development” competencies); keeping employees informed (referred to in “Communication” and “Team Leadership” competencies); and personal time management and prioritization (where the researchers differed in coding as “Project Management,” “Accountability,” “Initiative” and “Self-Development”). To resolve the differences in coding, the researchers discussed each coding difference and determined criteria for resolution to derive the underlying meaning referred to by the interviewee.

Table 1 presents the top four of the 26 NCHL competencies in the frequency order with which they were noted, the frequency to which each of the competencies was referred during the interviews, and the dominant competency themes that emerged during the interview data analysis.

Table 1.
NCHL Competencies, Themes, and Samples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NCHL Competency/ Frequency of References</th>
<th>Theme(s) and Sample Quotes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Change Leadership 122</td>
<td>Consistent Driver and Prioritizer of Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“an ideal healthcare leader is mission-driven, vision-minded. And keeps the main thing the main thing, which for us are the people that we serve. And then figures out how to align systems and inspire the people to pull together to do that.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“…If we have lack of focus, it’s hard to move anything along and so I usually try and keep two or three major areas of focus.” (#2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding the Healthcare Landscape</td>
<td>Understanding the Healthcare Landscape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Just by looking at the horizon of where change was going to occur….I knew that at some point, we were going to have to move from a volume-based world to a value-based world. Healthcare, it was fragmented, it was broken.” (#03)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Development 122</td>
<td>Proactive Continuous Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“So not knowing anything about ____, I went off and got trained.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Discovery and Self-Awareness</td>
<td>Self-Discovery and Self-Awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I love the diversity here. I love the chance to learn from other disciplines.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“It’s not about what you know, per se. It’s about...who you are as a person. It’s self-awareness… It’s being humble, and…that humility leads to your ability to listen and to engage other people and value their ideas.” “ (#21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talent Development 101</td>
<td>Moral Leadership Imperative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|                                         | “…vision is that we really want to foster and develop a system of problem-solvers… we really try to teach and empower others as we
work with them to develop that skill set.”
“You're always developing the next generation of leaders and helping people to reach their maximum potential. It’s really that important.”
(#10)

**Coaching with Standards and Compassion**
“Take people where they should be and not necessarily where they want to go”

**Team Leadership**

**Establishing a Culture of Connection and Purpose**
“It’s not perfect now but it’s a lot better because I’m one of those people that is a connector.”

**Empowering Delegation**
“It's empowering those people who work for you… she really let us drive the change and create the action plans.”
“She leads them, she helps them, she guides them, and she leaves them alone, right?” (#04)

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**Change Leadership**

Change leadership is described by the NCHL competency model as the ability to energize stakeholders and sustain their commitment to changes in approaches, processes, and strategies (Calhoun et al., 2008). This competency was referenced directly and indirectly by all the leaders in this study as an ever-present and underlying focus of their work. They described organization-wide changes such as mergers and acquisitions, as well as process and personnel changes at the unit and individual levels. Themes that emerged throughout the exemplary leader stories were the following: Change Leadership as a Meta-Competency, The Leader as a Consistent Driver and Prioritizer of Change, and Understanding the Change Landscape. These three themes are discussed below.

**Theme: Change Leadership as a Meta-Competency.** The change leadership competency could be seen in most leaders’ accounts as a “meta-competency” of sorts, in that it provided the context when relating incidents focused on other competencies. Leaders often provided examples of collaboration, problem solving, project management, self-development, talent development, and analytical skills in the context of an effort to drive change; these other competencies were utilized by leaders as strategies or tools in their change initiatives at individual, group, and organizational levels. For example, one interviewee (#10) discussed the need for IT and meaningful-use measures and electronic health records to be in place as a foundation for change. Another interviewee discussed the need for multidisciplinary teams and forums and learning approaches to be able to take a strategic perspective and proactively lead change in the organization. The context provided for this need was to maintain a competitive advantage (and avoid what happened recently to a Charleston hospital which just went bankrupt), and be able to “stay afloat” in today’s ever-changing environment. The following excerpt below pertains to one leader’s description of the processes he used - which can be seen to encompass a variety of competencies - to lead an integration project in his organization:

(The) mechanics of change management (begin with an) understanding of what role people need to play, and who are those key players, in the process. And… so, for
example, if you're building a steering committee, who are the decision makers, and who has enough authority inside of the different organizations or different functions to actually not only make decisions, but also have the respect of the people who will follow them as they make their decisions? Who are the leaders inside of those organizations? Then you want to build that type of team. And then, the first thing you have to do is... get past the "We, they," to the "We," in the process. And I've seen companies fail because they get so focused on... "This is the way we do it, we bought you in the process, so you do it our way." And I'm sitting there thinking, "Okay, in many cases that might be the case, it might not always be the case, but how do we approach it a little bit less subtly," and say, "Let's talk about the right outcome here," because at the end of the day, you got to get everybody rolling in the same direction, as you get into it. So, once you begin to identify that, then it's communication, communication, communication, communication, and the communication. Because you've got to just keep letting people know, "Hey, this was the plan, this is what we're doing," you got to solicit feedback, so people feel involved in the process, as you get into it. And then, you just have to offer those feedback loops; you've got to be able to react to what's going on. And that's where I think in many cases, the ability to listen and the ability to effectively adjust your communication styles become key for you, and then having empathy. Because you've got to understand depending on what side of the fence you come in from... there's a fear on the other side of the fence on "Do these people-- do I have a job? What is it going to be? Am I going to like working for this company?" So the more you can communicate to the workforce, then the faster they will get on your side of the equation. And then you have to be willing to change. If they have a better solution that makes better sense, then you have to be willing to give away what you're doing and then adapt to what they're doing. And I'll tell you, even though sometimes it's hard emotionally for the person who's in charge of doing that to do, it pays such dividends, because you get to the end result faster, because now people say "See they took what I did in the process, they must respect what we do a little bit." Because a lot of times people feel like they've just been disrespected through all these processes. So I think that's how you have to manage change, from a personal level,... (because) this is all around emotion and people. (#14)

**Theme: The Leader as a Consistent Driver and Prioritizer of Change.** Leaders spoke of having multiple and expanding priorities, with new laws, policies, and processes being enacted on a continuous basis by their organizations in order to remain responsive and competitive in today's healthcare environment. While acknowledging the need to be responsive and competitive as an organization, the leaders in this study also acknowledged the healthcare leader’s critical role in deliberately making known to organizational members which initiatives were top priority and deserving of the most emphasis when deciding on what to focus on a daily basis. As one leader stated:

We had a recent dramatic change in leadership here…, and I feel like there's got to be a clear objective. Now, I'm not saying you can't have a to-do list a mile long. You can have a to-do list a mile long, but something distinct has to be at the top of your to-do list. (#16)

Within this theme there was also a recognition that leaders used a variety of tools and strategies to drive change. Building relationships across organizational units and functions and
understanding various stakeholders’ perspectives (e.g. “finding your key stakeholders that you know are already on board with it, and using those individuals as your champions…making them part of the team to champion the change” #17), developing talent and building employees’ skills to handle new changes, and using team leadership were all mentioned as strategies for prioritizing change. As the same leader above stated:

I'm more like a map, where you can… see these are the challenges that are coming ahead, and this is the direction I want us to go in, and you can…see how the path we're taking is to the exclusion of other paths we might have taken. (#16)

**Theme: Understanding the Healthcare Landscape.** Leaders described drastic changes that were taking place on an almost-daily basis in their organizations and generally in the healthcare environment. These changes included the need for new processes relating to requirements derived from the Affordable Care Act, the need for greater efficiencies given increased competition and scarcer resources, and the need for new ways of looking at healthcare problems in order to find innovative solutions that the organizational systems could bear. The excerpts below are representative of the leaders’ constant references to the theme of understanding the changing healthcare environment and the metaphors used to describe this competency:

…The nation's gone through such a massive change…this whole paradigm. So here we are today. We're standing right here, and this is the volume world. This is the value world. Well, we're trying to figure out how do you close this gap? We've got to go from here to here. So value, volume, we've got to make that leap, and we need to build small little steps to get over there, and then slowly fill these in so that way, you can walk right over to it. These are all the planning pieces we need to be doing right now. (#3)

**Self-Development**

Self-Development is a competency defined by NCHL as having self-awareness of one’s strengths and challenges, and using self-directed learning to address one’s challenges (Calhoun et al., 2008). This competency category was referenced directly or indirectly by every participant in the study when describing their own performance as well as when providing examples of effective or ineffective healthcare leadership performance. Themes included proactive continuous learning and self-discovery.

**Theme: Proactive Continuous Learning.** Participants often referred to both the joy and necessity for continuous learning in their jobs and careers, and described numerous instances when they would proactively seek avenues for learning – through self-study, discussions and collaborations with experts across and outside the organization (e.g. “learning the nooks and crannies of the system” (#19)), and challenging job assignments. Study participants often referred to changes in their job situations as “learning opportunities,” and described in detail what they learned when facing changes and challenges. One leader described needing to be “an avid learner because of how fast healthcare is changing” (#10). Likewise, many participants described a deliberate career management journey, where they looked for gaps in their skills and knowledge sets, and proactively worked to address these gaps by volunteering for new and challenging assignments. As one leader stated:
So not knowing anything about hyperbarics, I went off and got trained, and became a 
Hyperbaric Tech, because I thought if I’m going to run a department, I need to know how 
it works. I need to know the equipment, the safeties and the risks. And just overall 
protocols. And in order to lead a team, I had to know what they did, what it comprised of. 
So I went off and went to _____ Medical Center in _____. and spent a week out there with 
their team. And they actually had a training program, so I came back certified. (#3)

Another leader succinctly summarized his continuous learning journey as building a pyramid of 
skills throughout his varied career in healthcare:

..Education. At this level right here, you want as wide a base of your pyramid as possible 
‘cause you never know what you’re gonna need as you go up. (#19)

Theme: Self-Discovery and Self-Awareness. Self-awareness was a key component of this drive 
for self-development; nearly all participants alluded to a quest for self-awareness which they 
used as a competency in performing their job. As one leader stated:

When somebody asks me to do something, I say, “You know what? Two of those match 
up with my strengths. So, yeah, I think I could bring that home. Let me go find my-- X 
person on my team that has this skill set and, between the two of us, sure, we can knock 
that out. And we can meet that timeframe. (#1)

In discussing the importance of self-awareness, another leader described self-acceptance and 
resilience in the face of understanding one’s strengths and shortcomings:

We all have our baggage. That’s right…and so it’s not the elimination of baggage. It’s 
just knowing what my baggage is and going, “This feels familiar and when I’m in this 
situation this tends to be what I do”… I think you’re raising their awareness, but more 
than that, you’re inserting in the wise person that there’s a process for becoming and 
staying aware. (#19)

Talent Development

Talent development is described in the NCHL competency model as building the organization’s 
talent pool by recognizing and supporting the development of employees’ skills and knowledge 
with coaching, feedback, and assignment activities (Calhoun et al., 2008). As was found for the 
self-development and change leadership competency categories, the exemplary leaders 
interviewed in this study referenced multiple examples which referred to the talent development 
competency. Many leaders exhibited a sense of urgency and clear ownership of talent 
development as a leadership responsibility, both for the organization’s needs as well as for their 
employees’ growth.

Theme: Moral Leadership Imperative. A common theme among leaders in the study was a 
sense of “moral obligation” to sincerely care about employees’ development, as referenced by 
one leader:
I said, “We have a moral obligation….We as an organization have a moral obligation to this group of employees to ensure that there’s nothing that the company’s doing intentionally or unintentionally to block their advancement.” So for example, if I want to go learn about Excel, I go over and I take a class…I’m still getting paid for that. Environmental Service worker wants to come to our program, they got to clock out. Well, we fixed that so they’re on the clock. We keep them whole. So we’re affording them some education, some coaching, some things on the clock in a way that’s going to help them… What we said is we’re not going to drag anybody across the finish line. But we’re going to make a clear path to the finish line. We’re going to clear the path to the finish line. But ultimately, you have to take your own exams, write your own papers. Everybody. But by golly, I don’t want anybody leaving here thinking they couldn’t succeed because of something that we did or didn’t do (#19).

Theme #2: Coaching with Standards and Compassion. Several leaders described a strong caring and compassion component related to their coaching efforts and self-identity as a leader, as noted by the following three leaders:

We need more educated healthcare leaders. I mean, it's hard because I know we've got 160 medical practices out there that have managers at different skillsets. Some of them are high school graduates that were on-the-job trained. We've got some that have associate degrees. We've got some that are bachelor degreed. So we've got a very variable group of people up there that are leading our medical groups. Some are very successful and some have struggled. I think there needs to be a program that brings them up to at least a standard of healthcare leadership and prepares them for what the future holds for healthcare (#18).

Team Leadership

The team leadership competency is defined in the NCHL model as managing team meetings, communicating with team members, establishing goals and positive norms as the leader of a team, and keeping the team informed and engaged (Calhoun et al., 2008). In this study, nearly all participants provided examples that pertained to aspects of the team leadership competency. Two of the major themes which emerged during the interview conversations pertained to “Empowering Delegation” and “Establishing a Culture of Connection and Purpose.”

Theme: Empowering Delegation. Leaders referenced the importance of delegation, in the context of the constant need to drive change, ever-increasing workloads, and the need to identify and develop their high-performing team members. Delegation was also seen as a way to gain buy-in and engagement for an overall change goal, e.g.:

As a leader I think that’s very important, not only to hear what they were saying but act on it. And we hired the person that they thought was appropriate and she’s doing phenomenally, so it’s good to get their buy-in. (#07).

You can order things and, when you order people to do things, I think you’re gonna get
exactl
ly what you order. But, if you can persuade them, bring their heart into it and understand, then you’ve got a much bigger commitment from them (#19).

Theme: Establishing a Culture of Connection and Purpose: Leaders discussed the need to create a positive team culture where everyone understood their role and its connection to a greater purpose. To create a positive team culture, leaders spoke of recognizing and rewarding effective performance, being available for their subordinates, and being a positive role models for others.

So I have a vice president here that-- she’s the vice president of quality, which you wouldn’t think would be someone who’s terribly engaged. To me that sounds like you’re looking at data. She’s very, very engaged in her managers, her abstracters. She reaches out to people weekly, so that rounding of, “I’m walking through your department just to say hey and, you know, gosh, how are things today,” or “You guys look really busy.” It could be a five-minute conversation but it means the world that they’re available. Availability is a very big thing, especially for higher-level leaders. I think sometimes there’s a disconnect with that. (#07)

As shown in Table 1, the exemplary leaders in the study described incidents and examples which pertained most frequently to the following NCHL competencies: change leadership, self-development, talent development, and team leadership. Highlights of the study findings are discussed below.

Discussion

Results from the present study suggest that the exemplary healthcare leaders interviewed in this study perceive that change leadership, self-development, talent development, and team leadership are the most critical competencies for effective performance of their healthcare leadership roles. In particular, the change leadership competency appeared to serve as a “meta-competency” encompassing the other competencies as tools or strategies in service to the constant change leadership required in today’s healthcare leader environment.

The fact that the participants in the study were perceived and identified by their C-level managers as exemplary leaders is an important consideration in interpreting the results from the study. By definition, these leaders are successful and effective in navigating the requirements of their healthcare leader roles. As such, their insights into the competencies most needed for fulfilling healthcare leadership role requirements can be given more credence than if a more random sample was interviewed, which may have included leaders who are less successful or not exemplary in their role behaviors. Likewise, however, it may be that more “average” or less exemplary leaders may identify other competencies as being even more critical for them. It is suggested, therefore, that future studies explore the experiences of a wider range of healthcare leaders to gain a broader understanding of their lived experiences in today’s healthcare environment.

The qualitative methodology used in the present study is particularly appropriate for the given research question of exploring healthcare leaders’ accounts of their actions in a variety of
healthcare leadership situations. Interviews of exemplary healthcare leaders allow for in-depth delving and follow-up questions pertaining to the underlying meaning of competencies and examples pertaining to those competencies. This type of depth of questioning and meaning-making is not possible with quantitative survey analysis. On the other hand, quantitative studies are suggested to provide insights relating to healthcare leaders’ ratings of the competencies most needed for their work, and to also provide greater generalizability of study findings.

It is noteworthy that findings from the current study suggest that “people”-related competencies, and in particular competencies related to talent development and self-development, were overwhelmingly the most-referred-to competencies by the exemplary leaders in this study. This finding, in conjunction with the plethora of studies alluding to the changing nature of the healthcare environment and the increasing responsibilities of the healthcare leader role, suggests that a desire and aptitude for continuous learning may serve as a critical foundational competency for current and future healthcare leaders. These findings are also aligned with recent research suggesting the emotional intelligence competencies are most correlated with healthcare leader’s performance (Weiszbrod, 2015). Taken together, results suggest that future research should investigate healthcare leader talent development needs and opportunities.

Areas for future research may also include needs assessment studies of leaders at all position and performance levels in order to identify which competencies represent a gap between actual and ideal readiness for handling the challenges in today’s healthcare environment. Needs assessment studies could investigate both 360 performance ratings and self-report qualitative interviews with leaders and in relation to objective measures important for healthcare organizational performance such as mortality rates, readmission rates, HCAHPS survey scores, and HQA process measures. Findings from future studies, in conjunction with this study, may suggest areas of emphasis in educational and development curriculum design and updates.

Engaged, passionate, visionary, caring, understanding of subordinates’ individual needs – all of these descriptors characterize the healthcare leaders in this study as well as the effective leaders they described in healthcare settings. It would therefore be fruitful for future research to use the lens of leadership theories – and in particular, authentic leadership and transformational leadership theory, in light of the participants’ emphasis on change leadership and self-development – to analyze the underlying influence processes most used by effective healthcare leaders in today’s healthcare industry environment.

Conclusion

This interview study provides insights regarding the competencies perceived by a sample of current exemplary healthcare leaders as most critical for the effective performance of their leadership roles. Future research using both qualitative and quantitative methodologies to assist in ascertaining specific skills embedded within the broader competency domains are recommended to meet the changing competency needs of healthcare leaders in today’s environment. In light of the current study’s findings pertaining to the importance of healthcare leadership development, the findings from this and future studies have critically important implications for talent identification, selection and assessment, development, and retention of healthcare leaders as well as the learning functions of healthcare organizations.
References


Appendix A
Interview Questions

• Describe your career and background, and how you came to be in your current position.
• How would you describe an ideal healthcare leader? Provide an example of someone who you see as epitomizing the ideal healthcare leader.
• Describe an example of a time when you observed an effective or ineffective example of healthcare leadership. What was the situation? What did the leader do that was particularly effective or ineffective? What were the outcomes of this person’s behavior?
• Describe the competencies that you see as most important for effective healthcare leadership today?
• Do you see leadership in healthcare as similar to, or different from, leadership in other industries?
Influence of Formal Academic Leadership Programs on Undergraduates' Leadership Mindset: An Assessment of a [SMC-L] Program

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Abstract

Students enrolled in a [SMC-L] program at [university] [N = 336] were surveyed to examine their leadership mindsets and whether their participation in a formal academic leadership program simultaneously influenced their hierarchical and system thinking preferences. No significant differences were found between students involved in the [SMC-L] program only and those enrolled in a formal academic leadership program. Significant differences did exist for gender and classification of students; women scored higher in systemic thinking and upperclassmen not enrolled in a formal academic leadership program scored lower in hierarchical thinking than underclassmen not enrolled in a formal academic leadership program. Students within the formal academic leadership programs have lower hierarchical scores and higher systemic scores than those who are not in a formal academic leadership program.

Introduction

Preparing college students for leadership roles after graduation is a function of all collegiate leadership programs, regardless if the program is focused on leadership development, training, or formal education (Brungardt, 1997). A campus living learning Community (LLC) creates an opportunity for shared residential and academic experiences. With a focus on active rather than passive learning, LLCs create a sense of community and support amongst the participants (Cross, 1998). As Ineklas et al. (2006) reported, the goal of the LLC is to, “create a smaller community, within an institution to help foster students’ learning and development” (p. 116-117).

One of the most unique LLCs is the Reserve Officers’ Training [SMC-L] (ROTC or [SMC-L]) program. [SMC-L] programs, grounded in the practices of military academies (Support for senior military colleges, 2016), require members to attend similar classes and participate in training exercises to learn military protocol and leadership development. A specific population of ROTC programs include the six Senior Military Colleges (SMCs). The six SMCs each establish a [SMC-L] outside the ROTC program that provides a disciplined lifestyle aligned with the US military culture focused on leadership and character development. Although engaged in military officer preparation, the [SMC-L] programs also enroll students not considering military careers.

Established when [university] opened, the [SMC-L] is the oldest university-sponsored student organization and a unique leadership-focused LLC. Rather than a one-year program exclusively for first-year college students, like many leadership-themed LLCs, the [SMC-L] is a four-year comprehensive LLC. Any [university] student, regardless of major, student classification, or desire to serve in the armed forces after graduation, is welcome to apply. The purpose of the [SMC-L] is to develop, “leaders of character who [are] prepared for the global leadership
challenges of the future” ([SMC-L], 2014), and as such, leadership education and developmental opportunities are interwoven into all aspects of the cadets’ experience.

Like most [SMC-L] programs, the [SMC-L] at [university] is built on a four class system ([SMC-L], 2014). Freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors all have specific roles and duties within the [SMC-L]. All freshmen cadets begin with ROTC courses and training with active military personnel; and enroll in a one-hour course their spring term to prepare to be direct leaders the following year, when they train the next class of freshmen. Sophomores enroll in a one-hour course in their spring term to prepare to be indirect leaders of the [SMC-L]. At the end of their second year, cadets must select between a military or non-military career.

For the more than 60 percent of students in the [SMC-L] who choose a non-military career (Leadership Excellence Program, 2014), they may remain in the [SMC-L] by enrolling in the academic Certificate in Leadership Studies and Development program. Juniors prepare sophomores for their direct leadership responsibilities of the freshmen. Those seeking a military commission enroll in the ROTC branch-specific courses to prepare for military officer duties, while those seeking the certificate complete two personal leadership education workshops, one each fall and spring term. Seniors create and implement policy, and determine the vision of the [SMC-L]. Seniors seeking a military contract continue their ROTC courses. Those in the certificate program complete two seminars: executive leadership and ethical decision making. Combined with full participation in the [SMC-L] and the four leadership workshops, certificate cadets must take eight credit hours of leadership courses from other academic departments on campus. The cadets must earn a B (3.0 GPA) to receive credit for the course within the certificate program (Leadership Excellence Program, 2014). Candidates must also be active in leadership roles within the [SMC-L] and apply their knowledge gained in the classroom and [SMC-L] experience to other activities such as internships, study abroad programs, other student organizations, and other leadership experiences. Once all requirements are met, academic, experiential, and application, the candidates receive an official notation on their university transcript indicating receipt of the Certificate in Leadership Studies and Development.

Research on multi-year, leadership-focused LLCs as well as undergraduate students’ leadership mindset development is limited. The issue is further complicated by the lack of a common leadership definition (Northouse, 2016). Consequently, the potential exists for students to engage in a variety of leadership programs and/or college courses, where the leadership definition or perspectives are in conflict. Thus, this study provided an opportunity to expand the body of research and to explore how participating in a formal academic leadership program while simultaneously participating in a [SMC-L] program impacted the cadets’ leadership mindset development. Moreover, this research answers the call expressed in Priority II of the Association of Leadership Educator’s National Leadership Education Research Agenda (Andenoro et al., 2013), that leadership educators have an obligation to execute, “programmatic monitoring and evaluation . . . to determine if their practice is achieving the desired outcomes” (p. 10).

**Literature Review and Conceptual Framework**

To meet the demand for recent college graduates who demonstrate a proficiency in leadership, many colleges and universities provide formal settings for students to study leadership as an
academic discipline and continue to invest resources in a variety of high impact teaching practices (Astin & Astin, 2000; Haber, 2012; Shertzer et al., 2005). One such high impact practice is the leadership-themed LLC where universities work to create an inclusive space for students to live and learn together, in efforts to produce the next generation of society’s leaders (Cross, 1998; Rocconi, 2011). Even though learning communities, specifically residential communities, vary in structure, size, and scope, all are designed to improve the undergraduate educational experience through collaborative learning (Cross, 1998). The opportunities for and focus on collaboration intensifies by housing students who enroll in the same classes and participate in the same co-curricular program in close proximity, i.e. the same residence hall.

As the residential experience becomes an extension of a common classroom and co-curricular experience, students are able to continue class discussions and actively apply the concepts learned within the security and support of their residential community. According to Cross (1998), “knowledge requires language, and people construct knowledge out of the language available to them in their community” (p.5), making one’s living community an important factor in knowledge acquisition. Likewise, Inkelas and Weisman (2003) found that changing one’s personal perspective requires more than exposure to multiple perspectives during an academic course. Consequently, participating in a common co-curricular experience provides an additional environment in which to engage and critically examine perspectives different from one’s own (Inkelas et al., 2006). However, the self-selection of students who apply to and then choose to participate in a leadership-oriented LLC, especially one as structured as the [SMC-L], makes it challenging to know if the participant’s observed gains are due to the academic leadership course alone, the LLC experience alone, a combination of the two, or are a result of the type of students who apply to and choose to participate in the LLC (Inkelas & Weisman, 2003).

As students are challenged consistently to apply the leadership lessons learned in the classroom within their residential community, opportunities increase to expand the students’ leadership capacity and competency. Thus, it is important to understand how leadership is portrayed within a student’s residential community when pursuing opportunities to improve students’ leadership development (Shertzer et al., 2005). Even though it is important to understand the influence a student’s living situation has on their conceptualization of leadership, it is equally important to understand how students individually define leadership as well as the source/experience from which this definition comes (Haber, 2012; Ho & Odom, 2015).

Wielkiewicz (2000) found that a one’s attitudes about leadership could be scored on two independent scales: hierarchical and systemic-thinking. Hierarchical-thinking revolves around the attitude that leadership involves rigid, linear positional ranking within an organization, where control, power, decision-making, and authority are all focused at the top of the organization. Whereas, systemic-thinking is centered around the attitude that leadership is a relational process happening throughout the organization, requires long-term thinking, supports collaborative decision-making, and shared authority (Wielkiewicz, 2000; Wielkiewicz, Prom, & Loos, 2005).

Furthermore, Ho and Odom (2015) found that participating in academic leadership courses influences a student’s leadership mindset. As the number of academic leadership courses increases, the more likely a student is to shift their leadership mindset from a hierarchical view to a relational view. This supports work done by Cress, Astin, Zimmerman-Oster, and Burkhardt
(2001), as they found students who participate in leadership programs are more relational and cooperative, more systemic, than those who did not participate in a leadership program.

Previous research also shows that a student’s gender and age/year in college influences their leadership mindset. Male students tend to maintain a more hierarchical-thinking approach to leadership while women tend to maintain a more systemic-thinking approach (Haber, 2012; Ho & Odom, 2015; Wielkwicz, Fischer, Overland, & Sinner, 2012). Moreover, college seniors (more than 90 credit hours completed) tend to be both higher in systemic-thinking and lower in hierarchical-thinking than freshmen (Ho & Odom, 2015), which indicates changes in how students’ view leadership and their own leadership identity. When studying the leadership identity development process, Komives, Owen, Longerbeam, Mainella, and Osteen (2005) used a grounded theory approach to document the path one follows. The result was a model incorporating six stages: awareness, exploration/engagement, leadership identified, leadership differentiated, generativity, and integration/synthesis (see Figure 1). Beginning with awareness one typically views leadership as external and separate from themselves. During the exploration/engagement stage, one begins to intentionally involve themselves in new group experiences and explore new responsibilities within these groups. At stage three, leadership identified, one views leadership as a position; an activity leaders “do.” Those in the leadership differentiated stage view leadership as a relational process, where leadership can come from any part of the organization. The generativity stage includes those who accept the responsibility to develop others within the organization as a means towards sustaining the organization. By the sixth and final stage, integration/synthesis, leadership is seen as a life-long development process and the leader is striving for congruence. Thus, the LID model enables researches to categorize a student’s leadership identity development at a given point in time.

Even though movement through these stages is linear and sequential, it is also cyclical (Komives et al., 2009). Full development does not happen by pausing in each stage before advancing to the next. Rather, each individual’s context and life experiences influence the depth of development within the stage. Ideally, the individual is experienced with all aspects of the stage before transitioning to the next. Komives et al. (2006) identified five organizational categories which influence this developmental process: developmental influences, developing self, group influences, changing view of self with others, and broadening view of leadership. The LLC’s collaborative learning focus provides multiple opportunities for all five influences to take hold.

The LID model’s six stages are also beneficial when studying changes in a student’s leadership conceptualization, namely at the times of transition between stages (Komives et al., 2006). Stage transitions are important as they show a broadening view of leadership and a changing view of self in relation to others. Komives et al. (2009) found the most prominent shift occurs at the transition between stages 3 and 4. This transition is significant because leadership in stages 1 through 3 is more focused on the actions of the positioned leader; whereas stages 4 through 6 categorize leadership as a process engaged in by any member of the organization, regardless of formal title or position (Komives et al., 2006). Consequently, researchers can utilize the LID model to understand how individuals make meaning of their leadership experiences within the context of their current situations (Komives et al., 2009).
The analysis of college students’ attitudes and/or beliefs about leadership, their leadership mindsets, is one research application of the LID model. The Leadership Attitudes and Beliefs Scale (LABS-III) classifies leadership on Wielkiewicz’s two independent scales: hierarchical-thinking and systemic-thinking. The LABS-III has been used in multiple studies to examine how students without formal leadership positions conceptualize leadership (Ho & Odom, 2015; Wielkiewicz, 2000; Wielkiewicz, 2002; Wielkiewicz, Fisher, Overland, & Sinner, 2012).

Typically, individuals who express hierarchical-thinking perceive leadership solely as the actions of the positional leader; whereas, those who express systemic-thinking perceive leadership as more of a non-positional, collaborative process (Wielkiewicz, 2000). Therefore, the transition from stage 3 to stage 4 of the LID model can be classified as the shift between hierarchical and systemic-thinking perceptions of leadership (Komives et al., 2005). Understanding students’ perceptions of leadership provides insights for leadership curriculum design, which is desirable as academic leadership courses significantly impact students’ growth as leaders (Haber-Curran & Tillapaugh, 2013; Lindsay, Foster, Jackson, & Hassan, 2009; Thompson, 2013).

Purpose and Objectives

This descriptive, slice in time, study sought to explore the leadership mindsets of undergraduate students actively participating in the [SMC-L] and in a formal, academic leadership program at [university]. Specifically, this study focused on the following research objectives:

1. Describe students’ leadership mindsets in terms of hierarchical and systemic thinking.
2. Determine relationships between hierarchical and systemic leadership mindsets based on student characteristics of gender, academic classification, academic leadership program, and previous leadership experience.

Methodology

Population and Sample

The approach of this study was survey research as this study sought to describe the characteristics of a large group of people on the issue of leadership mindsets (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Huyn, 2012). The population was undergraduate students who were taking military sciences courses and were active members of the [SMC-L] at [university] during the spring 2013 semester. Sections of the four military sciences courses were selected to participate in the study yielding a sample of 336 students (N=336) who completed the survey. The survey was administered by researchers rather than the military sciences course instructors to account and control for social desirability bias. Participation in the survey was voluntary.

Measures and Variables

The instrument used was a paper version of the Leadership Attitudes and Beliefs Scale (LABS-III) (Wielkiewicz, 2002), with eight additional demographic questions. The LABS-III is a 28-item instrument used to examine leadership mindset along two scales: Hierarchical and Systemic Thinking. Each scale consisted of fourteen items, which were measured on a five-point summated scale: 1(Strongly Disagree), 2(Disagree), 3(Neither Disagree nor Agree), 4(Agree), and 5(Strongly Disagree). The hierarchical scale measures beliefs about leadership being more positional. The systemic scale measures beliefs about leadership being more relational (Wielkiewicz, 2000; Wielkiewicz, 2002; Wielkiewicz, Prom, & Loos, 2005). Convergent and discriminative validity have been established for both scales (Wielkiewicz, 2002).

Research has shown the usefulness of the LABS-III instrument to measure college students’ understanding and assessment of leadership (Fischer, Overland, & Adams, 2010; Ho & Odom, 2015; Thompson, 2006; Wielkiewicz, 2000; Wielkiewicz, 2002; Wielkiewicz, Prom, & Loos, 2005). The eight demographic questions were incorporated for data analysis purposes.

Data Analysis

To address objective 1, [SMC-L] cadet’s leadership mindsets were illustrated using descriptive statistics along both the hierarchical and systemic-thinking scales. Descriptive statistics reveal attitudes toward distinctive factors of groups who may be dissimilar (Agresti & Finlay, 2009). The descriptive data included frequencies, percentages, mean scores, and standard deviations. Table 1 details descriptive statistics for each of the 14 questions tied to the hierarchical thinking scale, ordered from highest to lowest question mean score for those currently enrolled in an academic leadership program. For ease in interpretation, enrollment in a leadership program was coded “Lead.” The remaining cadets were coded as “Non.” A majority of cadets responded in support, either agree or strongly agree, to seven of these questions; with 70 percent or more of the cadets supporting five of the seven questions. Only one of the 14 questions had a majority of
cadets respond less than neutral, either disagree or strongly disagree. The mean question score for eight of the 14 questions ranged from slightly above 3.0 to just under 4.0, out of a 5-point scale. Three questions had question mean scores above a 4.0 and three other questions had mean scores below 3.0. However, no questions had a mean score below a 2.0. Overall, the cadets had slightly higher than neutral opinions regarding hierarchical thinking, as the grand mean was 3.41.

The 14 questions tied to the systemic thinking scale are detailed in Table 2; and the table is ordered similarly to Table 1. Over 70 percent of participants responded in support of, either agree or strongly agree, 13 of the 14 questions on this scale. Five of these 13 questions had “strongly agree” as the majority response. The one question that did not have a majority of response in support had more than one-third of responses as “neutral.” Twelve of the 14 questions had mean scores above 4.0, one question had a mean score of just under 4.0, and one question had a mean score under 3.0. Again, no question had a mean score below 2.0. In terms of systemic-thinking, the respondents had a more positive view, as the grand mean was 4.19. Table 3 details descriptive statistics for both the hierarchical and systemic scales based on personal characteristics, such as gender, classification in school, and previous leadership experience. The range for the hierarchical-thinking scale was 31 to 67, with an overall average of 46.04, which is only slightly higher than neutral (42) and well below the threshold of 56. The range for the systemic-thinking scale was greater, 25 to 70, with an overall average of 58.63, which is only slightly above the threshold of 56.

An increasing body of research has shown that gender influences how students conceptualize leadership. Women tend to have higher systemic-thinking scores when compared to men (Fischer, Overland, & Adams, 2010; Haber, 2012; Ho & Odom, 2015; Wielkiewicz, Fischer, Overland, & Sinner, 2012). In this study, an overwhelming majority of the students in the sample were male (n=288, 85.7%), while 48 students in the sample were female (14.3%). The mean scores for men were lower than for women on both the hierarchical and systemic thinking scales, 47.57 to 48.25 (hierarchical) and 58.25 to 60.92 (systemic).

A majority of the students in this study (n=197 or 58.6%) were underclassmen, (freshman and sophomores), and 139 students (41.4%) were upperclassmen, (juniors and seniors). The mean scores for the hierarchical thinking scale remained fairly constant between the freshmen and sophomores, as well as between the juniors and seniors. However, the upperclassmen reported lower hierarchical-thinking scores than the underclassmen. As to the systemic-thinking scale, the freshmen and seniors had similar mean scores while the sophomores and juniors reported lower mean scores. The lowest mean score for the systemic-thinking scale was reported by the sophomore students, who also happened to be the largest class in the sample population.

For purposes of this study, previous leadership experience was subdivided into four categories: none, [SMC-L] only, non-[SMC-L] only, or a combination of the two. Previous leadership experience was reported for 95.8% (n=322) of the sample population. Out of these students, 185 (55.1%) reported they experienced leadership in combination between the [SMC-L] and other outside organizations. Only 42 students (12.5%) reported their leadership experiences solely coming from the campus [SMC-L] program.

To capture which cadets were involved in formal academic leadership programs, three options were included on the survey: the [SMC-L]-sponsored Certificate in Leadership Studies, the
[General Leadership] – Leadership major, or the [Context-specific leadership] major. All three academic leadership programs were combined for ease of reporting.

To address objective 2, and determine if significant differences existed between hierarchical and systemic-thinking, mean scores were examined across all cadets. The researchers used independent sample t-tests (Field, 2009) to determine if significant differences existed. Differences in hierarchical and systemic-thinking for the characteristics of gender, classification, and leadership program enrollment were detailed in Tables 4-6, respectively. Tables 7 and 8 detailed differences between hierarchical and systemic-thinking and academic classification for cadets enrolled in a formal academic leadership program and cadets not enrolled in a formal academic leadership program, respectfully.
Table 1  
*Descriptive Statistics for Hierarchical-Thinking of Leadership Program Participants (N =226) and Non-leadership Program Participants (N= 110)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses % (f)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Neither</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>nor</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>A leader should take charge of the group.</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead</td>
<td>27.0 (61)</td>
<td>60.2</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>(26)</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>4.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non</td>
<td>32.7 (36)</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leaders are responsible for the security of organization members.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lead</td>
<td>27.4 (62)</td>
<td>58.8</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>(25)</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non</td>
<td>27.3 (30)</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>(21)</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>An organization should try to remain as stable as possible.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lead</td>
<td>29.6 (67)</td>
<td>50.4</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>(32)</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>(12)</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non</td>
<td>31.8 (35)</td>
<td>52.7</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>(11)</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The main tasks of a leader are to make and then communicate decisions.</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead</td>
<td>25.2 (57)</td>
<td>52.7</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>(29)</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>(19)</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non</td>
<td>26.4 (29)</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>(12)</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>(9)</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The responsibility for taking risks lies with the leaders of the organization.</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead</td>
<td>20.4 (46)</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>(48)</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>(14)</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non</td>
<td>19.1 (21)</td>
<td>56.4</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>(16)</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>(10)</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The main task of a leader is to make important decisions for an organization.</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead</td>
<td>18.6 (42)</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>(50)</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>(36)</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non</td>
<td>23.6 (26)</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>(19)</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>(18)</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A leader must control the group or organization.</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead</td>
<td>9.3 (21)</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>(62)</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>(41)</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non</td>
<td>17.3 (19)</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>(25)</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>(23)</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A leader must maintain tight control of the organization.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead</td>
<td>7.5 (17)</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>(73)</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>(43)</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non</td>
<td>12.7 (14)</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>(27)</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>(23)</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Members should be completely loyal to the designated leaders of an organization.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead</td>
<td>11.9 (27)</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>(80)</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>(46)</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non</td>
<td>8.2 (9)</td>
<td>37.3</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>(39)</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>(17)</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>When an organization is</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead</td>
<td>11.9 (20)</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>(79)</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>(10)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
in danger of failure, new leaders are needed to fix its problems.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(27)</th>
<th>(51)</th>
<th>(59)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non</td>
<td>16.4 (18)</td>
<td>20.9 (23)</td>
<td>39.1 (43)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positional leaders deserve credit for the success of an org.</td>
<td>23.6 (26)</td>
<td>0.0 (0)</td>
<td>3.30 1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead</td>
<td>7.1 (16)</td>
<td>29.2 (66)</td>
<td>29.6 (67)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non</td>
<td>7.3 (8)</td>
<td>26.4 (29)</td>
<td>42.7 (47)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A leader should maintain complete authority.</td>
<td>28.8 (65)</td>
<td>5.3 (12)</td>
<td>3.04 1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead</td>
<td>4.9 (11)</td>
<td>25.2 (57)</td>
<td>30.1 (68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non</td>
<td>8.2 (9)</td>
<td>25.5 (28)</td>
<td>26.4 (29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is important that a single leader emerges in a group.</td>
<td>32.7 (74)</td>
<td>7.1 (16)</td>
<td>2.88 1.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead</td>
<td>4.4 (10)</td>
<td>16.8 (38)</td>
<td>29.6 (67)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non</td>
<td>4.5 (5)</td>
<td>11.8 (13)</td>
<td>30.0 (33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The most important members of an organization are its leaders.</td>
<td>37.6 (85)</td>
<td>11.5 (26)</td>
<td>2.65 1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead</td>
<td>3.1 (7)</td>
<td>7.1 (16)</td>
<td>11.9 (27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non</td>
<td>5.5 (6)</td>
<td>10.9 (12)</td>
<td>23.6 (26)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Grand Mean = 3.38 (Lead) and 3.46 (Non), Overall SD = 0.61 (Lead) and 0.56 (Non)
Table 2  
Descriptive Statistics for Systemic-Thinking of Leadership Program Participants (N =226) and Non-leadership Program Participants (N= 110)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses % (f)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An organization needs flexibility in order to adapt to a rapidly changing world</td>
<td>Lead 54.9 (124)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non 55.5 (61)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership should encourage innovation.</td>
<td>Lead 56.2 (127)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non 47.3 (52)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizations must be ready to adapt to changes that occur outside the org.</td>
<td>Lead 50.0 (113)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non 50.9 (56)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individuals need to take initiative to help their org. accomplish its goals.</td>
<td>Lead 53.5 (121)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non 54.5 (60)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective leadership seeks out resources needed to adapt to a changing world.</td>
<td>Lead 51.8 (117)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non 50.0 (55)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational action should improve life for future generations.</td>
<td>Lead 43.8 (99)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non 40.0 (44)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everyone in an organization is responsible for accomplishing org goals.</td>
<td>Lead 45.6 (103)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non 40.0 (44)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An effective org develops its human resources</td>
<td>Lead 41.6 (94)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non 35.5 (39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership activities should foster discussions about the future.</td>
<td>Lead 29.8 (67)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non 25.5 (28)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 3

**Descriptive Statistics for Summative Thinking Scales by Characteristic (N=336)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Hierarchical Thinking</th>
<th>Systemic Thinking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>47.57</td>
<td>6.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>48.40</td>
<td>6.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Classification</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshman</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>48.38</td>
<td>6.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophomore</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>48.56</td>
<td>6.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>46.88</td>
<td>5.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>46.00</td>
<td>5.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership Experience</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>46.57</td>
<td>5.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[SMC-L] only</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>47.40</td>
<td>6.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combination</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>47.92</td>
<td>6.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-[SMC-L]</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>47.53</td>
<td>5.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Grand Mean = 4.20 (Lead) and 4.16 (Non), Overall SD = 0.39 (Lead) and 0.41 (Non)*

---

### Table 4

**Independent t-tests with Thinking Scales and Gender (N =336)**

Successful organizations make continuous learning their highest priority.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Hierarchical Thinking</th>
<th>Systemic Thinking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>52.2 (118)</td>
<td>19.1 (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>50.9 (56)</td>
<td>19.1 (21)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Leadership processes involve the participation of all organization members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Hierarchical Thinking</th>
<th>Systemic Thinking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>38.1 (86)</td>
<td>12.4 (28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>37.3</td>
<td>41.8 (46)</td>
<td>15.5 (17)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Good leadership requires that ethical issues have high priority.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Hierarchical Thinking</th>
<th>Systemic Thinking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>49.1 (54)</td>
<td>13.6 (15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>33.2</td>
<td>50.0 (113)</td>
<td>14.2 (32)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Anticipating the future is one of the most important roles of leadership processes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Hierarchical Thinking</th>
<th>Systemic Thinking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>56.4 (62)</td>
<td>12.7 (14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>58.8 (133)</td>
<td>15.0 (34)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Environmental preservation should be a core value of every org

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Hierarchical Thinking</th>
<th>Systemic Thinking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>20.0 (22)</td>
<td>41.8 (46)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>24.3 (55)</td>
<td>35.8 (81)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Grand Mean = 4.20 (Lead) and 4.16 (Non), Overall SD = 0.39 (Lead) and 0.41 (Non)*
### Table 5
Independent *t*-tests with Thinking Scales and Classification (*N* =336)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thinking Scale</th>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hierarchical</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>47.57</td>
<td>6.01</td>
<td>-0.868</td>
<td>0.386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>48.40</td>
<td>6.51</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systemic</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>58.25</td>
<td>5.48</td>
<td>-3.227</td>
<td>0.001*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>60.92</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *p<0.05

### Table 6
Independent *t*-tests with Thinking Scales and Leadership Program Enrollment (*N* =336)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thinking Scale</th>
<th>Leadership Program</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hierarchical</td>
<td>Enrolled</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>47.33</td>
<td>6.07</td>
<td>-1.553</td>
<td>0.121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not Enrolled</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>48.43</td>
<td>6.06</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systemic</td>
<td>Enrolled</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>58.85</td>
<td>5.38</td>
<td>1.034</td>
<td>0.302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not Enrolled</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>58.20</td>
<td>5.33</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 7
Independent *t*-tests with Thinking Scales and Classification for Cadets Enrolled in a Leadership Program (*N* =226)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thinking Scale</th>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hierarchical</td>
<td>Underclassmen</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>47.97</td>
<td>6.47</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>0.115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Upperclassmen</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>46.70</td>
<td>5.60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systemic</td>
<td>Underclassmen</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>58.80</td>
<td>5.92</td>
<td>-0.139</td>
<td>0.889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Upperclassmen</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>58.90</td>
<td>4.83</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 8
Independent *t*-tests with Thinking Scales and Classification for Cadets Not Enrolled in a Leadership Program (*N* =110)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thinking Scale</th>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hierarchical</td>
<td>Underclassmen</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>49.17</td>
<td>6.27</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>0.018*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Upperclassmen</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>45.92</td>
<td>4.58</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systemic</td>
<td>Underclassmen</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>58.45</td>
<td>5.47</td>
<td>0.895</td>
<td>0.373</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusions and Implications

As could be expected from participating in a degree program which promotes systemic thinking, cadets within a formal academic leadership program have lower hierarchical scores and higher systemic scores than those who are not academically affiliated with a leadership program. With the exception of the seniors, as the cadet’s classification in college increased, i.e. moved from freshman to junior, their hierarchical scores decreased, which aligns with previous research that as students spend more time in college their hierarchical thinking declines (Ho & Odom, 2015).

Interestingly, the kind of leadership experience, [SMC-L] or non-[SMC-L] did not significantly change either the hierarchical or systemic thinking scores. Thus, it could be inferred that the opportunity to practice and develop one’s leadership abilities is more important than the venue or context. Additionally, as typically [SMC-L] programs take a more traditional, top-down, hierarchical approach to leadership, it is interesting to note that the average systemic score for those with leadership experience within the [SMC-L] was higher than the average systemic score of those with leadership experience outside the [SMC-L]. However, it is not surprising that the highest average systemic thinking scores are associated with those students who have a combination of leadership experience (both [SMC-L] and non-[SMC-L]) as these students would have been exposed to a wider assortment of leadership styles and perspectives.

Contrary to previous research, women had a higher average hierarchical score than men, yet the women reported a higher average systemic score than men, which does align with previous research (Haber, 2012; Ho & Odom, 2015; Wielkiewicz, Fischer, Overland, & Sinner, 2012). Furthermore, the difference between the systemic thinking scales was statistically significant when examined against gender, which also supports previous research. See Table 4.

Even though the results are not statistically significant, the reduction in hierarchical-thinking mean scores as cadets progress through college supports research by Komives et.al. (2006). As students transition between stages in their leadership identity, they leave behind previous “old” perceptions in favor of new. Thus, the shift from higher to lower hierarchical-thinking mean scores between underclassmen and upperclassmen shows a shift between Stage 3, leader is position, and Stage 4, leader is more relational, of the LID model (Komives, et. al., 2006). The shift from Stage 3 to Stage 4 is common for college students as they transition from reliance on the leadership perceptions of adults or older peers to reliance on their own, individual understanding and perception of leadership (Komives et. al., 2009; Wiekiewicz, 2000).

The limitations of this study are that the respondents reflect students at a single university who were enrolled in the military sciences courses over one semester. Furthermore, the respondents may not be a true representative sample of the members of the [SMC-L] program in any of the categories of gender, classification, or leadership mindset. The disproportionately high number of males to females in the study also limits the findings. The researchers did not control for the influence of the respondent’s previous leadership experiences. Therefore, it is difficult to determine if the respondents’ collegiate leadership experiences or the leadership experiences they had prior to college were more influential in their leadership mindset development.
Recommendations

This study was an attempt to evaluate the leadership thinking of collegiate students in a four-year, military LLC at [university]. Hierarchical-thinking scores decreased from inception into the [SMC-L] to graduation in formal leadership education programs. However, the systemic-thinking scores were less linear. The researchers recommend the program leaders modify their curricula to provide a more deliberate approach in differentiating hierarchical and systemic-thinking. Despite the military being a traditional, top-down hierarchy, systemic-thinking is necessary to make decisions that make lasting effect on a global scale and would help the program fulfill its mission to prepare future global leaders.

It is also recommended that this study be replicated at other SMCs to draw comparisons between leadership experiences and leadership curricula in similar environments. Comparing leadership thinking at all six SMCs may provide substantial data to evaluate this unique subset of [SMC-L] programs and provide useful information for non-military, leadership-themed LLCs.

Likewise, the researchers recommend initiating a longitudinal study following one cohort/specific class of cadets through their four years within the [SMC-L]. The study should include assessments at the end of each year to record changes in leadership thinking from year to year. Following one specific sample through their four-year living-learning community may provide additional insight and a holistic evaluation of experience factors during the course of a cadets’ collegiate leadership experience in the [SMC-L].

References


Inkelas, K. K., Johnson, D., Lee, Z., Daver, Z., Longerbeam, S. D., Vogt, K., & Leonard, J. B. (2006). The role of living-learning programs in students’ perceptions of intellectual growth at three large universities. NASPA Journal, 43(1), 115-143.


Lindsay, D. R., Foster, C. A., Jackson, R. J., & Hassan, A. M. (2009). Leadership education and


Wielkiewicz, R. M., Prom, C. L., & Loos, S. (2005). Relationships of the leadership attitudes and beliefs scale with student types, study habits, life-long learning, and GPA. *College Student Journal, 39*(1), 31-44.
Exploring Students’ Experiences with a Dramaturgically Taught Leadership Class

Nicole G. Bauer, L.J. McElravy, & Carmen Zafft

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

Abstract

This paper evaluates the effect of a dramaturgically taught, undergraduate, leadership class by conducting semi-structure interviews with former students. Interviews were evaluated using general qualitative analysis to identify key themes the students used to make sense of their experiences. Evidence suggests dramaturgical teaching directly results in the personal development of students and invites further research to confirm causality and quantify the instructional method’s impact.

Introduction

As leadership educators, many of us aspire to help develop the leadership capacity of others, and in many cases we must rely on anecdotal evidence to determine our effectiveness. In this general qualitative study, we explore the long-term impact of an instructional method known a dramaturgical teaching (Barbuto, 2006). We conducted semi-structured interviews with five former students of an undergraduate leadership class taught using a dramaturgical teaching method at a public, Midwestern, land-grant university. We then used these students’ interviews to identify how they made sense of their experiences and how they used their experiences to inform their post-graduate careers.

Literature Review

A decade ago, Barbuto (2006) published an article in the Journal of Leadership Education promoting an educational model based on a class he developed to teach students to successfully navigating complex organizations using power dynamics. The article presented an interactive and experiential teaching method—known as dramaturgical teaching—which was described as “the most student-centered course design structure available in the leadership/management education field […] due to its potential for connecting theory and practice for the creation of knowledge […] and the development of critical thinking” (Barbuto, 2006). Barbuto’s (2006) pedagogical approach to leadership education required creating a learning environment in which students learn about specific leadership styles while experiencing them being personified by the professor. Specifically, Barbuto (2006) proposed a course structure where the semester was separated into three main sections: political (also referred to as authoritarian) leadership where students learn about power and influence; servant leadership where students learn to place the needs of others before their own individual needs; and transformational leadership where students work in teams to motivate each other towards a shared vision. Additional course details are listed in Table 1. Barbuto’s (2006) article included a sampling of student end-of-term course evaluations. When asked if the dramaturgical teaching method hindered students’ learning, 128 out of 168, or 76%, said that it did not (Barbuto, 2006). When solicited for advice and/or suggestions on how to change the way the course content was taught, 112 out of 168 students, or 66%, urged the instructor to not make any changes (Barbuto, 2006). This data led Barbuto
(2006) to conclude that “this approach to teaching leadership can have a powerful impact on the student experience.”

Experiential teaching strategies are an integral part of learning because of their ability to actively engage students (Finan, 2004; Guenthner & Moore, 2005; Kayes, 2002; Kolb, 2007). As an extension of the principles of experiential teaching (Kayes, 2002; Leberman & Martin, 2005), leadership educators are incorporating dramaturgical teaching into their curriculum (Boje & Rhodes, 2005; Leberman & Martin, 2005). Ferris et al. (2002) advocates “role-playing with feedback” as a method to develop political skill, which is “seen as a unique form of social skill that managers—particularly top managers—must have to influence and control others to achieve organizational objectives.” According to Ferris et al. (2002), politically skilled managers are “astute in understanding social situations, genuine and sincere in their interpersonal interactions, [influential leaders], and [adept at building] social capital.”

A study of how students make sense of their experience after completing their undergraduate experience is important for a few reasons. First, leadership educators have an obligation to provide courses that prepare students to be productive members of society and the workforce (Sawcik & Allen, 2013). Secondly, any instructor implementing a dramaturgical teaching strategy in leadership education needs to understand 1) how this teaching method impacts instructional objectives, and 2) the educational benefits that students perceive from completing the course (Goertzen, 2009).

Although the impact of different experiential learning techniques in leadership coursework has been investigated (Guenthner & Moore, 2005), for example service learning (Sessa, Matos, & Hopkins, 2009), education abroad (Rosch & Haber-Curran), and outdoor management training (Kass & Grandzol, 2011), the evidence of the impact of dramaturgical teaching is limited to one study (Barbuto, 2006). As such, we wanted to explore two key questions to better understand the impact of dramaturgical teaching, namely, how do students go on to use the information learned from their experience in their post-undergraduate careers, and does the method better prepare students to successfully engage in complex organizations.
Table 1
Course details for ALEC302: Dynamics of Leadership in Organizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership Style Used in Class</th>
<th>Authoritarian (Political) Leadership</th>
<th>Servant Leadership</th>
<th>Transformational Leadership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Concepts Studied</td>
<td>Power &amp; influence</td>
<td>Placing the needs of others before one’s individual needs</td>
<td>Working in teams to motivate each other towards a shared vision</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Professor’s Role**
- Authoritative
- Highly structured
- Deliberately fosters competition among students
- Demanding
- Does not engage in frivolous interactions with students
- Caring
- Open-minded
- Unstructured
- Focused on meeting each student’s individual needs
- Refrains from guiding class
- Students are responsible for directing class instruction
- Students are responsible for collectively creating a syllabus for this section
- Decisions must be made unanimously unless a unanimous decision is made to use a specific group decision making method

**Expectations for Student Behavior**
- Address the professor and classmates by their formal titles
- Dress professionally for class
- Prepare for class extensively
- Arrive early to class; anyone arriving late will be barred entry
- Students are responsible for collectively creating a syllabus for this section
- Decisions must be made unanimously unless a unanimous decision is made to use a specific group decision making method
- Work in teams
- Performance is measured according to team contracts and peer evaluations
- High levels of stress and anxiety associated with attending class
- Lowered self-esteem and class morale
- Inter-student competition
- Negative emotions
- High levels of frustration
- Circular Conversations
- Indecision
- Negotiations
- Occasional efforts to make sacrifices for others
- Enjoys and identifies with class content
- Hesitant of working in groups

**Typical Student Reactions**
- High levels of stress and anxiety associated with attending class
- Lowered self-esteem and class morale
- Inter-student competition
- Negative emotions
- High levels of frustration
- Circular Conversations
- Indecision
- Negotiations
- Occasional efforts to make sacrifices for others
- Enjoys and identifies with class content
- Hesitant of working in groups

**Conceptual Framework**

The research questions are framed in this study as a central question and sub-question:
Central Question: How do former students of an undergraduate leadership class taught using the
dramaturgical teaching method at a public, Midwestern, land-grant university make sense of their experience?

Sub-Questions: What lessons do said participants’ use to inform their post- undergraduate study careers?

These open-ended questions require participants’ explanations about the impact the dramaturgical experience had on them. In this effort, a general inductive approach (Thomas, 2006) is used as an evaluative tool. Thus the conceptual framework for this study follows an inductive approach, whereby the primary purpose is to have participants answer the evaluative questions, and for the researchers to categorize the responses into themes, and then to integrate these themes using existing literature (Creswell, 2009).

Methods

In this approach, three guidelines are suggested, and were followed:

1. To condense extensive and varied raw text data into a brief, summary format;
2. To establish clear links between the research objectives and the summary findings derived from the raw data and to ensure that these links are both transparent (able to be demonstrated to others) and defensible (justifiable given the objectives of the research); and
3. To develop a model or theory about the underlying structure of experiences or processes that are evident in the text data (p. 236).

The general purpose of this approach is to make meaning of the participants’ commonly lived experience of a semester of dramaturgical teaching in an undergraduate leadership class. The general inductive approach, also referred to as the general qualitative approach (Kahlke, 2014) also accommodates the collection of interview data from open-ended semi-structured interviews, which is then used to extract patterns and value.

Participants

Participants for the study were recruited from past class rosters of students enrolled in an undergraduate leadership class taught using the dramaturgical teaching method at a public, Midwestern, land-grant university. Purposeful sampling was used to recruit five to ten former students who had since joined the workforce. Additional considerations included recruiting both male and female participants and selecting students who had achieved at least an “A-” for a final grade in the class. The rationale for selecting students earning an “A-“ in the course was that these students demonstrated a high level of competence with the material, and were thus more likely to successfully implement the content in the course effectively.

Recruitment letters were emailed by the former instructor to ten candidates identified as meeting the study’s inclusion criteria. Of the ten people contacted, five responded and were recruited to participate in the study. The participants’ demographic information is listed in Table 3.
Table 3: Participants’ demographic information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant’s Pseudonym</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Race and/or Ethnicity</th>
<th>Post-Undergrad Career</th>
<th>Place of Residence</th>
<th>Interview Format</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Steve Johnson</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>23-26</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>Rural Firefighter</td>
<td>Rural Midwestern Town</td>
<td>Phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeremy Truman</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>23-26</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>HR for a small business</td>
<td>Midwestern Metropolis</td>
<td>In Person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eric Jones</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>23-26</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>Banquet Supervisor for a Hotel</td>
<td>Midwestern City</td>
<td>Phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jen Miller</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>23-26</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>Program Coordinator &amp; Grad Student</td>
<td>Midwestern Town</td>
<td>In Person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna Davis</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>23-26</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>Operations of a Non-Profit &amp; Grad Student</td>
<td>Midwestern Town</td>
<td>In Person</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Collection

The primary source of data for this mini-project was the transcribed dialogue of an open-ended, semi-structured interview. During the interview, the researcher took notes and recorded the interview. The interviews, lasting from 13 to 29 minutes, were then transcribed verbatim, except for elimination of all personally identifying details from each interview. The interviews consisted of ten questions:

1. Can you describe your current job(s) and the responsibilities it/they include(s)?
2. What do you recall about the teaching style used in [the dramaturgically taught leadership class]?
3. How would you describe your readiness to learn in [the dramaturgically taught leadership class]?
4. What would you say was the purpose of [the dramaturgically taught leadership class]?
5. How did the teaching style influence your path to achieve that purpose?
6. What did you take away from the teaching style used in [the dramaturgically taught leadership class]?
7. Since the completion of your undergraduate degree, how often do you find yourself reflecting on your [dramaturgically taught leadership class] experience? Can you give me an example?
8. Did the teaching style in [the dramaturgically taught leadership class] help prepare you for joining the workforce? Why or why not?
9. Is there anything you wish you could have covered in [the dramaturgically taught leadership class] that might help you better understand your current responsibilities?
10. Is there anything else you would like to share?

Data Analysis, Reliability, and Validity
The data analysis procedure included the primary researcher coding and the transcribed interviews. The data was then broken down into soundbites that were each given a code. Next, the codes were categorized into broader themes. The themes were then titled using “in vivo” language from the participants.

To ensure the consistency of results, referred to as reliability (Creswell, 2009), intercoder agreement among three researchers was employed. The coded segment of interviews and a definition of each theme was provided to the two co-authors, and the co-authors independently assigned a theme to each coded segment. The threshold of 80% was used to determine adequate agreement (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

As suggested by Creswell (2009), three primary validity strategies were employed to the accuracy of the results. First, rich, thick descriptions were used to convey the findings. Second, member checking, whereby the themes and codes were sent to the participants for their feedback to verify the themes accurately described their experience. Finally, a clarifying of bias through self-reflection is provided by the primary researcher:

My strategy of inquiry is informed by a social constructivist worldview, whereby I assume that my study’s participants seek to make meaning of their experiences and are influenced by their social and historical context. Social constructivism also understands that the researcher introduces an additional level of meaning-making complete with its own set of biases. This allows me, as the researcher, the freedom to candidly insert myself into the discussion of data. Altogether this study strives to foster an emergent and interpretive research design.

**Results**

**Intercoder Agreement**

To determine the consistency to which multiple coders would assign the same theme to coded text, two co-authors independently matched coded quotes to themes. With the first coder, who has experience teaching this class, intercoder agreement was 94%. With the second coder, who is a leadership faculty member in a different department, an 88% intercoder agreement was achieved, demonstrating adequate intercoder agreement.

**Member Checking**

Analysis of the collected data yielded five major themes. A rough draft of the themes and codes were sent to the participants for member checking. Three of the five participants responded to the request, and all three agreed with the direction of the analysis. One participant had the following to say when member checking:

I think this is a good and accurate summary of recurring themes taken away from [the class]. As I think, all 5 are spot on. I especially agree with the themes of “Relationships” and “Personal Development.” […] This helps provide more detail out of what was gained by us students.

**Codes and Themes**
A summary of the five themes and eighteen codes are provided in Table 4.

“Oh, I Learned This!”

This first theme captures the participants’ internalization of course content. When participants were asked to reflect on how often they think about their experiences in the class, each noted that they frequently considered what they learned. Jeremy said, “I try to relate it probably weekly. I mean, it’s a lot more now that I have just started a new job, so when you start at a new job it’s probably on your mind more, just because you’re figuring out how to work with people.” Two other participants affirmed that they reflected on the course material on at least a weekly basis while the others described the frequency as “a lot” or “all the time.” Two participants described such occasions as occurring “subconsciously,” “on a daily basis without even realizing it.” These statements suggest that the participants have critically thought about the course content and how it applies to their everyday life. Anna shared one example of how she continues to draw from her experience in the class:

Especially the [concept of] sharing power. […] I like power, […] and knowing that in sharing power I’m gaining power, […] helps me understand how I’m helping my employee, and helping our organization, and helping myself when I share those things, and when I give her knowledge and build trust with her in that way. [These] are some of the things we talked about in class.

Anna’s example is similar to that of the other participants, in that they each express a nuanced understanding of the course materials.

“Dealing with It”

Four of the five interviews featured the participants claiming the class taught them “how to deal” with different leadership styles. Further synthesis of the participants’ thoughts revealed that when participants used the phrase “how to deal”, they were in fact trying to convey processing their emotional responses, managing their expectations, and/or compartmentalizing their emotions when assessing a situation. Self-awareness describes this higher order of thinking. Because the dramaturgical teaching method allowed the students to be fully engaged in experiencing the style of leadership being studied for a prolonged period of time, Jen said, “You know exactly how you react under that type of leadership, how frustrated you get, or how much you like it.” Anna offered the following insight, “Quizzes don’t really hit home quite like experiencing it does, and they can’t throw you in the workplace, so doing it in the classroom was really helpful.” Steve noted that he used his increased self-awareness to inform the ways in which he responded to different leader styles, work environments, and career choices.
“Handling Ourselves”

While the “Dealing with It” theme had more to do with internal, emotional responses, “Handling Ourselves” pertains more to external, behavioral responses. Jen explained, “That class really helped me know how to do those things in certain situation.” Eric provided the following elaboration:

I feel like the class gave me a lot of tools of how to deal with those different types of leaders and their personalities, and the little things that you can learn about what makes them tick. I guess, so if you have [an authoritarian] leader you kind of learn what things go through their head, so you try to understand Well, okay, they think it’s okay to act this way, so I need to [consider] that in my own [behaviors].

Essentially, “Handling Ourselves” is all about self-monitoring, which includes learning to adapt to different situations, modifying one’s behaviors, and establishing an awareness of how one is perceived by others.

“Relationships”

Whether participants commented on interactions with the instructor, frustrations over collaborating with peers, or sharing a sense of comradery with fellow classmates, relationships
was the most prominent of all the themes. Perhaps, this is partially attributable to the nature of leadership studies in which much emphasis is placed on the leader/follower relationship. Anna alluded multiple times to learning how to “navigate relationships” in complex and ever changing environments. Meanwhile, Steve provided insights into the role that relationships played in constructing meaning from his experiences. Steve explained how he thought the overall purpose of the class was “to learn how to cooperate and build some kind of a relationship with any kind of leadership style.” His experienced in the class helped him empathize with the students that he now teaches fire safety. “When I am in a leader position,” Steve explained, “I remember the class and try [to have some] empathy for my students […] because […] I know I do not want to be authoritarian. I don’t want to be one-hundred percent servant leader, but it’s a matter of combing [them].” Steve admitted that he later went on to conduct a mini-research project of his own based on the communication exchanges between students and the class instructor as documented in the students’ journals. According to Steve, interpersonal communication played a key role in building trust and meaningful relationships.

“Ready to Work”

This theme’s title reflects the participants’ perceived increase in self-efficacy and gained confidence about joining the workforce upon completing their undergraduate studies. When asked whether or not the class helped him prepare for joining the workforce, Steve said: I just reflect back on it when I’m in a leadership role. I make a note that there are certain times to be an authoritarian leader and a certain time to be a servant leader depending on what result you want from your [peers …], and now I’m better able to understand the reactions I’m going to get from my coworkers or my students. I think I’m just better able to get a read on what they are truly feeling or what their opinion is of me in my role, […] so, yea, it did help prepare me.

However, “Ready to Work” also relates to one’s sense of self-actualization. Eric explained how he thought the servant leadership section, in particular, provided increase moral consciousness. “I thought [servant leadership] was really good for furthering the development of ourselves,” said Eric. “Not really like a school thing; not like a technical skill; but more like personal development. It really, really helped me.” Jeremy added that, “the class taught me how to be accountable, so [for example,] dressing up [during the authoritarian leadership section ….] You had to look nice, because that made you ready to learn.” All of the participants echoed the sentiment that the class “was a huge learning tool. It really throws you in rather than waiting to get that experience on the job”.

Discussion

Based on the five themes that emerged from the participants’ interviews, the essence of these former undergraduate students’ experience in a dramaturgically taught leadership class can be summarized as personal development. However because only students who received an “A-” were invited to participate in the study, generalizing these findings to other students is not recommended. Nevertheless, according to research by Manners and Durkin (2000), several factors were identified as being linked with cognitive development in adults. Their work presented a conceptual framework in which transitions to higher cognitive development stages could be facilitated by responses to life experiences that are “structurally Disequilibrating,
personally salient, emotionally engaging, and interpersonal” (Manners and Durkin, 2000). Since cognitive development constitutes a large part of personal development, we can, by extension, use these criteria—each of which was independently confirmed by this study’s participants—as evidence that this dramaturgically taught leadership class does in fact promote the students’ personal development. This conclusion yields meaningful implications for dramaturgy as a viable teaching method in leadership education.

Recommendations

The results of this study—should they prove to be reliable and valid upon further investigation—generate some exciting opportunities for further research. For example, evidence strongly suggests that personal development is a byproduct of the dramaturgically taught leadership class, it would be interesting to chart changes in students’ cognitive development over the course of the semester. This may yield further insights into how personal development can be intentionally fostered, since according to Kegan (1994), “[Modern life] demands something more than mere behavior, the acquisition of specific skills, or the mastery of particular knowledge. [It makes] demands on our minds, on how we know, on the the complexity of our consciousness.” Additionally, it would be interesting to explore how the themes that emerged from this study—themselves indicators of experiential learning—overlap, compliment, or negate Kolb’s (2007) Learning Cycle model.

Conclusion

While the results of this qualitative study are not highly generalizable, they do suggest that dramaturgical teaching as an innovative pedagogical approach to leadership education is a potentially effective way to fostering personal development while developing the leadership capacity of students. We hope this study will inspire more leadership educators to adopt dramaturgical teaching, and spur further research to quantify its effectiveness.

References


Relation of Leadership Educators’ Perceived Learning Goals and Assessment Strategy Use

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Abstract

This research explores the assessment strategies that leadership educators give the most weight in overall grading, the learning goals they focus on most, and the associations between the two. 801 leadership studies instructors participated in a global web-based survey. Findings suggest that leadership educators value Application as a learning goal far more than Foundational Knowledge and that major papers or projects and class participation are given the most weight. Further, significant relationships exist between self-evaluation and metacognition as well as exams and quizzes and foundational knowledge.

Introduction

While numerous studies have exploring the use of various pedagogy in leadership education, few have addressed the assessment strategy use or learning goals associated with teaching and learning leadership. Fink (2013) posits that to address these goals, teachers should take a learning-centered approach to designing courses. According to Fink (2013), “the heart of this approach is to decide first what students can and should learn in relation to this subject and then figure out how such learning can be facilitated” (p. 1). While application of this approach to specific courses and disciplines such as biology (Levine et al., 2008), economics (Miners & Nantz, 2009), and philosophy (Rose & Torosyan, 2009) are present in the literature, only Jenkins (2012) addressed this approach in leadership studies. Even so, Jenkins’ study was limited to instructors who taught undergraduate, face-to-face, leadership studies courses, and only evaluated instructional strategy use. Additionally, a review of the literature indicates that, of these studies, only a sparse few have collected quantitative data to measure instructor utilization of significant learning. Instead, they are mostly collections of scholarly advice and implications for practice grounded in instructional experiences rather than research data. Furthermore, the leadership education literature is absent of any exploration or empirical data that evaluates the association of assessment strategy use and the learning goals educators place the most emphasis.

The purpose of this study is to assess the learning goals instructors teaching leadership studies courses establish for their students and identify potential statistically significant relationships between these learning goals and assessment strategy use. A quantitative research design will be used. Specifically, a global web-based questionnaire will be used to identify the learning goals instructors teaching these courses emphasize most and measure the frequency of use of a defined group of assessment strategies. To do so, the researcher will explore the following research questions: (a) What learning goals are most important to instructors teaching leadership studies courses? (b) What assessment strategies do instructors teaching leadership studies courses give the most weight in overall grading? and (c) What associations exist between the learning goals instructors teaching leadership studies courses emphasize most and the assessment strategies they give the most weight in overall grading?
Literature Review

This research is grounded in two primary frameworks offered by Fink (2013): (a) Integrative Course Design (ICD); and (b) a Taxonomy of Significant Learning. ICD is an approach to curriculum design that emphasizes a “significant learning” or learning-centered approach where faculty decide first what students can and should learn in relation to the subject and then figure out how such learning can be facilitated (Fink, 2013). Only one study came close to systematically studying and “test-driving” ICD. In Creating Significant Learning Experiences Across Disciplines (Levine, et al., 2008), each author employed Fink’s (2003) approach to ICD. This study assessed college students’ learning in six courses from different disciplines over one semester in the following areas identified by Fink (2013) as “learning goals”: (a) foundational learning; (b) learning how to learn; (c) application; (d) integration; (e) human dimension; and (e) learning how to learn. Similarly, Nicoll-Senft (2009) employed a pre- and post-assessment model to gauge improvement in student learning in a single Special Education course. While significant improvement in student learning was reported in both studies, they addressed learning goals in only six and one courses respectively. This study aims to address these gaps in the literature by collecting empirical data about the learning goals leadership educators establish for their students in many courses across the discipline through a global survey.

Creating Significant Learning Experiences

Significant learning experiences describe a process or taxonomy that includes students engaged in their learning in a high energy classroom. This taxonomy differs from Benjamin Bloom’s (1956) Taxonomy of Learning that classifies levels of intellectual behavior important in learning—knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation—in that it is more learner-centered than teaching-centered and it is more of an interconnected, interactive cycle than a hierarchical process or pyramid. Accordingly, Fink (2013) asserts that creating a complete set of learning activities capable of fostering significant learning requires a comprehensive view of teaching/learning activities. Correspondingly, he advocates following two general principles when selecting learning activities: (a) they should include information and ideas, experience, and reflective dialogue; and (b) they should rely on direct rather than indirect learning activities. With respect to learning goals, Fink posits that learning activities should reflect the instructor’s judgment of how effectively they address these goals. For example, when aligned with Fink’s six-piece taxonomy, students can learn or review course content (Foundational Knowledge), apply knowledge (Application), explore the personal and social meaning of the subject (Human Dimension), combine one kind of knowledge with others (Integration), and so on—all at the same time (Fink, 2013).

Accordingly, Fink (2003) describes “good” courses as those that: (a) challenge students to significant kinds of learning; (b) use active forms of learning; (c) have teachers who care—about the subject, their students, and about teaching and learning [not just research]; (d) have teachers who interact well with students; and (e) have a good system of feedback, assessment, and grading. This list reflects that if someone’s teaching successfully meets the criteria listed above, its impact is going to be good, no matter what else is bad about it—even if a teacher is not a great lecturer or well organized. Conversely, if someone’s teaching does not meet these criteria, that teaching is poor, not matter what else is good about it (Fink, 2003). Significant learning suggests
a *learning-centered approach* to designing courses where instructors decide first what student can and should learn in relation to the subject and then figure out how such learning can be facilitated (Fink, 2005). To do so, Fink suggests a model of Integrated Course Design (ICD) where instructors first identify important situational factors and then use that information to make decisions about learning goals, feedback and assessment, and teaching and learning activities. Table 1 illustrates this process in the leadership discipline by combining the model of ICD with an adapted model suggested by Northouse (2010) as part of the Instructor’s Resources in the fifth edition of the textbook *Leadership: Theory and Practice*.

Table 1. 
*Applying Fink’s Taxonomy of Significant Learning Across Six Learning Goals*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Goal</th>
<th>Key Questions for Each Learning Goal (Fink, 2003)</th>
<th>Suggested Answers in the Leadership Discipline (Northouse, 2010)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foundational Knowledge</td>
<td>What key information (facts, terms, formulae, concepts, principles, relationships, etc.) is/are important for students to understand and remember? What key ideas or perspectives are important in this course?</td>
<td>Knowing the history and development of the leadership theories presented in the textbook, understanding the components of each leadership model or approach, and identifying the strengths and weaknesses of each model.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application</td>
<td>What kinds of thinking (critical, creative, practical) are important for students to learn? What skills are required? Should students be expected to learn how to manage complex projects?</td>
<td>Critical and creative thinking about the case studies included in the textbook, identifying practical uses of leadership theory in other contexts, and recognition of one’s own skills relative to the leadership approach being studied.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration</td>
<td>What connections should students recognize and make among ideas within this course? Among information, ideas, and perspectives from this course and those in other courses or areas? Between material in this course and the students’ personal, social, and/or work life?</td>
<td>The ability to connect leadership concepts and behaviors to other ideas, people and realms of life. For example, how are leaders different from other people? In what ways, if any, are all leaders the same? How does the context of leadership (such as medicine, music or sports) affect the expectations and behaviors of leaders?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Dimension</td>
<td>What should students learn about themselves? What should they learn about understanding others and/or interacting with others?</td>
<td>Learning about oneself and others. How does knowing about leadership theory help one to function and relate to others more effectively? How useful are the various leadership models and approaches for developing leadership skills in others?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring</td>
<td>What changes/values should students adopt? Should</td>
<td>Developing new interests in leadership or caring about leadership to a greater extent than before. Students who care become</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Learning interests be affected? Feelings? Commitments?

How to learn about how to be good students in a course like this? How to learn about this specific subject? How to become a self-directed learner (developing a learning agenda and a plan for meeting it)?

Engaged in leadership issues outside of the classroom and continue to develop their leadership skills.

Developing intellectual curiosity, becoming more aware of one’s own learning process and why others, including leadership theorists, pursue their unique lines of inquiry. Students continue to read and think about leadership after the conclusion of the course.


**Assessment as Learning.** As educators, our chief questions are: (a) What should our full set of learning goals be? (b) What kinds of feedback and assessment should we provide? and (c) How will students (and the teacher) know if these goals are being accomplished? (Fink, 2005, 2013). At the level of individual courses, assessment techniques serve similar purposes, i.e., feedback, usually ungraded, is provided frequently so students can enhance the quality of their learning and teachers can assess the effectiveness of different teaching and learning techniques and strategies (Angelo & Cross, 1993). In any event, instructors should make assessment demands explicit so that students understand that only full understanding will be acceptable as a learning outcome (Gibbs, personal correspondence, 1999, as cited in Fink, 2013).

In line with the learning-centered approach emphasized in the Model of ICD, Fink (2005) recommends a set of feedback and assessment procedures introduced by Wiggins (1998), collectively known as “educative assessment.” This approach suggests that assessment process not only reflect what students can currently do, but that assessment also educates and thereby enhances what students can do (Wiggins, 1998). At the heart of this procedure is “Forward-Looking Assessment” which incorporates exercises, questions, and/or problems that create a real-life context for a given issue, problem, or decision. To construct this kind of question or problem, the instructor has to “look forward,” beyond the time when the course is over, and ask: “In what kind of situation do I expect students to need, or be able to use, this knowledge?” Fink (2005) posits that, “answering this question makes it easier to create a question or problem that replicates a real-life context. The problem should be relatively open-ended, not totally pre-structured. If necessary, certain assumptions or constraints can be given” (p. 4). For example, having students engage in an experiential exercise becomes much more potent when it is linked with reflective dialogue and authentic assessment becomes even more meaningful when it is linked to opportunities for students to engage in self-assessment (Fink, 2013).

**Comparing Learning Goals and Assessment Strategy Use**

Deeply rooted in Fink’s ICD framework is the process of deciding first what students should learn and aligning teaching, learning, and assessment strategies intentionally and appropriately.
However, no previous studies have explored empirically the relationship between perceived learning goals and assessment strategy use. Relatedly, a similar relationship was explored in the context of students’ learning goals and strategies. Karabenick and Collins-Eaglin (1997) surveyed 1,037 students in 54 college classes and collected data related to their perceived importance of mastery and performance goals, and of competitive, individualistic, and cooperative incentive structures. The findings in this study suggest that goals and incentives affect strategy use, although the relationships could have resulted from the instructors’ relative emphasis on goals and incentives and their facilitation of the students’ use of learning strategies. Again though, this research was limited to the context and perspective of college students versus the experiences of educators. Nonetheless, the statistical method employed in the aforementioned study was helpful in guiding the research here.

Similarly, Jenkins (2012) compared Fink’s operationalized learning goals and instructional strategy use in undergraduate, face-to-face leadership studies courses. The findings from Jenkins’ study suggest that instructors who emphasize application-based learning goals also engaged in instructional strategies known to accentuate an inclusive atmosphere focused around discussion-based pedagogies, that instructors who emphasized learning goals focused on integration also utilized discussion-based instructional strategies more often than their peers, and that instructors who emphasized foundational knowledge as a learning goal tended to use pedagogies that focused on conceptual understanding and frequently utilized exams and quizzes. According to Jenkins (2012, p. 139), “instructors that use more skill building pedagogies are more likely to focus on the application of leadership in their courses, or know how to apply leadership models to real-life situations” and “foundational knowledge might be enhanced by using traditional assessment strategies such as testing or quizzesing students on course content.” Jenkins (2012) adds that while the results of his study do not prove a causal relationship, the findings could be utilized as a resource for leadership educators seeking pedagogies to align with program goals and student outcomes, and may prove helpful in program design.

Method

The 801 participants were instructors who reported having taught an academic credit-bearing leadership studies course within the previous two years and completed the survey in its entirety. This is the largest reported study of this population to date. An initial question determined the eligibility of participants and a second follow-up question asked participants to select a delivery method option for the type of leadership course they taught most frequently: (a) Undergraduate-level, in-class/faceto-face; (b) Graduate-level, in class/faceto-face; (c) Undergraduate-level, online (100% web-based); (d) Graduate-level, online; (e) Undergraduate-level, blended/hybrid (at least 50% online with no less than two in-class/faceto-face class meetings); and (f) Graduate-level, blended/hybrid. Participants were then asked to identify one specific academic credit-bearing course that met the delivery method option from the previous question, to type the name of that course in a textbox, and to use that course as a reference point when completing the survey. The most popular course topics were special topics (11.3%), organizational/group/team leadership (7.3%), introductory leadership (7.3%), general leadership (4.5%), and discipline- or profession-specific leadership (4.5%). Additionally, participants reported that the college their academic course was delivered from was most often Business or Management (23.9%), Education (18.9%), or Academic Affairs/College-wide/Gen-ed, or no affiliated college (8.6%)
and that the specific academic department was most often Leadership, Organizational Leadership, or Leadership Studies (25.9%), Business (9.8%), and Management (9.0%). The average class size was most often “15-29 students” (58.5%), “1-14 students” (23.5%), or “30-49 students” (23.5%). Finally, the institution type was most often a 4-year public (47.6%) or private (46.8%) and located in the U.S. (85.0%), Canada (4.6%), or the U.K. (2.7%).

The analyzed data were collected from a web-based questionnaire through a global study that targeted thousands of leadership studies instructors through three primary sources from March 31, 2013, through May 3, 2013. The first source was the organizational memberships or databases of the following professional associations/organizations or their respective member interest groups: (a) the ILA; (b) the Association of Leadership Educators (ALE); (c) NASPA (Student Affairs Professionals in Higher Education) Student Leadership Programs Knowledge Community (SLPKC); and (d) the National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs (NCLP). The second source was the attendee list of the 2012 Leadership Educators Institute (LEI), an innovative bi-annual conference-like forum geared specifically towards new to mid-level student affairs professionals and leadership educators who coordinate, shape, and evaluate leadership courses and programs, create co-curricular leadership development opportunities and experiment with new technologies for doing so. The third source was a random sample of instructors drawn from the ILA Directory of Leadership Programs, a searchable directory of leadership programs available to all ILA members. While e-mail addresses were used to invite potential participants to take the survey, this research was anonymous.

Validity

While the first and second sources were more so “shotgun approaches,” they were also more likely to have ideal participants as members or attendees. While the ILA member database, ILA Directory of Leadership Programs, and LEI Attendee list provided access to members or attendees respectively, the researcher did not have access to the individual e-mails for the NASPA SLPKC, ALE, and NCLP groups. And, while the latter did send out invitation e-mails to participate in this study’s survey to their respective listservs, return rates are not available due to the undisclosed number of recipients. Nonetheless, the return rates for the ILA member directory (12.57%), ILA Directory of Leadership programs (11.25%) and LEI (25.08%) were promising. However, there was a potential for overlap among targeted groups, which may affect the precision of the return rates. Overall, these data collection procedures provided the researcher with the best possible sources to generalize the population.

Demographics

Participants were mostly male (50.2%) and white (82.8%), African American/Black (5.8%), or Hispanic/Latino (3.3%). Additionally, 29.3% of participants were “55 to 64” years of age, 25.5% were “45 to 54” years of age, and 17.9% were “35 to 44” years of age. The vast majority of participants had a doctorate (72.5%), while 26.1% had earned a Master’s degree. However, participants’ terminal degree area was most often Leadership (12.8%), Educational Leadership (10.1%), Management/MBA (8.8%), Higher Education (8.0%), Education (6.4%), Organizational Leadership (5.6%), or College Student Affairs, Development, or Personnel (4.9%). Participants’ primary activity at their institution was as full-time faculty (49.9%), part-
time or adjunct faculty (13.9%), or full-time staff/administration (14.2%), and only 4.9% of participants reported that their full time professional career was outside academia. Of the participants’ who identified as faculty, 12.3% were associate professors, 11.4% were full professors, 10.1% were assistant professors, and 10.5% were instructors or lecturers. Of the participants who identified as staff/administration, 11.3% were in director roles, 4.7% in coordinator roles, and 2.3% were assistant directors. Participants indicated that they had been working in higher education for “1-3 years,” (28.9%), “4-6 years” (25.8%), or “more than 10 years” (25.7%). Finally, participants reported that their experience teaching leadership was most often “more than five years” (54.1%), “less than one year” (20.0%), or “3-5 years” (12.7%); and that their experience teaching the course they used as a reference point was “more than five years” (49.9%), “3-5 years” (21.1%), or “2-3 years” (11.4%).

Instrument Development and Data Analysis Techniques

To explore the research questions within the framework of leadership education, a list of commonly utilized assessment strategies used in both face-to-face and online leadership education contexts was created. The selection of assessment strategies were derived chiefly from Conger’s (1992) “four approaches to leadership development,” Allen and Hartman’s (2009) “sources of learning in collegiate leadership development,” and Jenkins’s (2012) survey of instructional strategy use in undergraduate, face-to-face leadership studies courses. The selection of online assessment strategies was informed by the empirical studies of Djajalaksana (2011; see also Fletcher, Djajalaksana, & Eison, 2012; Djajalaksana, Dedrick, & Eison, 2013) as well as the work of Salmon (2002), Bonk, Graham, Cross, and Moore (2005), and Bonk and Zhang (2008), all of whom published extensive guidebooks for online learning in educational settings. The selection of assessment strategies (see Appendix A) was also informed by many of the aforementioned scholars and practitioners who included data or resources on assessment techniques in higher or leadership education. In the end, final selection for inclusion in this study was based on a combination of recommendations from a panel of experts, tested in a pilot study, a review of the literature, and the researcher’s expertise and experience. Admittedly, all assessment methods have their pros and cons. Indeed, because learning about leadership and developing leadership skills may be different than learning other content in a traditional classroom setting, leadership education may need different strategies for assessing learning (Eich, 2008; Komives, Lucas, & McMahon, 2013; Wren, 1995). Accordingly, leadership education requires its own examination to determine how effective learning of leadership is assessed. Here, assessment strategy use was measured by asking participants the following question and scale: “Assessment Strategies are interchangeable with assignments, evaluations, etc.; they can be anything an instructor has built into a course to grade students. Here are some assessment strategies to which leadership instructors like you attach varying weight in their courses. Please indicate the level of weight toward a student’s final grade each is given in your course you identified in Question 3.”

- 1 = 0%, I do not use this type of assessment in my course.
- 2 = 1-10%
- 3 = 11-20%
- 4 = 21-30%
- 5 = 31-40%
In order to assess the learning goals most important to leadership educators who participated in the survey, each of the “Suggested Answers in the Leadership Discipline” from Northouse (2010) were operationalized into two associated Learning Goals learning goals that were combined into calculated subscales (e.g., 1A and 1B; see Appendix B). Specifically, participants were asked, “When deciding what you want your students to learn in the course you identified in Question 3, how important are each of the following learning goals? (Question 3 of the survey asked participants to identify one specific academic credit-bearing leadership course that they taught/teach regularly. This question also included explicit language explaining that the participant should use this course as their reference point throughout the survey.) Participants reported frequency of establishing these learning goals through the following rating scale:

- 1 = Not at all important
- 2 = Not very important
- 3 = Somewhat important
- 4 = Important
- 5 = Very Important

**Findings**

The analysis of these data revealed that when instructors set out to decide what they want students to learning their leadership courses, they emphasize learning goals that stress application far more than those that stress foundational knowledge. Higher mean scores indicated greater relative importance of specific learning goals. As illustrated in Table X, participants reported emphasizing Application ($M = 4.18, SD = 0.69$), Integration ($M = 3.92, SD = 0.80$), and Learning how to Learn ($M = 3.90, SD = 0.86$), more frequently than Caring ($M = 3.87, SD = 0.94$), Human Dimension ($M = 3.83, SD = 0.88$), and Foundational Knowledge ($M = 3.43, SD = 0.96$). Interestingly, Application was consistently the most frequently emphasized learning goal, regardless of course modality, i.e., face-to-face, online, or blended, and Foundational Knowledge was consistently the least frequent.

**Table 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Goal Subscale</th>
<th>All ($N = 801$)</th>
<th>Face-to-Face ($n = 607$)</th>
<th>Online ($n = 114$)</th>
<th>Blended ($n = 80$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$M$</td>
<td>$SD$</td>
<td>$M$</td>
<td>$SD$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundational Knowledge</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>0.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Dimension</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning how to Learn</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Comparing Assessment Strategies and Learning Goals

In order to answer research questions two and three, this study also collected data associated with the use of specific assessment strategies by leadership educators (see Tables 3, 4 & 5).

Table 3
Correlations of Measures of Six Learning Goal Subscales with Face-to-Face Assessment Strategies that Instructors Give the Most Weight

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Strategy</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>FK</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>HD</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>LHTL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group Projects/Presentations</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.10*</td>
<td>.18**</td>
<td>.21**</td>
<td>.09*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Writing Project/Term Paper Class</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>.16**</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation/Attendance</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>.09*</td>
<td>.09*</td>
<td>.11**</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.12**</td>
<td>.12**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Projects/Presentations</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>.16**</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.16**</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.09*</td>
<td>.16**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>.21**</td>
<td>-.10*</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.11**</td>
<td>-.11**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Papers</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>.09*</td>
<td>.12**</td>
<td>.16**</td>
<td>.08*</td>
<td>.12**</td>
<td>.13**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective Journals</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.16**</td>
<td>.16**</td>
<td>.12**</td>
<td>.20**</td>
<td>.22**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Leadership Development Plans</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.16**</td>
<td>.18**</td>
<td>.20**</td>
<td>.17**</td>
<td>.22**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-evaluation</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.18**</td>
<td>.19**</td>
<td>.14**</td>
<td>.23**</td>
<td>.25**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation/Interview of a Leader</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.16**</td>
<td>.15**</td>
<td>.11*</td>
<td>.14**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read and Respond</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>.09*</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.19**</td>
<td>.15**</td>
<td>.14**</td>
<td>.14**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skill Demonstration</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>.12**</td>
<td>.13**</td>
<td>.17**</td>
<td>.20**</td>
<td>.21**</td>
<td>.22**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-Peer Assessment</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>.15**</td>
<td>.14**</td>
<td>.16**</td>
<td>.18**</td>
<td>.21**</td>
<td>.21**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portfolio or evidence collection</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>.11**</td>
<td>.09*</td>
<td>.13**</td>
<td>.09*</td>
<td>.19**</td>
<td>.22**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>.16**</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Creation</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.16**</td>
<td>.08*</td>
<td>.16**</td>
<td>.17**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. FK = Foundational Knowledge; A = Application; I = Integration; HD = Human Dimension; C = Caring; and LHTL = Learning how to Learn
*p < .05 (2-tailed). **p < .01 (2-tailed).

Table 4
Correlations of Measures of Six Learning Goal Subscales with Online Assessment Strategies that Instructors Give the Most Weight

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Web</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>FK</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>HD</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>LHTL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Boards</td>
<td>4.41</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.21*</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 5

**Correlations of Measures of Six Learning Goal Subscales with Blended Assessment Strategies that Instructors Give the Most Weight**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Blended</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>FK</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>HD</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>LHTL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Major Writing Project / Term Paper</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>.27**</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.21*</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Research Projects/Presentations</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>.24*</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.24*</td>
<td>.28**</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td>.29**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>.23*</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.23*</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Papers</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>.29**</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.21*</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>.19*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case or Case Study Analysis</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>.31**</td>
<td>.29**</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.28**</td>
<td>.31**</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read and Respond</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>.22*</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective Journals</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Leader Development Plans</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>.23*</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.24*</td>
<td>.23*</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Projects/Presentations</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>.21*</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation/Interview of a Leader</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.21*</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-evaluations</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.21*</td>
<td>.23*</td>
<td>.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Peer Assessment</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>.23*</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Creation or Digital Storytelling</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.21*</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>.24*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-Portfolio</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. FK = Foundational Knowledge; A = Application; I = Integration; HD = Human Dimension; C = Caring; and LHTL = Learning how to Learn

*p < .05 (2-tailed). **p < .01 (2-tailed).
Assessment Strategy Use

In face-to-face leadership courses, group projects/presentations ($M = 3.33, SD = 1.68$) were given the most weight, followed by major writing projects or term papers ($M = 3.25, SD = 1.94$), and class participation/attendance ($M = 2.94, SD = 1.57$). Conversely, instructors teaching face-to-face courses associated the least weight or did not use portfolio or evidence collection ($M = 1.66, SD = 1.36$), quizzes, ($M = 1.51, SD = 1.01$), or video creation ($M = 1.43, SD = 1.12$). In online courses, discussion boards ($M = 4.41, SD = 2.03$) were a clear frontrunner, followed by a major writing project or term paper ($M = 4.09, SD = 2.24$), and individual projects/presentations ($M = 3.53, SD = 2.24$) and participation ($M = 3.53, SD = 2.31$). Conversely, instructors teaching online did not use or assign student peer assessment ($M = 1.76, SD = 1.48$), video creation or digital storytelling ($M = 1.49, SD = 1.21$), or e-portfolios ($M = 1.46, SD = 1.18$). Finally, in blended courses, major writing projects or term papers ($M = 3.71, SD = 2.03$) accounted for the majority of the weight, followed by class participation ($M = 3.40, SD = 1.94$) and group projects/presentation ($M = 3.40, SD = 1.92$), and discussion boards ($M = 3.29, SD = 1.89$). Conversely, video creation or digital storytelling ($M = 1.65, SD = 1.35$), quizzes ($M = 1.64, SD = 1.13$), and e-portfolios ($M = 1.58, SD = 1.26$) were not affiliated with students’ grades. While some findings are unique to the modality, class participation was, on average, given the most overall weight among the three groups, ranking in the top four of each group, with a range of $M = 3.53$ in the online courses to $M = 2.94$ in the face-to-face courses. Clearly, class participation is valued by instructors who teach leadership studies.

Exploring the Relationship between Assessment Strategies and Learning Goals

For the Face-to-Face instructors, the data suggests moderate and statistically significant correlated positive relationships between the use of self-evaluations and the learning goals Caring, $r = .23$, and Learning how to Learn, $r = .25$, as well as Skill Demonstration and the learning goal Learning how to Learn, $r = .22$, (all $ps < .001$). Additionally, small, but statistically significant correlated negative relationship exists between Exams and the learning
goals Caring, $r = -.11$, and Learning how to Learn, $r = -.11$, (all $ps = .006$). For the online instructors, Case or Case Study Analysis was significantly correlated with the learning goals Foundational Knowledge, $r = .31$, Application, $r = .29$, Human Dimension, $r = .28$, and Caring, $r = .31$, (all $ps < .005$). Additionally, Individual Research Projects/Presentations was significantly correlated with the learning goals Human Dimension, $r = .28$, and Learning how to Learn $r = .29$; and short papers were significantly correlated with the learning goal Foundational Knowledge, $r = .29$, (all $ps < .001$). Finally, for the Blended instructors, the data suggests moderate and statistically significant correlated positive relationships between Group Projects/Presentations and the learning goals Integration, $r = .34$, $p = .002$, and Caring, $r = .29$, $p = .011$; between Individual Leadership Development Plans and Application, $r = .30$, $p = .008$; between Individual Research Projects/Presentations and Application, $r = .31$, $p = .006$; and between skill demonstration and Application, $r = .29$, $p = .011$. Finally, a moderate and statistically significant negative correlation was found between exams and the learning goal Learning how to Learn, $r = .23$, $p = .048$.

Discussion and Implications:
Learning Goals and Assessment in Leadership Education

The data in the present study suggest that leadership educators emphasize the application of leadership first and foremost. This is consistent with the study conducted by Jenkins (2012) that explored the learning goals of instructors who taught undergraduate face-to-face leadership studies courses. Conversely, the foundational knowledge of the discipline does not appear to be a substantial learning goal in most leadership studies courses. This, perhaps, is explanatory of a leadership discipline that has been historically skill-based. Even so, such skills are likely inclusive of individual (e.g., reflection) and group (e.g., group projects and presentations) applications of leadership (see for example: Bennis, 2009; Northouse, 2015).

Additionally, these data suggest that in face-to-face modalities, self-evaluation is valued by instructors who seek to focus on their students’ development of critical decision making skills, specifically decisions that affect change and the feelings, values, interests, commitments, and leadership perspectives of others characterized by the Caring subscale. Interestingly, instructors who focus a large percentage of their students’ grades on exams do not value the development of students’ decision making skills with respect to diverse others or leadership metacognition as characterized by the Caring and Learning How to Learn subscales. In online courses, case studies and case study analysis seemed to be used for a variety of learning goals. Fittingly, the case study method as a powerful pedagogical tool that gives students multiple situations, concepts, and images to work with as they think about experiences that they haven’t yet had (Garvin, 2003; Parks, 2005). This experiential framework, borrowed from John Dewey, draws on practical experience, but is usually somewhat removed from the actual, immediate experience on the student. Indeed, the case study method can be used to teach leadership, regardless of course modality.

The data also suggests that class participation is highly valued by leadership studies faculty. Since discussion-based pedagogies are used most frequently in leadership studies courses (see Jenkins, 2012), it follows that instructors would incentivize student attendance. However, it is unclear from this data how specifically participation and attendance are defined. Weimer (2016)
suggests providing clear criteria for students regarding good participation that includes the following components: (a) Preparation; (b) Contribution to discussion; (c) Group skills; (d) Communication skills; and (e) Attendance. Weimer also proposes empowering students to generate criteria, adding that, “awareness is further deepened if participation assessment includes a self-evaluation component (2013, paragraph 4). Arguably, these methods bring about the inclusive environments we come to expect in leadership studies courses and other dialogical disciplines (see also: Armstrong & Boud, 1983; Dancer & Kamvouinas, 2005).

Arguably, instructors who focus on their students becoming better students of leadership also focus the majority of their students’ course grades in activities that assess their ability to evaluate or work by themselves and demonstrate specific skills. Conversely, traditional assessment like exams and quizzes do not appear as the assessment of choice for these types of outcomes. Northouse (2010) suggests that “application would involve critical and creative thinking about the case studies included in the textbook, identifying practical uses of leadership theory in other contexts, and recognition of one’s own skills relative to the leadership approach being studied.” Whereas the correlational design used here precluded definitive causal interference, the data support the notion that instructors that focus their efforts on specific learning goals may also subscribe to equally specific assessment strategies. If so, then instructors are encouraged to employ some variety in their assessment strategy choices. For, if they do not, they may inadvertently exclude important levels of significant learning (Fink, 2013). Perhaps leadership educators can meet specific learning goals by employing particular types or groups of assessment strategies. For example, if students consistently come to class without the foundational knowledge of the discipline, instructors might employ assessment strategies to gauge this specifically such as exams, quizzes, or short papers. Similarly, if application is a key learning goal in an academic department, instructors might focus more of their students’ course grades on assignments related to individual development or individual projects, case studies, and peer-assessment. Finally, while the results of this study do not prove a causal relationship, the findings are promising. Further, as leadership program coordinators and leadership studies faculty members continue to seek assessment strategies that align with program goals and student learning outcomes, data such as these may prove helpful in program design.

Conclusions

This study was undertaken with the vision that it could be pragmatically used by leadership Educators. This exploratory study of assessment strategy use and learning goals within the leadership discipline has numerous implications for practice for a variety of individuals who seek to advance teaching and learning leadership in a variety of modalities. As well, the findings of this study have implications for leadership studies, leadership pedagogy, and the learning goals instructors establish for their courses. These findings can provide a foundation to develop workshops for leadership educators or enhance existing ones. Findings from this study may also offer a framework for leadership educators when deciding on the learning goals for their own courses.

References


Weimer, M. (2016). Clear criteria: A good way to improve participation. *Faculty Focus: Teaching Professor Blog*. Retrieved from http://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/teaching-professor-blog/clear-criteria-a-good-way-to-improve-participation/?utm_campaign=Faculty+Focus&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&utm_content=26841278&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-8QbDA5H3IwDV1IUwoJ0Rt5H5Wrd2kF1S5ClgZDoxwfBOz94nAiHBVFMiSGLRFU5n8ke22pPAVr9Eq3SXnHzENagoQs&_hsmi=26841278


### Appendices

#### Appendix A

**Leadership Education Assessment Strategies and Modalities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Strategy</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Face-to-Face</th>
<th>Online</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Case or Case Study Analysis</td>
<td>Students are graded on coherence, relevancy to class, ideas generated, content integration, etc.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation/Attendance</td>
<td>Students are given points for active participation in course activities.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Boards</td>
<td>Students are graded on the quality and content of their discussion posts.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>Students complete tests or exams that last the majority of the class period intended to assess subject matter mastery.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Projects/Presentations</td>
<td>Students work on a prescribed project or presentation in a small group.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Leadership Development Plans</td>
<td>Students develop specific goals and vision statements for individual leadership development.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Research Projects/Presentations</td>
<td>Students actively research a leadership theory or topic and present findings in online presentation or written format.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Writing Project/Term Paper</td>
<td>Students write a significant paper exploring course content or research as a major course assignment.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation/Interview of a Leader</td>
<td>Students observe or interview an individual leading others and report their findings to the instructor/class.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online/E-Portfolio</td>
<td>Students document their own learning stored in an online/electronic portfolio on the internet.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>Students are given points for active participation in online course activities such as discussions, chats, or other interactive computer-based learning exercises.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portfolio or evidence collection Presentation Creation</td>
<td>Students document their own learning through the creation of an electronic portfolio.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>Students create short presentations and post them online (e.g., PowerPoint, Prezi)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read and Respond</td>
<td>Students complete short graded quizzes intended to assess subject matter mastery.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Strategy</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective Journals</td>
<td>Students develop written reflections on their experiences or understandings of lessons learned about course content.</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Projects/Presentations</td>
<td>Students actively research a leadership theory or topic and present findings in oral or written format.</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-evaluation</td>
<td>Students respond in writing to criteria set for evaluating their learning.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Papers</td>
<td>Students author one or more short papers (ten pages or less in length) exploring course content.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skill Demonstration</td>
<td>Students physically represent learning through problem solving ability in relevant contexts.</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Peer Assessment</td>
<td>Students critique other students’ work using previously described criteria and provide specific suggestions for improvement.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Creation</td>
<td>Students create short video presentations and post them online.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Participants who reported teaching a blended course were provided with the complete list of the assessment strategies in Table A.
Appendix B

Table B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Taxonomy</th>
<th>Learning Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1A</td>
<td>Foundational Knowledge</td>
<td>Understanding the history and development of course-related leadership models, theories, and approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1B</td>
<td>Foundational Knowledge</td>
<td>Understanding and remembering of key assumptions, terminology and components of course-related leadership models, theories, or approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2A</td>
<td>Application</td>
<td>Thinking (critical, creative, or practical) and identifying uses of course-related leadership models, theories, or approaches in other contexts (i.e., case studies, organizations, career, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2B</td>
<td>Application</td>
<td>Recognizing one’s own skills relative to the course-related leadership models, theories, or approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3A</td>
<td>Integration</td>
<td>Connecting course-related leadership concepts and behaviors to other ideas, people, academic areas, contexts, events, issues, and realms of life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3B</td>
<td>Integration</td>
<td>Understanding how the context of leadership (i.e., medicine, music, sports, etc.) affects the expectations, ideas, and behaviors of leaders (e.g., how are leaders different from other people?, In what ways, if any, are all leaders the same?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4A</td>
<td>Human Dimension</td>
<td>Understanding how course-related leadership models, theories, or approaches helps one to function and relate to others more effectively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4B</td>
<td>Human Dimension</td>
<td>Understanding the utility of various leadership models and approaches for developing leadership skills in others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5A</td>
<td>Caring</td>
<td>The appropriateness of leadership decisions that affect one’s caring about changes, values, interests, feelings, and commitments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5B</td>
<td>Caring</td>
<td>Developing trust of select others and/or welcoming diverse leadership perspectives from others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6A</td>
<td>Learning How to Learn</td>
<td>Becoming more aware of their own learning process and why others, including leadership theorists, pursue their unique lines of inquiry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6B</td>
<td>Learning How to Learn</td>
<td>Developing intellectual curiosity about leadership or engaging in leadership issues outside the classroom and continue to develop their own leadership skills after the conclusion of the course.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Impact of Destructive Leadership in Higher Education

James J. Do, PhD & James M. Dobbs, PhD

United States Air Force Academy

Abstract

Leaders within multiple industries claim cynicism is a factor in employee burnout, emotional exhaustion, turnover, adversely affecting organizational citizenship behavior, commitment, and effectiveness. Leadership is frequently constructed positively, but recent abuses of authority have revived interest in the dark side of leadership. Terms like destructive, toxic, and abusive are used interchangeably but describe the same phenomenon: interpersonal influences and downward hostility by those in positions of authority negatively affect followers and undermine the best interest of the organization. While organizations have emphasized the benefits of effective leadership, aspirational notions of leadership differ from what is actually experienced. This paper examines connections between toxic leadership and cynicism in an institution of higher learning, and argue they are worthy of additional exploration for leadership scholars and practitioners.

Introduction

The impact of poor leadership and cynicism is increasingly recognized as a problem in organizations. Research suggests that human capital may be an important, sustainable, competitive advantage that organizations have, as employees represent the source of courage, innovation, future leadership, and creativity (Chaleff, 2003; Johnson, 2009; Kellerman, 2008). In addition, they are the link between the organization and its stakeholders. More specifically, research indicates that cynical employees are more likely to challenge or speak negatively about their employer (Stanley, Meyer, & Topolnytsky, 2005). Additionally, there is evidence that employee’s negative comments adversely affect the customer’s experience, and the bottom line (Meyer & Schwager, 2007; Verhoef, Lemon, Parasuraman, Roggeveen, Tsiros, & Schlesinger, 2009). Therefore, how a follower feels about his or her institution is of importance. Given that connections have been established between job satisfaction and performance, the importance of fostering a positive work environment and developing human capital becomes a worthy item of focus. Additionally, the extent of the problem of worker cynicism appears to be pervasive. Polls report that over 50% of survey respondents describe themselves as cynical at work (Hochwarter, James, Johnson, & Ferris, 2004). These broad-based feelings of cynicism show little sign of decreasing as companies continue to lay off workers, outsource operations, and cut entire branches of organizations to increase revenue.

The problem of follower cynicism is not limited to the workplace, but rather is endemic throughout the world across a broad spectrum of organizations. Mistrust of institutions across multiple and diverse sectors such as academia, government, banks, big business, and the military is more pervasive now than at any time since the era of the Great Depression (Andersson & Bateman, 1997; Caldwell, 2006; Kanter & Mirvis, 1989; Kouzes & Posner, 1993). According to the National Leadership Index that surveys Americans’ attitudes toward their leaders in 13 major sectors, confidence in leaders fell to the lowest point since the index was established in 2005.
Follower cynicism appears to be widespread, and it negatively impacts the organizations tainted by it. The complex relationship between perceived poor leadership and cynicism, and its effects, is worthy of additional attention and exploration.

**Cynicism in the Organization**

The term cynicism originated from ancient Greek philosophers called Cynics, who rejected all conventions designed to control men, such as religion, manners, or rules of decency, advocating instead the pursuit of virtue in a simple and non-materialistic lifestyle (Caldwell, 2006). Early research defined cynicism as an attitude distinguished by a “dislike for and distrust of others” (Cook & Medley, 1954, p. 418). More recent work has equated cynicism as an attitude characterized by scornful or jaded negativity, suspicion, and a general distrust of the integrity or professed motives of others (Andersson & Bateman, 1997). Defined concisely, cynicism is the condition of lost belief. Lost to cynicism is belief in the possibility of a change, improvement, or betterment of current or future circumstances along with the ability to aspire to a different state. The hurt, disappointment, and anger that follow unmet expectations and unfulfilled goals give rise to a perspective that is overwhelmingly negative. As such, cynics “agree that lying, putting on a false face, and taking advantage of others are fundamental to human character” and conclude that people are “just out for themselves” and that “such cynical attitudes about life are paralleled in attitudes about work” (Mirvis & Kanter, 1992, pp. 50-52). Thus, members who are cynical can influence an entire organization and perhaps even hinder an organization from reaching its goals. Cynicism in the workplace is emerging as a new paradigm resulting from a critical appraisal of the motives, actions, and values of an employer and is a construct worthy of further exploration.

Most studies defined organizational cynicism as a negative work attitude that has the potential to affect numerous organizational and individual outcomes (Abraham, 2000; Andersson, 1996; Andersson & Bateman, 1997). Cynicism’s influence upon an organization is not extensively examined by scholars, nor is the essence of the attitude “characterized by frustration, hopelessness, and disillusionment, as well as contempt toward and distrust of a person, group, ideology, social convention, or institution” (Andersson, 1996, pp. 1397-1398). Scholars differ in defining the origin, and therefore, the complete nature or definition of organizational cynicism. James (2005) defined organizational cynicism as “attitudes related to one’s employing organization, characterized by negative beliefs, feelings, and related behaviors in response to a history of personal and or social experiences susceptible to change by environmental influences” (p. 7). Thus, an individual’s prior history is key to unlocking the door of cynicism. Dean, Brandes, and Dharwadkar (1998) described organizational cynicism as a negative attitude toward one’s employing organization, comprised of the belief that the individual’s organization lacks integrity, fairness, sincerity, and honesty. These definitions are not entirely at odds. In fact, they could be said to have similarities to Abraham’s (2000) suggestion that cynicism toward the organization could result from workers’ perceptions of a lack of congruence between their own personal values and those of the organization. This idea of value congruence between individuals and organizations is particularly appealing for the study of cynicism and leadership because values play a central role in leading followers, and influencing organizational culture (Schein, 2010).
There is ample literature supporting the importance of value congruence between leaders and followers. For example, Lord and Brown (2001) theorized that values influence follower affect, cognition, and behavior by interacting with follower self-concepts. While Argyris’ (1964) seminal work on shared values and goal congruence theory emphasized the importance of promoting the integration of individual and organizational goals, and suggested that incongruence between the two may cause unintended consequences such as passivity and aggression. Such results may interfere with system (organizational) effectiveness and individual growth and satisfaction. This is consistent with Dean and colleagues’ (1998) conceptualization that cynicism is a multidimensional construct developed by a person and the organization, made up of three components: beliefs, affects, and behavioral tendencies. Specifically, the cognitive dimension of organizational cynicism is the belief that organizations lack such principles as “fairness, honesty, and sincerity” (p. 346). The affective dimension refers to the positive and negative emotional reactions individuals may feel toward an organization, and the behavioral dimension of organizational cynicism refers to the negative tendencies in the expression of strong criticisms toward the organization. In the simplest of terms, cynicism is the feeling that develops whenever expectations do not match with reality.

With regard to consequences of cynicism, research has shown that cynicism has important negative ramifications, contributing to substantial costs for both organizations and individuals resulting from increases in stress, emotional exhaustion, burnout, job tension, job satisfaction, and turnover (Abraham, 2000; James, 2005). It also reduces citizenship behavior, productivity, commitment, and organizational identity (Andersson & Bateman, 1997; Bedian, 2007; Mirvis & Kanter, 1992). In essence, cynicism can undermine leaders, institutions, and the practices they support.

Given the pernicious impact of organizational cynicism, it is surprising that a close examination of the literature in this area reveals little empirical research or rigorous inquiry on organizational cynicism and its relationship to leadership styles or behaviors. This is especially notable, given that as Bass (1990) stated, “leadership is often regarded as the single most critical factor in the success or failure of institutions” (p. 8). The majority of studies have focused on the consequences and effects of cynical employees in business models conducted in the private sector, and typically presented very specific antecedents for study (e.g. workforce reduction, layoffs, organizational performance, and executive compensation; Andersson, 1996; Andersson & Bateman, 1997; Brandes, Castro, James, Martinez, Matherly, Ferris & Hochwater, 2007). These studies are largely silent on the role a leader’s behavior might have in influencing organizational cynicism of their followers.

**Destructive Leadership**

Research in the area of leadership traditionally tends to be seen in an overly positive light. Every week commentaries post feature tables, posters, or quotes exhorting all the good things associated with leadership and the bad attributes associated with being a manager, boss, and the like. The leadership publishing, recruiting, and development industries have all promoted the notion that leadership is a good thing. All it takes to be a leader is to be authentic, leverage one’s strengths, demonstrate executive presence, serve others, or adopt these seven habits. However, recent abuses of authority in a range of organizations—business, politics, education, and the
military—have revived interest in the dark side of leadership. In recent years, scholarly publications have used a variety of constructs to describe these dark or destructive forms of leadership: abusive (Tepper, 2000), tyrannical (Ashforth, 1994), unethical or bad (Kellerman, 2004), and toxic (Lipman-Blumen, 2005; Pelletier, 2009; Reed, 2004; Whicker, 1996). Although these terms are used differently by different authors, they are often used to describe the same phenomenon: interpersonal influences and downward hostility by those in positions of authority that negatively affect followers and ultimately undermine the best interest of the organization. For example, Lipman-Blumen (2005) maintained that leaders are considered toxic when they “engage in numerous destructive behaviors and exhibit certain dysfunctional personal characteristics” (p. 18), whereas Reed (2004) stated that a single specific behavior does not necessarily cause toxic leadership, rather it is the “cumulative effect of demotivational behavior on unit morale and climate over time that tells the tale” (p. 67).

Attempts to define toxic leadership are numerous, and vary from study to study. For example, Einarsen, Aaslad, & Skogstad (2007) propose that destructive leadership should account for destructive behavior aimed at both subordinates and at the organization. With that in mind, they suggested the following all-inclusive definition of destructive leadership: “the systematic and repeated behavior by a leader, supervisor or manager that violates the legitimate interest of the organization by undermining and/or sabotaging the organization's goals, tasks, resources, and effectiveness and/or the motivation, well-being or job satisfaction of subordinates” (p. 208). Thus, Einarsen and colleagues focused their definition on the receivers or victims of the toxicity. Taking a slightly different vantage point, Schmidt’s (2008) research systematically attempted to bring some comprehensive understanding to the topic of toxic leadership by defining what toxic leadership is and is not, while developing and evaluating a new measure he called the Toxic Leadership Scale. His research concluded that toxic leadership is a much broader construct than abusive supervision. Toxic leadership is a multidimensional construct that includes elements of abusive supervision along with narcissism, authoritarianism, self-promotion, and unpredictability. Whicker (1996) stated “toxic leaders may be of one of several types, but all toxic leaders share three defining characteristics: deep-seated inadequacy, selfish values, and deceptiveness” (p. 53). Scholars Kusy and Holloway (2009) summed up the literature aptly, addressing both the leader and the follower, cause and effect, saying that toxic personality is “anyone who demonstrates a pattern of counterproductive work behaviors that debilitate individuals, teams, and even organizations over the long term” (p. 4). The underlying tenet to toxic leadership is that it is “viewed as a detractor from motivation, alignment, and commitment to organizational goals that serve as the hallmark of good leadership” (Reed & Bullis, 2009, p. 6).

Although there are obvious similarities among these concepts, researchers have yet to adopt a common definition or conceptual framework of toxic leadership. Thus, Reed’s (2004) claim that “toxic leadership, like leadership in general, is more easily described than defined, but terms like self-aggrandizing, petty, abusive, indifferent to unit climate, and interpersonally malicious seem to capture the concept” (p. 71). Based on national research using interviews and surveys, it has been stated that “toxic people thrive only in a toxic system” (Kusy & Holloway, 2009) where organizational leaders enable toxic behavior through lack of attention to and ignorance of the problem (Reed & Olsen, 2010). Like organizational cynicism, toxic leadership has emerged as a phenomenon of concern and a topic of discussion and research.
Methods

The data for this paper was conducted at an undergraduate university in the Mountain West region with a student body numbering approximately 4,000. [Author 2] gathered attitudinal data during Spring 2013 through the administration of three instruments and a demographic questionnaire: Cynical Attitudes Toward College Scale (CATCS), Toxic Leadership Scale (TLS), and the effectiveness scale on the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ). [Author 2] conducted a reliability analysis to measure how well a set of items measure a single characteristic or one-dimensional construct (Cortina, 1993). Although existing reliable instruments were chosen for this study, Cronbach’s alpha was used to test whether the Toxic Leadership, Effective Leadership, and Organizational Cynicism instruments maintained their reliability and validity in this study after adjustment and modification. All reliabilities for the construct scale scores fell above the acceptable minimum of .70 established by Nunnally (1978). Of particular note, Schmidt’s (2008) 15-item scale used to measure Overall Toxic Leadership was calculated at .95. Thus, low reliability was not a limitation of the study.

The survey was administered electronically via the internet using the Qualtrics electronic survey platform. All recruitment of participants was done through the online SONA research system. Participation was strictly voluntary and while demographic information such as gender, race or ethnicity, and class year was collected, individual respondents were not identifiable. Consent was sought electronically, in conjunction with the survey, but prior to administration. If consent was denied, connection to the survey halted without providing access to any survey questions.

A power analysis using the software package GPower (Erdfelder, Faul, Lang, & Buchner, 2007) revealed that a sample size of 285 participants would achieve 80% power to detect a medium effect size at the p=.05 level of statistical significance. Initially, 809 students were recruited from a research subject pool populated with students from psychology and leadership courses. Of that number, 315 signed up for the survey and agreed to the informed consent. Of that total, 285 students completed the entire survey, and constituted the final sample size for this study: a participation rate of just over 35 percent from the eligible subject pool. Among the 285 study participants, there were 193 (67.7%) men and 92 (32.3%) women. Additionally, the study volunteers included all four academic classes: 40 were seniors (14.0%), 138 were juniors (48.4%), 28 sophomores (9.8%), 54 freshmen (18.9%), and 25 (8.8%) did not report their class.

A multiple regression analysis was required to determine if two or more toxic leadership styles would collectively better predict organizational cynicism than any single style alone. The dependent variable was the organizational cynicism score. Five toxic leadership style scores were entered into a stepwise model selection procedure.

To achieve a comprehensive understanding of the research issues, [Author 1] collected data using qualitative methods including interviews (Rubin and Rubin 2011; Warren and Karner 2010). Survey research shows a spectrum of attitudes and behaviors and measured trends over a period of time. By supplementing surveys with interviews, we focused attention on the processes influencing such attitudes and behaviors. Students participated in unstructured, in-depth, active interviews, much like guided conversations between two individuals. To guide
conversations, a freely organized interview guide allowed [Author 1] to address several themes while providing flexibility to change focus on the fly, depending on the direction in which participants took the interview.

In total, 29 students were interviewed over a period of four months, in Fall 2013, generating an average of six pages of single-spaced fieldnotes for each interview. Nine participants were women, roughly a third of our participants and a much higher representation than in the student body (22% women). Among the 29 students who volunteered for this study, 16 were juniors (55%) and 13 were freshmen (45%). Participants responded to several themed questions eliciting conversation about their experiences as a student, the cultural climate of the institution, expectations, frustrations, leadership, and training. For each interview, main questions remained the same but follow-up questions changed as interviews progressed, focusing on specific and individualized issues. The inductive nature of these methods allowed the testing of categories and concepts in the field as they arose (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Charmaz 2001). Collectively, the interviews took about 2,000 minutes with the average length of the interview taking one hour and ten minutes. The interviews were transcribed from audio recordings and participants assigned pseudonyms.

Results

In summary, [Author 2] found evidence that a relationship exists between perceived toxic leadership and increased levels of organizational cynicism, and that followers of toxic leaders are likely to have more negative attitudes toward their organizations as a whole. This could be due not only to the toxic leader being perceived as representative of the organization, but also due to the perception that the organization does not intervene to protect its personnel. [Author 1] corroborated these discoveries with in-depth interviews. These findings reflect Reed's (2004) research that toxic leaders are anathema to the health of organizations, undermine confidence levels, and erode cohesion and esprit de corps.
Table 1
Correlations Between Perceived Predictor, Moderating, and Outcome Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of toxic leadership style</th>
<th>Self-promotion</th>
<th>Abusive supervision</th>
<th>Unpredictability</th>
<th>Narcissism</th>
<th>Authoritarian</th>
<th>Overall Toxic leadership style</th>
<th>Effective leadership</th>
<th>Organizational cynicism</th>
<th>Policy cynicism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-promotion</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.71*</td>
<td>.73*</td>
<td>.74*</td>
<td>.74*</td>
<td>.88*</td>
<td>-.68*</td>
<td>.38*</td>
<td>.29*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abusive supervision</td>
<td>.71*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.74*</td>
<td>.72*</td>
<td>.72*</td>
<td>.86*</td>
<td>-.62*</td>
<td>.26*</td>
<td>.24*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpredictability</td>
<td>.73*</td>
<td>.74*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.78*</td>
<td>.73*</td>
<td>.89*</td>
<td>-.68*</td>
<td>.26*</td>
<td>.26*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narcissism</td>
<td>.74*</td>
<td>.72*</td>
<td>.78*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.76*</td>
<td>.90*</td>
<td>-.64*</td>
<td>.24*</td>
<td>.23*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritarian</td>
<td>.74*</td>
<td>.72*</td>
<td>.73*</td>
<td>.76*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.90*</td>
<td>-.70*</td>
<td>.28*</td>
<td>.23*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall toxic leadership style</td>
<td>.88*</td>
<td>.86*</td>
<td>.89*</td>
<td>.90*</td>
<td>-.75*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.32*</td>
<td>.28*</td>
<td>.28*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective leadership</td>
<td>-.68*</td>
<td>-.62*</td>
<td>-.68*</td>
<td>-.64*</td>
<td>-.70*</td>
<td>-.75*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-.32*</td>
<td>-.32*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational cynicism</td>
<td>.38*</td>
<td>.26*</td>
<td>.26*</td>
<td>.24*</td>
<td>.28*</td>
<td>.32*</td>
<td>-.32*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.55*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy cynicism</td>
<td>.29*</td>
<td>.24*</td>
<td>.26*</td>
<td>.23*</td>
<td>.23*</td>
<td>.28*</td>
<td>-.32*</td>
<td>.55*</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Entries are Pearson correlations. $N = 285$; * $p < .01$.

The correlation matrix (see Table 1) shows statistically significant, strong positive correlations between the organizational cynicism score and various toxic leadership styles. There is evidence to suggest that students who perceive their leaders to have higher levels of toxic leadership styles on any of the five dimensions: abusive supervision, authoritarian leadership, narcissism, self-promotion, and unpredictability, tend to be more cynical about their organization.

Figure 1 is a scatter plot, which graphically depicts the relationship between the organizational cynicism score and the overall toxic leadership style score. The figure gives some indication of a positive correlation between the variables.
There was a statistically significant, strong positive correlation between the organizational cynicism score and the overall toxic leadership style score, $r(283) = .32; p < .001$. [Author 2] concluded that there is strong evidence to suggest that students who perceive their leadership to have a high level of overall toxic leadership style tend to be more cynical about the organization.

[Author 1] conducted qualitative interviews, which corroborated [Author 2’s] quantitative findings, and found that almost all the students he interviewed mentioned feelings of cynicism toward the organization (26 of 29 did so without prompting). Most students attributed their cynicism to treatment by their leadership in several specific circumstances: the use of a classic trope “When I Was Your Age”, tailored for use at [institution] as “We Had It Tougher Last Year” (WHITLY), authoritarian leadership in the form of micromanagement, perception that leadership did not care for students, and the experience of unmet expectations.

In the case of WHITLY, which 16 students discussed in detail (10 freshmen and 6 juniors), students accept that their upper-class peers and leadership will tell them the institutional experience was tougher in the past; however, the general consensus is that this phrase is detrimental to the morale of the student body. Glen, a freshman, tiredly mentioned, “[Our leadership] tell us that all the time.” His classmate, Matt, stated, “Well, there’s a common saying ‘back when it was hard’. Every class before us had it harder… I don’t really know how someone can say they had it harder than other classes. That happens basically every time you get [new leadership].” When asked how this narcissistic viewpoint impacted student morale, Arthur (a freshman) felt devalued: “It kind of feels like other people don’t think our accomplishment was as big as what they did.” Lars agreed and added his leadership repeats this phrase “to add that
ounce of pride to themselves. ‘Yeah. I’m better, I’ve pushed myself harder, I’ve worked harder [than you].’” These views support a cynical reaction to toxic leadership behaviors, specifically exhibiting deep-seated inadequacy and selfish values as previously mentioned. Ronnie, a junior, is dismayed by self-interested leadership, “It’s stupid. Everyone is always going to have their own struggles, their own internal struggles and difficulties so I think it’s kind of a selfish thing to say. I don’t think that’s fair at all to say to people.”

Fifteen students (4 freshmen and 11 juniors) who perceived their leaders to have higher levels of authoritarian leadership, specifically related to micromanagement, spoke out about their experiences at their institution. Several participants felt that their leaders treated students like children or maintained a rigid and overbearing style of leadership. Dave, a freshman, expressed his concern, “I feel like I’m going back to elementary school almost where they have to monitor everything you do.” Chris and Mary, both juniors, stated that their leadership treats them “like babies” and “you just follow orders”. Damian, a junior, reflected on a transactional reason why leadership behaves in such a manner:

If they just let us do our own little things and fail out without holding our hands when we’re deficient, they lose investment. They’re incentivized to more or less hold our hands when we’re struggling rather than letting us swim or drown.

In a conversation with Mary, [Author 1] expanded a conversation on trust and the student honor system in place, which is similar to honor systems across institutions of higher learning.

[Author 1]: Can you tell me a little more about people not taking you for your word? Mary: Yeah, that happens all the time here. We have [an] honor system so we can trust each other. But we always have to verify. I understand that but sometimes if you have to verify every single time it shows that you really don’t trust that person. [The leadership doesn’t] really practice the system of trust and [they’re] not actually trusting people.

These student interviews reflect a cynical reaction to an organization’s destructive leadership behavior. In almost all of the interviews, students’ negative feelings toward leadership carried over to negative feelings about the organization, reinforcing a study by Burris, Detert, and Chiaburu (2008). This could be due not only to the leader(s) being recognized as representative of the organization, but also due to the perception that the organization does not intervene to protect its personnel. To understand how the institution fell short in this aspect, [Author 1] asked follow-up questions to place focus on the overall health of the student body. Several participants, including juniors Mary, Kelly, and Whitney, disclosed they were clinically diagnosed with depression, joining many other students in the university counseling center. They perceived their leaders did not take care of them so their only option was to seek help in counseling and managed with antidepressants. Mary expressed her dismay in the institution’s leadership and shortage of assistance for students:

I know a lot of people here who have recently developed mental issues that they need to work through since they got here. I wish the help was more available. I know a handful of other people here who are on antidepressants. It’s kind of weird that you go to a school where you need to take drugs and talk to people constantly.
In an even more severe case, Kelly divulged that she almost committed suicide as a freshman. She struggled at school and noticed that people, specifically leadership, did not notice her difficulties:

Nobody really cared. People said “I don’t know why she looks so sad.” “Oh, why is she so upset?” But nobody really took the time to ask me “What’s going on? Can I help you?” You know, things like that. [People here] just don’t care. People get left behind. People get kicked out. A lot of people failed that kid in so many different ways because they didn’t care about the kid. Stuff like that.

Based on results that the strong positive correlation between the organizational cynicism score and the overall toxic leadership style score, regressions were conducted to determine which of the toxic styles or combination of styles best predict organizational cynicism. The final model was statistically significant, $F(4, 255) = 12.9; p < .001$; however, none of the three demographic control variables (e.g., gender, ethnicity, and academic class) were statistically significant. Of the five toxic leadership styles, self-promotion was the strongest predictor of organizational cynicism ($p < .001$). The adjusted R-Square attributed to the final model was .16, which means the control variables and the self-promotion toxic leadership style score collectively explain 16% of the total variance in organizational cynicism scores.

This last finding could be attributable to several reasons. Violations of contracts have been cited as primary determinants of employee cynicism (Andersson, 1996; Johnson and O’Leary-Kelly 2003). According to this research, cynicism results from violations of specific promises to the employee, violations of generalized expectations, and/or observed violation experiences of others. If students perceive their leaders acting in ways that promote their personal self interests above and beyond the interests and welfare of the organization they are leading, this could be perceived as a failure of obligations and produce unmet expectations. The cynicism literature has identified the experience of unmet expectations, and the feelings of disappointment that go along with it, as one of the primary determinants in the development of cynicism; unmet expectations have been labeled as a direct antecedent of cynicism in organizations (Kanter & Mirvis, 1989).

During interviews, the topic of unmet expectations transpired organically with 25 of 29 students. Most of the participants expected this institution would be a beacon of excellence, which Erica (a junior) observed and connected to cynicism: “I think that’s where the cynicism comes from. That basis of the dream school you wanted to come to and how the school actually is.” When asked for more detail about cynicism in the student body, Hans (a junior) surprisingly stated, “The only thing that missed my expectation was the cynicism. I didn’t anticipate everyone hating the place so much. I was like, what the heck.”

Damian was very particular with how he described this institution and his disappointment with the inner workings of a large organization. He was passionate and discussed many pressing issues in the student body, remained upbeat and positive, however, appeared upset at times when speaking about the disconnect between his expectations and current reality. [Author 1] noticed this shift in posture and asked him to elaborate:
I think the biggest divergence I could solidify has got to be how [this institution is] a ridiculously well-oiled machine that makes the right decisions, the best leaders on top, and you get here and realize that it’s just another bureaucracy. You get here and realize how the system is just as convoluted as any other bureaucracy and you kind of get frustrated with it and aggravated. I feel like I’ve learned everything I could learn from here and anything else they’re trying to teach me is garbage or useless. It’s critical and it might not all be true but that’s how it feels most of the time. It’s aggravating because that’s not what I was promised. It wasn’t inherently promised to me or said to me, but people coming here want to be good leaders.

To summarize, cynicism is not unique to this institution. Related to destructive leadership, it may affect any undertaking in which humans are involved. Students do not enter this institution, and people do not enter into organizations, with inclinations toward cynicism but, somewhere along their journey something occurs that changes their outlook. Perhaps the most appropriate assessment of the situation comes directly from someone who has experienced this first hand (Bill, a junior):

Cynicism is one thing that I hate. I’ve been here two and a half years. I do not want to come off as arrogant when I say this but I feel like I got it figured out in some ways. What is cynicism exactly? It’s hatred toward the organization or hatred toward what you’re doing or what you believe you’re doing or how you’re doing it. At least that’s how I look at it. How does that develop? [The freshmen] didn’t come in here with any cynicism at all. They weren’t cynical about [this institution]. They came in here excited, ready to work; they knew [school] was going to be hard. They knew what they had signed up for. Do you know what scared me the most? They were going to turn into cynical upperclassmen, kind of like how my class has been. I’m not going to lie, I have a little bit of that cynicism, too. Then you ask how, how did that happen?

Limitations

Although this study contributes to the literature on the relationship between perceived toxic leadership and organizational cynicism, and measures with sound psychometric properties were used, several limitations must be considered. The first concerns the unique sample that was chosen. Data was obtained from only one source and one institution. Although arguments have been made as to the costs and benefits of such a population, the generalizability of the findings may still be of a concern. It is possible that students are in some ways not representative of the broader U.S. population of college-age youth or even similar to students at other institutions. Furthermore, it is unknown if the leadership perceptions of the students are representative of other students in this particular institution, or other organizations in general. Generalizing these findings within the broader context of higher education should be approached with caution because the results reported in this study were based on correlations, and as such do not verify causal directionality but simply the existence of a linear relationship. This study does not consider the dynamic nature of cynicism in the workplace because longitudinal data was not collected. Because data was collected at a single time, raising the possibility that data collected at another time might produce different results, it is not possible to view how the relationships between leadership style and cynicism develop over time. Thus, the relationship between these
variables may be overestimated.

**Discussion**

The appeal of destructive behaviors as a research target lies in its potential to influence numerous individual and organizational outcomes. Specifically, harmful leadership behaviors have been found to negatively affect subordinates’ job satisfaction levels, organizational commitment and create an erosion of trust. Additionally, abusive supervision has been positively related to subordinates’ intentions to leave their jobs. Furthermore, subordinates of abusive supervisors show higher levels of anxiety, burnout, depression, and work-family conflict, as well as diminished self-efficacy and more frequent health complaints that could lead to deteriorations in performance and morale.

Given the relationship between cynicism and perceived toxic leadership, leader development programs would be well served to include the concept of toxic leadership as a fundamental component in their training. Three hundred and sixty-degree assessment of leader perceptions, including a comparison with self-ratings would be particularly insightful. The more awareness leaders have regarding their harmful leadership behaviors and tendencies, the sooner they can correct their deficiencies and positively affect the organization and their followers. This recommendation aligns with those made by scholars Reed and Olsen (2010) in their discussion of the need to discuss destructive leadership practices in organizations. Specifically, they recommended that negative examples of leadership should be examined, in addition to stories of exemplary leadership in policy and doctrinal publications. Organizations and its members can learn much from negative case studies, and stories of failure are powerful influencers of organizational culture.

Next, the implementation of formal mentoring programs could be especially useful in this regard. Considering that Kusy and Holloway (2009) exposited, “toxic people thrive only in a toxic system” (p. 10), a proactive approach by top-level leaders would be to volunteer their time to create opportunities for more supervisor–employee interactions. These interactions could foster important relationships and generate an organizational culture within which senior leaders ensure that intermediate-level leaders and managers engage in appropriate, healthy behaviors.

Finally, given the linkage between these two constructs, it is advisable that administrators, supervisors, and others in leadership roles spend some focused time learning about toxic leadership and cynicism. More specifically, leadership training programs should focus on the highly destructive toxic leadership dimensions of self-promotion and unpredictability. The prevalence of cynicism in the workforce could be significantly reduced by the introduction of leadership education programs for personnel in positions of authority. Applying an understanding of the relationship between toxic leadership and organizational cynicism to the training and education of leaders in corporate, government, academia, and military organizations might ultimately serve to mitigate/lessen the negative impact of cynicism on those institutions.

**Conclusion**

Cynicism might be widespread among employees in organizations but as a construct it is
inadequately understood. The purpose of this paper is to gain a better understanding of the complex relationship between how a follower’s perception of a supervisor affects organizational cynicism, and understanding how behaviors of toxic leaders that may predict cynicism.

This paper examined the role of leadership to the pervasiveness of cynicism within public and private institutions. Drawing on the belief that leader behavior has both positive and negative impact on the prosocial and antisocial behavior of followers, we suggest that the results of this study have implications for the development of both leaders and organizations. Findings from this research could assist administrators, supervisors, and others in leadership roles to better understand the impact of perceptions of toxic leadership on cynicism. Cynicism can be mitigated but cannot be attacked directly nor can we battle against attitudes themselves. However, by identifying its origins, measures can be taken to engage against the conditions that allow cynicism to propagate in an organization. Applying this understanding to the training and education of leaders in institutions of higher education might ultimately serve to militate against the negative impact of cynicism on those institutions.

References


Leadership Programs, Discourses, and Participants’ True Sense of Self

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Abstract

As the challenges communities and organizations face become increasingly complex and interconnected, leadership has continued to evolve to meet these new needs. This applied research study investigated the norms and assumptions about leadership held by participants in an adult leadership development program. This study also highlights participants’ perceptions of the program’s impact on their own norms and assumptions about leadership. Based on the Western Indicator of Leadership Discourses, participants reported a near-even preference for eco-leader and therapist discourses. A preference for eco-leadership was highly correlated with introversion, while a messiah leadership was highly correlated with extroversion. Participants also placed a high value on relationships with followers, promoting collaborative environments, promoting committed followers, and not relying on positional leaders for answers.

Introduction

Today’s challenges are increasingly complex, requiring a greater reliance on interdependent work. To meet these challenges, the way we approach leadership is also changing. Leadership is increasingly viewed not as the effect of an individual, but, rather, a collective process (Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009). “While traditional historical teaching points to the ‘great man’ theory of leadership, it is the marginalized, grass-roots, social movements that often lead and innovate change …” (Western, 2010, p. 43). These changes are apparent in applied contexts and surface in writings, such as Leadership in Agriculture: Case Studies for a New Generation. In that book, Jordan, Buchanan, Clarke, and Jordan (2013) report, “in this rapidly changing environment effective leadership is vitally important agriculture’s continued success” (p. 4). Moreover, they report, “leadership is intrinsically communal in nature and is also a relationship among participants and collaborators” (Jordan, Buchanan, Clarke, & Jordan, 2013, p. 13).

The National Leadership Education Research Agenda identifies a priority for “programmatic assessment and evaluation,” noting the need for leadership educators to “be more adept at understanding how to empower the development of those we serve” (Andenoro et al., 2013, p. 9). In the context of agriculture, the leadership programs often work at a state level to develop leaders for the challenges of our modern era. This is accomplished largely through facilitating new connections and partnerships to find collaborative solutions. While the aspirations of agricultural leadership programs are admirable, we need to know more about the programs’ ability to promote community partnerships associated with modern leadership challenges and discourses (Kaufman, Rateau, Carter, & Strickland, 2012).

Literature Review

Based on a meta-analysis of leadership from historical, socio-political, and economic perspectives, Western (2008) has identified four discourses of leadership during the past century:
(a) controller, (b) therapist, (c) messiah, and (d) eco-leader (Figure 1). While each was a reaction to the limitation of the prior discourse, they all have their own strengths and weaknesses, and all continue to exist concurrently in varying degrees (Western, 2008).

The controller discourse dominated the early part of the 20th century, when our understanding of leadership was heavily influenced by the industrial revolution. The first scientific studies of leadership were conducted during the early decades of the 20th century, and the resulting industrial paradigm of leadership emphasized the “preeminence of leaders and the machine-like qualities of organizations” (Wielkiewicz & Stelzner, 2005, p. 236). Typified by Frederick Taylor’s scientific management approach and Max Weber’s Iron Cage metaphor, the controller discourse was the appropriate fit for an era of scientific rationalism and industrial revolution (Western, 2008). In this discourse, followers were relegated to worker status and reduced to “cog[s] in a machine, mirroring standardization and mechanization within the mass production of the factory” of the time (Western, 2008, p. 162). The archetypical controller leader values efficiency and productivity among his or her workers. They expect workers to respect positional authority and power, and to know their place in the hierarchy of the organization. The industrial revolution led to higher salaries and the creation of the consumer-driven economy we still enjoy (Western, 2010). However, faced with the atrocities of authoritarian regimes before and during World War II, society began to question the notion that scientific management would always yield societal progress, and scientific management slipped into decline in many contexts.

Following World War II, the therapist discourse emerged among calls for a more democratic society and a bet on the “principle that ‘happy workers are more productive workers’” (Western, 2010, p. 39). This approach made leadership more people-focused; it reflected the “wider social trends of atomization, self-concern, and the post-war individualistic expectations of being fulfilled, successful and happy” (Western, 2008, p. 163). With this in mind, the therapist leader seeks to maximize production by increasing the motivation of workers through promoting personal growth. While there is an emphasis to encourage workers to create their identity and find fulfillment through work, the underlying purpose is still to maximize productivity and shape
individuals to fit desired norms (Western, 2010). The therapist discourse continues in many people-oriented sectors, such as non-profits and public administration. However, this approach fell from favor in the corporate world, as it could not be scaled up to provide economic benefits in an era of globalization and the global corporation (Western, 2008).

During the late 1970s and early 1980s, the messiah discourse emerged “with the aim to create strong, dynamic organizational cultures under the vision and charisma of a transformational leader” (Western, 2010, p. 40). This new “covenantal leadership” style drew on the lessons of the more collectivist culture of Japan, which focused on eliciting loyalty and commitment from employees, as well as tying personal success to that of the organization. During this era, the organizational leader became a social character of influence, leading through his or her own symbolism and status (Western, 2008). Business schools, corporations, civic organizations, and churches embraced this transformational (messiah) leader who could offer vision and passionate leadership to create inspired, loyal, and committed followers. However, this discourse relied heavily on “normative control,” which is “self- and peer-control through surveillance and internalization, emotionalism and cultural norms” (Western, 2008, p. 164). This often led to highly conformist, cult-like followings, such as in the case of Enron. The archetypical messiah leader uses charisma and passion to inspire devotion and loyalty from their followers. While the messiah leadership discourse remains strong, the evangelical leaders it has created are sometimes revealed to be a facade, as they have often failed to produce the desired results. Additionally, as the world becomes increasingly complex, interconnected, and interdependent, we can no longer look to heroic individual leaders as the sole source of vision and direction (Western, 2013).

In the beginning of the 21st century we find ourselves facing numerous complex and interconnected challenges: climate change, finite fossil fuel resources, global financial crises, and terrorism — truly adaptive and wicked problems. Western (2010) posits that centralization and control are not, nor ever were, possible. The nature of leadership under the eco-leader discourse is that it redistributes leadership and power from a centralized, hierarchical structure throughout the organization in an attempt to leverage the energy and creativity of the entire system (Western, 2010). In this discourse, the role of leadership is to bring together people, ideas, and organizational structures so that organizations can develop strategies to address adaptive challenges (Allen, Stelzner, & Wielkiewicz, 1999). Leaders within this paradigm must understand that productive leadership ecosystems can be cultivated, but they cannot be created and controlled. The archetypical eco-leader thinks like an “organizational architect, connecting people and creating networks using processes and technology” (Western, 2013, p. 275). They create spaces for others to lead, recognizing that leadership is a collaborative, collective process. They have a “profound belief in ethics, collaboration, diversity and distributing leadership” (Western, 2013, p. 275). Implicit in this new approach to leadership is a greater reliance on everyday individuals to have the skills and willingness to participate in the process of leadership. Collective decision-making, collaboration, and grassroots organizing require specialized skills similar to those described by Silvia and McGuire (2010): (a) understanding social and political contexts; (b) creating work groups to tackle tasks; and, (c) communicating vision to attract followers. All are appropriate and useful in the highly decentralized agricultural community.

The [Agricultural Leadership Development Program] (ALDP) program is an example of an approach to prepare the agricultural community for the challenges of our modern world and to
facilitate new partnerships within the community. The mission of the [ALDP] program is to develop leaders “who can effectively engage all segments of the [State] agricultural community to create collaborative solutions and promote agriculture inside and outside the industry.” More specifically, the program is designed to “develop new partnerships and foster deeper collaboration across [State]’s organizations, groups, and sectors.” The long-term vision is that the [ALDP] program “will provide a sustainable future for [State]’s agricultural community by maximizing potential for successful growth through a system of networking, collaborative decision-making, and development of strong leaders” (ALDP Website). Individuals applying to [ALDP] do so, at least in part, because of an interest in leadership and the development and application of leadership skills. Throughout two years of intentionally designed experiential learning opportunities, program participants are placed in study seminar situations intended to enlighten and challenge their understanding of leadership — what it looks like outwardly, what it feels like inwardly, and what the implications of applied leadership are in various contexts.

Research Objectives

This study had the following research objectives:

1) Characterize [ALDP] program participants’ leadership discourse preferences, as measured by the Western Indicator of Leadership Discourses (WILD) questionnaire;
2) Investigate relationships between WILD questionnaire and other personality assessments administered through the [ALDP] program; and
3) Describe [ALDP] program participants’ perceived impact of leadership development activities on their norms and assumptions about leadership (i.e., leadership discourses).

Methods

An explanatory sequential mixed methods design was used to conduct this study. In this design, we first conducted a quantitative strand of research and then followed up on specific findings with a second, qualitative strand (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). The qualitative strand offers the opportunity to focus on specific results, investigate in greater depth, and explain initial findings. Leadership studies, in particular, benefit from a mixed methods approach because of the complexity of the phenomenon; Stentz, Plano Clark, and Matkin (2012) argue that multiple methodological approaches are, in fact, necessary to understand the complex processes involved in leadership.

Quantitative data were collected by means of several personality assessments. We collected the dependent variable (discourse preference) using the Western Indicator of Leadership Discourses (WILD) questionnaire, which reveals an individual’s underlying assumptions regarding how leadership should be enacted. This 20-item instrument consists of brief statements concerning leadership and then asks respondents to rank responses from number one, the answer you most agree with, to number four, the answer you least agree with. An individual’s score is apportioned among the four leadership discourses (e.g., Controller = 4%, Therapist = 12%, Messiah = 50%, and Eco-Leader = 34%) such that a dominant or preferred discourse is revealed — though it is possible to be equal in all four discourses. The independent variables were measured through a variety of personal assessments, such as the Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI), Kirton’s Adaption-Innovation Inventory (KAI), and
the Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i).

Simple descriptive statistics were used to summarize and present results. Additionally, Pearson’s product-moment correlation coefficient was used to determine the strength and direction of correlational relationships between assessment scores. Based on these results, participants were selected for the second, qualitative strand because of a strong preference for either controller or eco-leader discourse (i.e. extreme cases) (Ary, Jacobs, & Sorenson, 2013).

Qualitative data were collected by means of semi-structured, open-ended interviews guided by a researcher-developed protocol. A priori propositions guided the researchers to interpret quantitative results in light of supporting literature, which led to specific interview questions. The protocol focused the conversation on encouraging participants to share in their own words their attitudes and beliefs on leadership in the context of the agriculture community. It was comprised of several primary questions:

(a) Please describe a moment, situation, or experience that has shaped your perspective on leadership.
(b) How has participation in [ALDP] influenced the way you lead or practice leadership in your personal or professional life?
(c) How would you describe the way in which an organization should be led?
(d) When you provide leadership to a group or project, where do you focus your attention and efforts?
(e) What is the role of followers in leadership?
(f) Thinking about a leader that you admire, how do they approach decision making in the groups they work with?

Each of these six questions had several follow-up questions that allowed the researcher to probe for better understanding and detail. During interview sessions, the researcher acted as facilitator.

Following the interviews (n = 9), the researchers completed whole-text analysis of verbatim transcripts, employing the constant comparative analytic procedures developed by Corbin and Strauss (2008). We used Atlas.ti to code the data and excerpt text using a systematic approach (Ary et al., 2013). We grouped codes into preliminary categories and used the categories to identify broad themes in the data, as they related to the research questions. The results of this qualitative analysis are reported in the form of themes, which are each supported by participant quotes.

**Findings**

**Quantitative Data**

Based on the Western Indicator of Leadership Discourses questionnaire (WILD), [ALDP] participants (n=23) had a near-even preference for the eco-leader (29.5%) and therapist (29.1%) discourses. Participants next preferred discourse was messiah (24.1%). Least preferred was the controller discourse (17.3%). We observed several significant relationships between leadership discourse preference and other personality assessments (Table 1). Notably, preference for the eco-leader discourse was highly positively correlated with the MBTI score for introversion, as well as the TKI rank for collaborating. A preference for an eco-leader discourse was negatively
correlated with the TKI rank for competing. Additionally, a preference for the messiah discourse was positively correlated with the MBTI score for extroversion.
Table 1  
*Correlations, means, and standard deviations of variables hypothesized as related to leadership discourse.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
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<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Eco-Leader</td>
<td>29.52</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Messiah</td>
<td>24.13</td>
<td>5.04</td>
<td>-.302</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Therapist</td>
<td>29.13</td>
<td>5.32</td>
<td>-.005</td>
<td>-.253</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Controller</td>
<td>17.26</td>
<td>6.86</td>
<td>-.450</td>
<td>-.326</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5 MBTI Extroversion</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>.999</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td>.518</td>
<td>.073</td>
<td>-.021</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6 MBTI Introversion</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.999</td>
<td>.604**</td>
<td>-.518*</td>
<td>-.073</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>-1</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 MBTI Thinking</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.209</td>
<td>-.210</td>
<td>.427*</td>
<td>-.252</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td>.171</td>
<td>-.171</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8 MBTI Judging</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>.507</td>
<td>.100</td>
<td>.528*</td>
<td>-.282</td>
<td>-.168</td>
<td>.344</td>
<td>-.344</td>
<td>.243</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9 TKI Competing</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>-.710</td>
<td>.242</td>
<td>-.077</td>
<td>.388</td>
<td>.268</td>
<td>-.268</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>-.082</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10 TKI Collaborating</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>.712*</td>
<td>.104</td>
<td>-.097</td>
<td>-.349</td>
<td>-.198</td>
<td>.198</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>.069</td>
<td>-.742*</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11 TKI Accommodating</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>.034</td>
<td>-.096</td>
<td>-.317</td>
<td>.273</td>
<td>-.162</td>
<td>.162</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>.299</td>
<td>.514</td>
<td>-.513</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>12 KAI Score</td>
<td>100.59</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>-.063</td>
<td>-.633</td>
<td>.011</td>
<td>.213</td>
<td>-.384</td>
<td>.384</td>
<td>.261</td>
<td>.566**</td>
<td>-.190</td>
<td>.094</td>
<td>-.317</td>
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<tr>
<td>13 EQ-i Total</td>
<td>101.55</td>
<td>12.17</td>
<td>.163</td>
<td>.066</td>
<td>-.296</td>
<td>.063</td>
<td>-.220</td>
<td>.220</td>
<td>.210</td>
<td>-.119</td>
<td>-.353</td>
<td>.362</td>
<td>-.247</td>
<td>.062</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note. *p<.05, **p<.01, and b cannot be computed because at least one of the variables is constant.
Qualitative Data

We identified five themes regarding the impact of the [ALDP] program on participants’ norms and assumptions about leadership:

- Positional leaders do not have all the answers.
- Effective leaders value relationships.
- Effective leaders promote committed followers.
- Effective leadership promotes collaborative environments.
- [ALDP] participants value practical, everyday leadership skills gained.

Positional Leaders Do Not Have All the Answers. Most participants reported that before participating in [ALDP] they had a highly leader-centric understanding of leadership. They described leadership as the actions of an individual, often in an official position of authority, who issued directives for followers to carry out. As one participant put it: “In the past, I expected the leader to be the person who came in and made all the decisions and told you what to do…” Another described leadership as a “very much a top-down kind of deal.” However, after participating in [ALDP], participants reported a change in their perceptions. They began to see leadership as a collaborative process involving both leaders and followers, and most reported that they no longer saw positional leaders as being capable of, or responsible for, having all the answers. They favored drawing on the collective intelligence of the group to solve problems. One participant said, “I don’t assume that I … have all the answers or the best ideas and… I think there’s a lot to learn from others… You risk a lot if you think you can do it all.” Another stated flatly, “Organizations that aren’t so effective … lead by positions of authority.” Participants also reported the affect of this new understanding was a shift in the role of the leader in the group from directive to facilitative. As one participant put it, “Instead of feeling like I have to be in charge and tell everybody what to do…[I] realize that you know the leader is just guiding the group.”

Effective Leaders Value Relationships. As participants in [ALDP] began to see leadership less in terms of positional authority, they identified the relationships between leaders and followers as being increasingly important in facilitating leadership and group success. They also reported becoming more concerned with followers’ motivations and psychological well-being, and they saw their role as a leader as central to ensuring the positive experience of the follower. One participant said, “Call it what you want, but an organization is nothing but people. It’s a group of people with a common purpose, and whatever the organization is, [it] should be run…in a manner that all those people in that organization matter…” Another added, “The true value of [ALDP] was that understanding of myself and how to relate that to others.”

Effective Leaders Promote Committed Followers. Participants frequently spoke of capitalizing on the relationships they forged to promote committed followers who brought their whole selves to the task. The primary means of fostering committed followers was encouraging them to provide input on decisions and ensuring a process in which people felt they had a “say-so.” As one participant put it, “I am very conscious now of involving those people that work for me in the process…I don’t involve them … only to make them feel good…but I do it because I recognize it as a needful thing.” One aspect of this felt need for input reported by many
participants was the widely reported byproduct of fostering buy-in and motivation among followers:

So I think...it has to be an input from all; simply because if you have input, you feel like you are part of the group, whereas ...if you are told that this is the goal, it’s a lot harder to buy into…

For many participants, follower input was not only encouraged but expected. Several equated committed followers to followers who actively participated in the process and challenged the processes when necessary for the good of the group or mission. One participant said, “[A follower’s] role is to support the leader, but not to be a ‘yes man’ for the leader, you know, to support the leader with ideas, thoughts, and opinions.” Another added, “I expect them to … think for themselves. So if a directive doesn’t make sense, you know, I want them to articulate why it doesn’t make sense.”

Effective Leadership Promotes Collaborative Environments. Nearly all participants reported a greater preference for promoting collaboration in their groups and teams to help solve problems. They saw collaboration as central to creating better organizational outcomes through deliberation and leveraging the collective intelligence of the group. One described her new approach in this way:

We’re all hands-on, doing different things, and one of the most valuable things that can happen is the person who’s doing something...if they stopped and say, “You know what, if we did it this way, it would be a lot faster;” or they’ll, you know, “a lot less expensive,” or it would be, you know, “we would have a better outcome.”

Participants also noted that fostering collaborative environments, again, required a shift in thinking about leadership, from a directive to facilitative role. Many saw part of their new role as encouraging others to take leadership roles: “Anyone can be a leader to one degree or another.”

One participant’s description of his role was typical of the group: “I am a leader and other people are leaders, but they don’t know it. And part of my role as a leader is to enlighten other people and enable them.”

[ALDP] Participants Value Practical, Everyday Leadership Skills Gained. Lastly, while this study focused on [ALDP]’s success in challenging the leadership norms and assumptions of its participants, emergent in this research was a clear appreciation for the everyday skills gained, such as better social skills and a deeper understanding of self. One participant said, “We’ve had a lot of opportunities to self-evaluate in [ALDP]. And that was, without a doubt, most influenced process for me on the education side...” Others expressed that [ALDP] had helped them become more confident and better able to articulate their ideas. More importantly, they cite this communication ability as a facilitator of their success in their newfound more collaborative, relationship-focused leadership approach described in the previous four themes. One commented:

I think what…what [ALDP] has done for me… is that they made me more vocal in just …in certain meetings where I wouldn’t speak at a certain time because I said well, it’s
not important, nobody wants to hear that. Then when you get the confidence to speak up in a very high power meeting, uh, you see that you can make a difference and I think that’s part … part of the relationship.

Another echoed the same sentiment, but added that he attributed much of that growth to his peers in the program: “Peer learning, and watching others become more confident, more skilled, more articulate, … learning from them, and we shared experience.”

[ALDP] participants also saw their increased knowledge of self as not only valuable when communicating a position, but also in terms of increasing character. [ALDP] participants viewed characteristics, such as authenticity, integrity, and honesty, as essential to garnering followers. One commented, “Folk that are being led or needing leadership or whatever are going to look at the leader, see his actions and how he acts and walks…and they will obviously see that and emulate it.” Another added that to be an effective leader, one must “have a true sense of self. And that sense of self must be beyond…must be beyond simply skills and abilities but also attitudes and beliefs.” For [ALDP] participants, questioning those attitudes and beliefs was a critical aspect of the program.

Discussion

This applied research study examined [ALDP] participants’ preference of leadership discourses, as well as the relationships between their leadership discourse preferences and other personality assessments. The study also examined [ALDP] program participants’ perceptions of the impact of the leadership program on their preferred leadership discourse.

Research Objective 1: Characterize [ALDP] program participants’ leadership discourses preferences, as measured by the Western Indicator of Leadership Discourses

Results show that participants had a near-even preference for the eco-leader (29.5%) and therapist (29.1%) leadership discourses. This indicates both a distributed leadership approach and a focus on followers and relationships. The preference for the eco-leader discourse indicates that participants may conceive of agricultural organizations as “a web of connections, networks that operate like ecosystems” (Western, 2013, p. 245). This has implications for leadership; adherents to the eco-leader discourse believe “organizations cannot be led top-down, for an ecosystem requires nurturing, not controlling” (Western, 2013, p. 245). In this vein, the eco-leader discourse contends that leadership is a collaborative process, rather than the influence of one individual on a group of followers. The preference of a therapist discourse suggests that participants might subscribe to the belief “to run an organization successfully, it’s the people you have to focus on, and it’s the psychological and emotional that are important, not just managing people as function objects or ‘human resources’” (Western, 2013, p. 188).

Participants favored the messiah discourse (24.1%) a close third. This preference indicates participants’ may place importance on fostering committed followers. The messiah leader is considered largely synonymous with the transformational leader (Bass, 1985), and is characterized by the ability gain the loyalty and commitment of employees by articulating a compelling common vision and establishing a strong sense of community among employees. The
messiah discourse, too, focuses on individual followers. Rather than viewing a company primarily as a brick-and-mortar structure, such as a factory or an office, that happens to need human resources to operate, messiah leaders instead view organizations socially, “as cultures, and as constructed systems of meaning” (Western, 2013, p. 220).

Lastly, the least preferred leadership discourse was the controller discourse (17.3%). The low preference for the controller discourse indicates participants may largely eschew a view of leadership that emphasizes hierarchical organizational structure, top-down directives, command-and-control style leadership, and the reward of loyalty and obedience (Western, 2013).

These findings are significant because they characterize leaders in the agriculture community and show a significant preference for the still-emergent eco-leader discourse. The eco-leader discourse may be a logical fit for leaders in the agriculture community because its focus on distributed and collaborative leadership approaches may be applicable in the largely decentralized, egalitarian agricultural community.

**Research Objective 2: Investigate relationships between WILD questionnaire and other personality assessments administered through the [ALDP] program**

We found several relationships between preference for leadership discourse and elements of personality assessments, notably the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) and Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Management Instrument (TKI).

A preference for the eco-leader discourse was highly positively correlated with the MBTI score for introversion (Table 2). While there is no literature that explicitly links eco-leaders with introversion, the eco-leader discourse does view leadership as a more collective, collaborative process, which may be preferential to introverts avoiding the spotlight that is so prized by other discourses (Western, 2013).

A preference for the eco-leader discourse was also highly positively correlated with the TKI conflict mode of “collaborating” and negatively correlated with “competing.” The opposite of competing, those with a preference for collaboration learn from team members’ insights, often resolving some issue that would have otherwise resulted in competing for resources (Thomas, 1974). This finding supports Western’s (2013) description of the eco-leader discourse.

A preference for the messiah discourse was highly positively correlated with the MBTI score for extroversion. Messiah leaders are transformational leaders who offer “vision and passionate leadership” to create inspired, loyal, and committed followers (Western, 2008, p. 40). That those who prefer a messiah leadership discourse also tend to be extroverted is consistent with the literature on messiah leaders. Western (2013) writes flatly, “Messiah leaders are usually extroverts” (p. 240). However, until now there has been little empirical data offered to support this assertion.

**Research Objective 3 - Describe [ALDP] program participants’ perceived impact of leadership development activities on their norms and assumptions about leadership (i.e., leadership discourses)**
[ALDP] program participants identified five broad themes when describing the effects of their participation in the program on their leadership: (a) Positional leaders do not have all the answers; (b) Effective leaders value relationships; (c) Effective leadership promotes collaborative environments; (d) Effective leaders promote committed followers; and (e) [ALDP] participants value practical, everyday leadership skills gained. Embedded in the first four of these five themes is evidence of two important shifts in participants’ norms and assumptions about leadership: (1) participants believe leadership is more about relationships than position or title, and (2) participants feel a collaborative approach to leadership processes leads to greater commitment and better organizational outcomes. Each of these shifts is supported by the quantitative data presented in Table 1, which leads us to some important considerations.

First, participants reported a shift from a position-based leadership approach to a relationship-based leadership. Several participants reported entering the program with a perception of leadership as being based on positional authority: “very much a top-down kind of deal.” However, participants reported a shift toward more collaborative processes that draw on the collective capacity of the group rather than relying on a single, positional leader. This may help explain why participants eschew the controller discourse, which is typified by a command-and-control style of leadership, in favor of the eco-leader and therapist discourses, which focus on distributed leadership structure and a people-first approach.

Second, participants reported viewing relationships with followers with increased importance. Moreover, they increasingly see themselves as central to the followers’ motivations and psychological well-being in a group. Participants frequently talk of the importance of input and buy-in; consistent with the therapist discourse. The therapist leader is one “who listens, cares and encourages, and is usually a leader who is liked and admired…this leader takes care of the team, creating a subtle therapeutic dependency, becoming the unconscious ‘good father/mother’…” (Western, 2013, p. 213). Oftentimes, though, attention to follower motivation and psychological well-being is for the purpose of achieving the end goals of the leader and organization.

Third, participants reported an increased importance placed on fostering collaborative environments. In addition to any increased motivation or well-being of followers, the participants reported a belief that collaboration leads to better decisions and outcomes. This is consistent with the basic premises of the eco-leader discourse.

Fourth, participants reported the necessity of fostering committed followership to ensure increased motivation. The primary means of fostering committed followers was soliciting input and providing an open process for decision making. This is a hallmark of both the therapist and eco-leader discourse; however, each has its own ethos surrounding motivating followers. The therapist leader motivates followers by providing for their psychological well-being and need for fulfillment through meaningful work, but for the purpose of increasing organizational productivity (Western, 2013). The eco-leader, however, solicits input and sets in place collaborative decision-making processes to ensure better decisions; concern for the psychological well-being of follower is also present, but more genuine. With participants reporting a near-even preference for the eco-leader and therapist discourses, it was unclear from which discourse their concern for follower participation comes.

Interestingly, it was the fifth thematic finding related to the value of practical, everyday
leadership skills that alluded to implications for norms and assumptions about leadership regardless of discourse. Indeed, there are aspects of leadership that transcend discourse, yet are nested in skill, experience, and ability to act as a leader. Within this idea of valuing everyday practicality, are findings that the ALDP helped develop interpersonal skills and helped participants gain a better understanding of self and others. Truly, this insight has implications for developing perspective around discourse ethos and allows for contextual flexibility in leadership style.

Conclusions & Recommendations

The preference for the eco-leader discourse indicates that participants may conceive of agricultural organizations as “a web of connections, networks that operate like ecosystems” (Western, 2013, p. 245). This has implications for leadership, because the eco-leader discourse suggests “organizations cannot be led top-down, for an ecosystem requires nurturing, not controlling” (Western, p. 245). In this vein, the eco-leader discourse contends that leadership is a collaborative process, rather than the influence of one individual on a group of followers; and such a perspective is supported by the qualitative themes. Perhaps it is the “behind-the-scenes” approach that makes the eco-leader approach more attractive to introverts.

A preference for the therapist discourse seems to align with value ALDP participants place on relationships. As one shared, “I really think the key is understanding the people that you’re working with.” According to Western (2013), the archetypical therapist leader “listens, cares and encourages, and is usually a leader who is liked and admired, because they understand, praise and support, and stand by their people” (p. 212). Certainly, such a leader is valuable when establishing partnerships and collaborations. As one participant put it, “I am a leader and other people are leaders and they don’t know it. And part of my role as a leader is to help enlighten other people and enable them.”

While the controller discourse may have some value for ALDP participants, they clearly acknowledge the limitations of a positional leader. One participant expressed the sentiment well by sharing, “I don’t assume that I don’t have all the answers or the best ideas and I …I think there’s a lot to learn others.”

Western’s (2013) four leadership discourses provide a useful framework for assessing leadership development program participants’ views on leadership, and for discussing leadership trends in the agricultural sector. Additionally, Western’s (2013) discourses offer a means for leadership development programs to assess their own inherit discourse preference, and more purposefully develop and evaluate leadership development programs and their effects on participants. Additionally, we recommend that administrators of leadership programs administer the WILD questionnaire to participants at the outset and conclusion of the leadership program. This will allow for better measurement of any shifts in participants’ norms and assumptions regarding leadership. Finally, while this study examined the leadership discourse preferences of 23 participants in one agricultural leadership program, further research should be conducted on a larger sample to more fully explore the leadership discourse preferences of today’s agricultural leaders. A larger sample would also allow for the use of predictive statistics, specifically regression analysis, to potentially use MBTI and TKI scores to predict leadership discourse.
preference.

References


The Impacts of a National Animal Health Internship Program on Interns’ Perceived Leadership, Critical Thinking, and Communication Skills

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University of Georgia

Abstract
At perhaps all levels of education, strong leadership skills are often equated with the ability to engage in critical thinking, and effective oral and written communication. The purpose of this study was to identify the self-perceived expansion of animal health interns’ leadership, critical thinking and communication competencies using the UF-EMI and LSI. For the UF-EMI, the total mean score of the pre-critical thinking disposition of all interns was 104.73; post-critical thinking disposition was 114.46, an increase of 9.73. Results of the LSI indicate the just 70% accept who they are and don’t see themselves as good listeners. The researcher postulates that the LSI results are not unique to the study participants and urges colleges and universities to identify ways to address these items.

Introduction/Literature Review
College students often have overwhelming concerns when it comes to preparation for employment after graduation (Gault, Redington, & Schlager, 2000). During their matriculation in college, students have a plethora of opportunities to refine their leadership skills (communication, critical thinking, problem solving, etc.) so as to be more competitive in the marketplace upon graduation. At perhaps all levels of education, strong leadership skills are often equated with the ability to engage in effective oral and written communication. The daunting task of securing gainful employment from companies that require prior experience as well as strong leadership skills can be challenging for new graduates. Employers look for prior experience to qualify entry-level professionals. According to a 2015 Forbes article, many employers feel that recent graduates are unprepared to join the workforce and are unable to apply knowledge and skills such as critical thinking and communication in a real-world setting (Klebnikov, 2015). A study completed by The Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU) concluded that a large gap between college students’ feelings about their preparedness level and employers’ feelings about college students level of preparedness exists. The majority of employers felt that recent college graduates are not prepared for the workforce in areas such as critical thinking skills, written and oral communication skills, and working with others in teams (AACU, 2015). The aforementioned skills are often referred to as “soft skills” and may also include team building, conflict resolution, time management, etc.

Soft skills are defined as aspects of social behavior such as communication skills, leadership abilities, personal qualities such as empathy and friendliness that are required to become successful in life (deRidder, Meysman, Oluwagbemi & Abeel, 2014). A study completed by Brooks, Flanders, Jones, Kane, McKissick and Shepherd (2008) reported that undergraduates seeking employment positions were heavily focused on technical skills and not so much on soft skills. The study concluded that job candidates need to focus more on critical thinking, problem solving, and analytical skills. Soft skills enable a person the ability to effectively relate to others by way of communication, organization, or written skills (Tyagi & Tomar, 2013).
Students’ ability to solve problems and be resourceful is a few of the very non-cognitive (soft) skills some experts view as being of the same importance as mathematics and reading (Adams, 2012). Murti (2014) argues that soft skills are developed through prior relationships, (personal and business) which make them harder to teach and evaluate in a classroom setting. According to a survey by the Workforce Solutions Group at St. Louis Community College, employers acknowledge that recent graduates have high technical expertise in given fields, however over half of the respondents stated that critical thinking, problem solving, and communication/interpersonal skills are areas new hires are lacking in (St. Louis Community College, 2015 p.13).

Crawford, Lang, Fink, Dalton, and Fielitz, (2011) with support from the National Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) sought to determine which soft skills employers seek in new college graduates. Of seven soft-skill clusters (decision making/problem solving, self-management, teamwork skills, professionalism skills, communication skills, experiences, and leadership skills), the top two ranked by employers were communication and decision-making/problem solving (Crawford et al., 2011). Educational systems that do not provide what the labor market needs could be the cause of a disparity in skills needed for recent graduates to enter the workforce. The problem is college students are not being influenced or engaged to focus on soft skills in their coursework. One experiential learning method to potentially influence the soft skills of college students is through internship programs that provide the necessary practical experience for entry-level prospects and promote on the job training (Walker, 2011).

Internships originated in the United States during the early 1900s and are a non-traditional educational approach based on experiential learning (Driscoll, 2006). As defined by Kolb (1984), “… [Experiential] learning is described as a process whereby concepts are derived from and continuously modified by experience” (p.26). The four primary steps within Kolb’s model are concrete experience, reflecting on an observation, forming abstract ideas, and active experimentation (Walker, Morgan, Ricketts, & Duncan, 2007). Although those participating in experiential learning may enter the cycle at different stages, the sequence must be followed as illustrated in Figure 1 (Kolb, 1984; Walker et al., 2007).

![Figure 1. The Experiential Learning Cycle (Kolb, 1984)](image)

An internship provides practical experience for students unskilled in a given profession. Globally, internships can be traced back to the middle ages when apprenticeships were offered by guilds to promote interest in particular trades (Sides & Mrvica, 2007). An apprenticeship is a
paid position for someone who has decided on a career path and is looking to obtain in-depth knowledge in a specific field. Cooperative education or co-op is a type of paid internship that allows college students to work with professionals in their field of study to enhance academic training (Blair, Milea & Hammer, 2013). Externships are shorter in duration and provide students with work experience in a chosen career field. In Europe, youth apprenticeships date back to the early nineteenth century and are still a vital component of European training systems (Olson, 1993; Snell, 1996). The University of Cincinnati is credited with starting the very first internship program in 1906 (Thiel & Hartley, 1997).

Students benefit from internships by being allowed to experience a real world connection to their studies (Mello, 2006), and are typically completed while they are enrolled in an academic degree program (Thiel and Hartley, 1997). Many institutions make it a requirement to complete an internship during a student’s college tenure. Employers benefit from internships by being able to get a glimpse of a student’s work ethic without having to completely hire them (Coco, 2000; Gault, Redington, & Schlager, 2000; Kneumeyer & Murphy, 2001). Employers recruit interns through career fairs, campus recruiting efforts, and through the use of previously established networks with campus clubs and organizations. Additionally, relationships are fostered with companies in the community by way of internships, as well as nationally, which in turn benefits the institutions (Divine, Linrud, Miller, & Wilson, 2007).

One study reported that 94 percent of respondents denoted that an internship provided an experiential advantage when it came to finding a job (Coco, 2000). Internships offer students the opportunity to make classroom knowledge applicable to the real world (Sides & Mrvica, 2007), and students who complete internships are able to return to the classroom and share their knowledge and experiences with their peers and add relevancy to learning (Swift & Kent, 1999). Internships also enable students to clarify career goals and can lead students to permanent positions within companies once a degree is conferred (Divine, et al., 2007). Finally, internships can also be used to aid students in the transition from a college academic setting to a career workplace setting (Taylor 1998). Students can add multiple internship experiences to their resume, which constitutes prior experience in a given field and builds their networking potential.

Few business schools require students to partake in an internship prior to graduation (Weible, 2010) even though students and industry leaders understand the value of internships (Hergert, 2009). The reputation and visibility of a college or university can be enhanced through internship programs offered (Coco, 2000). Feedback from industry leaders of student’s performances in comparison to students from other institutions can be helpful in a universities preparation of curriculum (Divine, et al., 2007). The networking contacts made through internship programs are beneficial in fund-raising, sponsorships, and future student placement in internship programs (Coco, 2000; Gault, et al., 2000). Institutions who foster and nurture relationships between internship programs hold long-term benefits such increased availability of classroom speakers, increased participation in job fairs, and increased contacts for development personnel in various fundraising efforts (Divine, et al., 2007).

Employers benefit from interns by way of inexpensive and often quality labor (Coco 2000; Gault, et al., 2000). Companies do not have to provide benefits (health, dental, vision, etc.) to interns (Divine, et al., 2007), which in turn could possibly lead to lower costs. Interns can be
used during busy times of the year for companies with no long-term commitments (Divine, et al., 2007). Employers can evaluate potential employees prior to making long-term commitments through an internship program. Table 1, developed by Dobratz, Singh, and Abbey (2014) represents the values of internships for students, employers, and institutions as determined by a cadre of researchers.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits of Internships</th>
<th>To the Student</th>
<th>To the Institution</th>
<th>To the Employer</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Potentially earn money while receiving a learning experience (Thiel &amp; Hartley, 1997)</td>
<td>Enhance the qualifications of professors (Divine, et al., 2007; Thiel &amp; Hartley, 1997)</td>
<td>Reduced turnover (Kuemeyer &amp; Murphy, 2001)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Better interpersonal skills (Beard &amp; Morton, 1999) from Divine et. Al., 2007)</td>
<td>Keeping faculty up-to-date on the community (Divine, et al., 2007)</td>
<td>Ability to evaluate potential employers prior to full-hire (Divine et al., 2007; Gault, Redington, &amp; Schlager, 2000)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Higher personal as well as social skills (Page, Geck &amp; Wiseman, 1999)</td>
<td>Can lead to company donations (Thiel &amp; Hartley, 1997)</td>
<td>Strengthens relationships with universities (Divine et al., 1996)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better equipped and more qualified (Divine et al., 2007; Taylor, 1988)</td>
<td>Potentially increase enrollment through the attraction of the required offering (Divine, et al., 2007)</td>
<td>Inexpensive resources of student interns (Coco, 2000)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher starting salaries (Taylor, 1988)</td>
<td>Attract nontraditional students (Thiel &amp; Hartley, 1997)</td>
<td>Ability to create brand loyalty among those involved (Thiel &amp; Hartley, 1997)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More maturity and confidence (Thiel &amp; Hartley, 1997)</td>
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</table>
More job offers “(Coco, 2000; Swift & Kent, 1999; Taylor, 1988)” from Divine et al., 2007 (Thiel & Hartley, 1997)
Leadership skills (Cook, Parker, and Pettijohn, 2000 from Divine 2007) (Gault, Redington & Schlager, 2000)
Job acquisition skills (Divine, 2007)
*Note. Adapted and used with permission from Dobratz, Singh, & Abbey (2014)

Although much is known about the value of internships for students, employers, and institutions of higher education, little is known of the impact of an internship with regard to students’ communication, critical thinking, and leadership skills; hence, the purpose of this research study.

**Theoretical Framework**

This study was organized around two theoretical frameworks – the first being critical thinking as defined and explored by Peter Facione. Facione’s (1990) definition of critical thinking states that “we understand critical thinking to be purposeful, self-regulatory judgment, which results in interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and inference, as well as explanation of the evidential, conceptual, methodological, criteriological, or contextual considerations upon which that judgment is based” (p. 2). From Facione’s study, the critical thinking skills identified were Interpretation, Explanation, Analysis, Evaluation, Inference, and Self-regulation. In addition, Facione (1990) refers to his identification of critical thinking dispositions, or approaches to life that increases an individual’s likelihood to participate in critical thinking. These dispositions include analyticity, self-confidence, inquisitiveness, maturity, open mindedness, systematicity, and truth seeking. Facione described further characteristics of dispositions in 1998:

“Inquisitiveness with regard to a wide range of ideas, concern to become and remain well-informed, alertness to opportunities to use critical thinking, trust in the process of reasoned inquiry, self-confidence in one’s own abilities to reason, open-mindedness regarding divergent world views, flexibility in considering alternatives and opinions, understanding the opinions of other people, fair-mindedness in appraising reasoning, honesty in facing one’s own biases, prejudices, stereotypes, or egocentric tendencies, prudence in suspending, making, or altering judgments, willingness to reconsider and revise views where honest reflection suggests that change is warranted” (p.8).

Dispositions develop over time and are influenced by an individual’s surrounding environment. They are strong precursors of critical thinking and even though they can be changed, they often change slowly and over an extended period of time (Irani, Rudd, Gallo, Ricketts, Friedel, & Rhoades, 2007).
Engagement, cognitive maturity, and innovativeness – examples of dispositions that can be impacted by a host of variables in one’s environment – can be measured via an instrument referred to as the University of Florida Engagement, Cognitive Maturity, Innovativeness (UF-EMI): Critical Thinking Disposition Assessment (Ricketts, Williams, & Priest, 2009). According to Ricketts and Rudd (2005):

“The Engagement disposition measured students’ predisposition to look for opportunities to use reasoning; anticipating situations that require reasoning; and confidence in reasoning ability. The Cognitive Maturity (Maturity) disposition measured students’ awareness of the complexity of real problems; being open to other points of view; and being aware of their own and others’ biases and predispositions. The Innovativeness disposition measured students’ predisposition to be intellectually curious and wanting to know the truth” (p. 33).

The second theoretical base for this study is grounded in the theory of self-efficacy. According to Bandura (1977, 1986) self-efficacy is a person’s belief in their own ability to start, perform, and complete specific activities at high levels even in the midst of adversity. Self-efficacy espouses those individuals with high self-efficacy will be competent performers of the skills or activities for which there are efficacious. Therefore, leadership students who are efficacious in leadership skills are likely to exhibit those skills as student or professional leaders.

Self-efficacy is a primary tenet of Social Cognitive Theory, which explains that behavior is reciprocally influenced by personal factors and the environment (Bandura, 1986). Through this lens, leadership course content and experiences (environment) reciprocally interact with the personal characteristics participants/students bring to the course and expected leadership skills (behavior).

Given this theoretical framework, according to Facione (1995), a student who experiences an internship is likely to experience analyticity, self-confidence, inquisitiveness, maturity, open mindedness, systematicity, and truth-seeking, dispositions of critical thinking. If a student gains those benefits, according to Facione (1995), the student should be able to think critically.

**Methods**

The purpose of this study was to identify the self-perceptions of animal health interns in regard to the expansion of competencies based in leadership, critical thinking and communications – skills necessary to be an effective intern. The objectives that guided this study were:

1. Identify the demographic characteristics of the animal health interns;
2. Analyze the perception of leadership and life skills focusing on working with others, decision-making, positional leadership, understanding of self, and communication among the interns; and
3. Identify the interns’ self-perceived critical thinking skills before and after the completion of a 12week internship.

The population for this study was a convenience sample consisting of all interns (N=32) employed during a summer-long national animal health internship program that was structured...
based on the following practices: (1) participants were strongly encouraged to participate in an orientation session to ensure the same expectations and role definitions were in place for all, (2) participants were greeted and given presentations by upper level executive employees (i.e. CEO of company, VP of marketing, Director of HR, etc.), (3) participants were provided with an intern supervisor who performed mid-summer checks to assess the intern’s progress, (4) participants were provided with real work assignments and asked to contribute value to the company at the end of the 12 week program through their projects, (5) participants were encouraged to involve other employees and interns in their summer projects, (6) participants were encouraged to showcase their intern work through company-wide presentations at the conclusion of the internship program, and (7) participants were given the opportunity to conduct exit interviews and provide feedback with the intern coordinator.

Of the 32 interns, 30 chose to participate in the study. The areas of concentration for the animal health interns were home office, food animal sales, companion animal sales, and research and development. All participants were advised of their rights as human subjects and asked to review an Institutional Review Board (IRB) consent form prior to taking the survey – which was distributed as hard copy at the conclusion of the internship program. The quantitative survey consisted of two domains – the University of Florida Engagement, Cogitative Maturity, Innovativeness (UF-EMI) assessment and the Leadership Skills Inventory (LSI).

The retrospective post-test only version of the UF-EMI contains 26 items, each relating to one of the three constructs: engagement, cognitive maturity, and innovativeness. Reliability has been calculated on each of the constructs in a previous study at the University of Florida and has ranged from: (engagement = 0.906, maturity = 0.787, and innovate = 0.797) (Irani, et al., 2007). Reliability was also reexamined with this study’s population. The instrument asks the participant to select a level of agreement (strongly disagree to strongly agree) with each statement after completing the internship.

The Leadership Skills Inventory (LSI) was developed at Iowa State University in 1980, tested in 1981 by Carter and Townsend (Townsend, 1981) and revised in 1983 (Townsend & Carter, 1983). This survey consists of 21 statements describing various leadership and life skills, which correspond to five internal scales used for analysis: working with others, decision-making, positional leadership, understanding of self, and communication. Respondents are given a Likert-type scale for each statement (1=strongly disagree; 5=strongly agree). This instrument has yielded consistent reliability coefficients from previous studies (Thorpe, Cummins & Townsend, 1998; Bruck, 1997; & Taylor, 1998) and more recently Rutherford (2002) reported reliabilities ranging from .63 to .83.

Data was analyzed with Excel and SPSS. Mean scores, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages were all analyzed. Analysis and findings will involve aggregate data which does not allow the researcher or any consumer of the research to be able to identify participants responses to any of the questions or survey items.

Results

Objective one: Identify the demographic characteristics of the animal health interns.
Student interns represented the following college majors where veterinary medicine and animal
science were highlighted by the majority: agribusiness, agricultural education, accounting/finance, animal science/business, sales & marketing/ agricultural communication, animal science/pre veterinary medicine, veterinary medicine, biology, marketing, business, animal science/ MBA, agricultural communication/international agriculture, animal science, biology/agricultural engineering, and poultry science. As highlighted in Table 2, 54% of the respondents fall between the ages of 22-24, gender was nearly equal in representation, 70% were Caucasian, and 73% of the respondents reported being an undergraduate. Lastly, nearly one third of the respondents reported having a previous internship experience.

Table 2

Demographic Characteristics of Student Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-21</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-25</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-31</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic Level</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Previous Internship Experience</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Total N=30.*

Objective two: Analyze the perception of leadership and life skills focusing on working with others, decision-making, positional leadership, understanding of self, and communication among the interns.

In regard to the LSI – as presented in Table 3, respondents scored high percentages in: I can cooperate and work in a group/team, I feel responsible for my actions, I use past experiences in making decisions, I use information in making decisions, I feel responsible for my decisions, and I can follow directions (97%-100%). Respondents scored lower percentages for: I consider all choices before making a decision, I listen carefully to opinions of group/team members, and I am a good listener (70%).

Table 3
### Leadership Skills Inventory of All Interns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strongly Disagree/Disagree</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Neutral</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strongly Agree/Agree</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can cooperate and work in a group/team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I get along with people around me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel responsible for my actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe in dividing the work among group/team members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand myself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel comfortable teaching others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I consider all choices before making a decision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I listen carefully to opinions of group/team members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am respected by others my age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can lead a discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use past experiences in making decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe that all group/team members are responsible persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am sure of my abilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am a good listener</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use information in making decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel comfortable being a group/team leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I accept who I am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel responsible for my decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I can give clear directions 0 10% 90%
I can follow directions 0 3% 97%
I can run a meeting 3% 7% 90%

Note. Strongly Disagree/Agree = 1-2; Neutral = 3; Agree/Strongly Agree = 5.

Objective three: Identify the interns’ self-perceived critical thinking skills before and after the completion of a 12 week internship.

For all respondents (N=30), the mean pre total score of the UF-EMI was calculated as 104.73 and the mean post total score was calculated as 114.46. Mean scores for the pre critical think disposition ranged from a low of 19 to a high score of 87, and the mean scores for the post critical think disposition ranged from a low of 13 to a high score of 95 (Table 4). According to the UF-EMI, the higher the mean score the higher the critical thinking disposition. The interns had the highest scores in the engage construct for the pre and post-tests, which means they are able to anticipate situations where reasoning will be necessary to use and are confident communicators. The second highest disposition was cogitative maturity, which suggests awareness of their own predispositions and biases when making decisions. High scores in cogitative maturity also suggest that the interns are aware of complex in nature problems and there is rarely “one right answer” to problems they may encounter. The innovativeness disposition scores suggests that individuals want to know more and are constantly seeking knowledge through research, reading, and questioning. The UF-EMI uses the CCTDI cutoff points developed by Facione, et al., (1998, p.13).

Table 4
Pre Critical Think Disposition of All interns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>104.73</td>
<td>10.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engage</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>44.67</td>
<td>4.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maturity</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>31.10</td>
<td>4.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovate</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>29.53</td>
<td>2.71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Post Critical Think Disposition of All interns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>%Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>114.46</td>
<td>7.95</td>
<td>0.077</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engage</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>49.25</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>0.077</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maturity</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>34.46</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>0.081</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovate</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>31.75</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>6.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results of the pre and post sum scores for the critical thinking dispositions of male and female interns in engagement, cognitive maturity, and innovativeness were not significantly different – thus the researcher deemed it unnecessary to post results.

Conclusions/Recommendations

Fifty-percent of the respondents were between the ages of 18-21 and 73% self-identified as being
an undergraduate. Fifty three percent of the respondents are reported as males and 70% are Caucasian. This shows a clear lack of diversity within the intern group. There is little to no diversity between the age of interns as well as the ethnicity of interns. To address this, the national animal health internship program should recruit a more diverse intern population in the future to include: a variety of ages, ethnic backgrounds, and previous internship experiences – this would better reflect the workforce of a global animal health company.

Interns are not fully confident in themselves or their self-awareness as reported in Table 3. Serving in leadership roles in organizations could help in improving their confidence levels and aid in identifying methods to gain a deeper understanding of self-awareness, such as utilizing Emotional Intelligence which has the potential to impact college students throughout life. Furthermore, colleges and universities should require students to complete a course(s) that focus on communication, teamwork, and leadership in the workplace – all soft skills necessary for success in industry (Crawford, et al., 2011) - so they are better prepared when interning and/or entering the workforce.

The respondents’ self-reported scores on the LSI seem to conflict with previous research (Brooks, et al., 2008) and (Crawford, 2011) - which makes the case for more studies to be conducted in the area of students’ perceived soft skills and their preparedness in comparison to employers perceptions about college students’ level of preparedness. The typical ranges for the UF- EMI are: Engagement 28 – 55, Maturity 16 – 40, Innovativeness 15 – 35, and Total 59 – 130. The possible ranges for the UF- EMI are: Engagement 11 – 55, Maturity 8 – 40, Innovativeness 7 – 35, and Total 26 – 130. As reported in Table 4, the total mean score of the pre-critical thinking disposition of all interns is 104.73. The total mean score of the post-critical think disposition of all interns is 114.46. The respondents fall between the typical and possible ranges with an average score for both the pre and post dispositions. The respondents’ total mean post score increased by 9.73 which would indicate that the national animal health internship program had an overall positive effect on the participants’ Engagement, Cognitive Maturity, and Innovativeness dispositions. This increase could be attributed to the structure of the internship program and shows the need for students to complete internship programs.

The researcher believes this type of study should be replicated to include other animal health companies and possibly other companies in different industries to truly determine the impact(s) of a 12-15 week long internship program on interns perceived leadership, communication, and critical thinking abilities. It is extremely important to follow-up this study with a qualitative study that highlights employer perspectives and drills deeper to understand the true impacts of internship programs from the eyes of industry leaders. It is also recommended that future studies conduct a focus group of interns so as to gain a deeper understanding of the impacts of a national animal health internship program.

References


Olson, L. (1993). Creating apprenticeship system will be tough, advocates admit. *Education Week* 12, 1, 29.


The Grand Rural Oregon Experiment in Community Leadership Development

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Director, Ford Institute for Community Building (retired)

Craig A. Smith, MBA
Executive Director, Rural Development Initiatives (retired)

Abstract

Between 2003 and 2016 the Ford Institute Leadership Program graduated more than 6,300 community members from its leadership classes held in rural communities across Oregon. The classes, which consist of 48 class hours on traditional leadership subjects, augmented by a community project, engaged a broad and diverse group of citizens from youth to elders. The purpose of the training was to develop leaders who would strengthen community organizations and collaborations that would in turn change metrics of community vitality. Formal evaluation shows that the classes have strengthened community leaders, organizations and collaborations, and there is growing informal evidence that community projects led by graduates are impacting vitality. Much more formal evaluation is proposed for this grand experiment.

Introduction

The Ford Institute for Community Building is an initiative of The Ford Family Foundation of Roseburg, Oregon. The Foundation formed in 1996 from the estate of Kenneth W. Ford, owner of Roseburg Forest Products. The mission of the foundation, which serves rural communities (under 30,000 population) in Oregon and Siskiyou County, California (hereafter only Oregon is noted) is “successful citizens, vital rural communities.” The Foundation initially created large scholarship and grant programs, but in 2000, it launched a new initiative, called the Ford Institute for Community Building, to achieve vital rural communities through leadership development (successful citizens). The Institute created the Ford Institute Leadership Program as the vehicle for class delivery.

The idea of using leadership to achieve the mission originated with Mr. Ford, a lumberman who understood from his personal experience that those communities where his company had large mills tended to operate as company towns where the mill managers served as the town leaders. He intuited that there was much broader capacity within the community that could be developed. Mr. Ford worked with Dr. Charlie Walker, a Foundation board member and then President of Linfield College in Oregon, to move from his “founder’s intent” to a concept: an Institute that would develop successful citizens through structured leadership training.

In development of the Institute concept, in 1999 the Foundation hosted a conference that brought together from around Oregon experts on rural development and leadership. The keynote speaker, Charles Bray, past president of the Johnson Foundation, offered a list of guidelines including: development of community leadership is essential, building community assets trumps assessing
community needs, and “sticking with it is essential; three-year investments are delusional” (Gallagher, 2012).

With these guidelines in hand, senior staff and Foundation board members took a fact-finding trip visiting, among others, the Blandin Foundation in Minnesota with its statewide community leadership program. The travelers were impressed with the “Blandin model” – which involved bringing several mid-career, known leaders from several communities together for a week of intensive training at a conference center. This model became the working concept for the Institute program.

In May 2001 the Institute hosted a second larger conference with nationally-recognized authorities on rural leadership, including senior officers of the W. K. Kellogg Foundation. With notes from the fact-finding trip and the two conferences, the board met in a retreat to set strategic directives for the Institute. Key directors were: invest over time and get to know communities well, commit deeply to communities and believe in their capacity for growth, support local efforts to sustain leadership after interventions and training, and know how to assess the viability of a community.

In early 2002 the founding director of the Institute looked to one of the authors (Gallagher), who then worked with the Oregon State University Extension Service, for guidance. He was familiar with Extension’s Family and Community Leadership program (Schauber, 2001) and 4-H youth leadership programs (Seevers and Dormany, 1995). He offered a quite different model than that used by Blandin, a model more like the Family and Community Leadership Program. His model involved engaging a diverse group of community members in a leadership class, to be held in the community, and spread out over several months. The class was to include youth (teenagers) to elders, a mix of known, emerging, and potential leaders, and ethnic diversity appropriate to the community. It also was to involve sharing meals together and ideally a class/community project to work together.

With this new approach developing, in late 2002 the Institute contracted with the Heartland Center for Leadership Development in Lincoln, Nebraska, to prepare a curriculum. The Heartland Center engaged The Brushy Fork Institute at Berea College in Kentucky and Rural Development Initiatives (RDI) in Oregon as advisors. The Heartland Center is known as a national leader in rural community development; the Brushy Fork Institute is known for its community outreach in its service to Berea College; and RDI at that time was known primarily as an economic development nonprofit that worked in conjunction with various departments of the State of Oregon in rural communities. RDI, however, had also developed a rural leadership class called Rural Futures Forum, which it offered in communities where it was facilitating economic development projects. As the Institute and RDI became acquainted, it became apparent that the new Institute leadership class could supplant the Forum and be delivered by RDI trainers. The scale of the endeavor was to be much larger than the Forum, but the grand scale it ultimately became was not apparent at the time.

Rather than build up the staff to offer the leadership classes in house, in January 2003, with Gallagher as the new Institute director, the Institute contracted with RDI to serve as the delivery partner for the new program. From that date forward, the Institute and RDI operated as a team
and within weeks of the contract, RDI, using a draft curriculum from Heartland Center, offered the first “Leadership Development” class to the communities of the Coquille Valley located west of Roseburg. RDI had worked in the valley in previous years and quickly engaged 18 participants from ages 17 to 70, with experience ranging from elected leaders to interested community members and a high school student.

The curriculum consisted of 16 modules of three hours each, designed for an audience at about the community college level. Core elements included: the practice of leadership, community vitality, community development, communication, working in groups, managing conflict, running effective meetings, class (and community) project selection, impact and stakeholder analysis, resource development, project management, action planning, making presentations, marketing your project, and growing volunteers. The curriculum was seeded with exercises, such as appreciative inquiry and asset mapping and an early module included the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, implications of which were discussed in each of the subsequent modules. The Heartland Center embedded a class/community project in the curriculum so participants would be selecting and designing an actual project while learning new leadership knowledge and skills. The Institute agreed strongly with the project idea and made offered up to a $5,000 match.

With the initial class being well received, the team soon engaged additional communities, with the plan being to engage four communities each fall and four more each spring. To provide the training to all 700-plus rural communities the team divided them into clusters, called “hubs,” using watershed boundaries, county lines, school districts, and advice from the communities as guides. Ultimately there were 88 hubs with an average population of about 8,000. The team met each semester to select hubs to receive the class the following year. Rather than advertising the program, the team relied on word-of-mouth advertising, much occurring through the League of Oregon Cities, Association of Oregon Counties and RDI’s network of contacts. Interested communities contacted the Institute or RDI to be entered into the queue.

To identify class participants, RDI in each community developed a committee of known leaders who first brainstormed a list of organizations, both formal and informal, in the community, and then identified representatives of those organizations, often creating a list of over 100 individuals. Committee members visited with top nominees, providing information about the class, such as time commitment. The nominees, if interested, would apply. In this way all class participants were recommended by community members and all were volunteers. The team originally set class size at 18 but that number grew to 25 as trainer skill increased; larger classes were tested but found less effective by trainers at developing the desired conversation. All costs were born by the Institute and participants only had to commit their time and energy.

As there were often many more applicants than spaces in the class, the Institute in 2004 asked the Foundation board to fund up to three leadership classes in each community, giving each hub about 75 total graduates. This decision dramatically increased the Institute budget and RDI contract three-fold and challenged RDI’s capacity to deliver multiple classes simultaneously. As classes were held at a convenient meeting place in a hub community, trainers had to drive to the community. RDI responded by hiring and locating trainers on a regional basis. The team tested several class presentation schedules but the favorite for community members turned out to be offering modules Friday afternoon and evening and Saturday morning and early afternoon, about
one weekend a month for four months. The actual weekends were scheduled so they did not conflict with events on the community calendar. The program included catered meals each day, often served by a local restaurant or caterer, to provide time for out-of-class discussion.

For communities with many Spanish-speaking residents, RDI developed a 12-hour “prequel” class in Spanish to prepare participants for the main class. RDI also developed a similar prequel for Native American communities, which was taught by a Native American trainer. Both classes emphasized that the leader/follower relationship is defined by the culture.

Most of the class participants were engaged in one or more organizations—nonprofits, membership groups, community organizations, and local government—in their community and soon they requested additional training to apply the new leadership knowledge and skills to their specific organizations and collaborations. In 2004 the board approved, and the Institute began to offer classes called “Effective Organizations” and “Community Collaborations” in each hub, thus adding to the budget, contract, class load, and the commitment to communities. (Two additional contractors, Human Systems and the Nonprofit Association of Oregon, helped RDI deliver these classes, each serving about one third of the state.) Each class included 16 hours of class time with follow up one-on-one consultation with a professional and more detailed support available through a technical assistance grant from the Foundation. To provide additional support for graduates of any of the three classes, and for those who were not able to attend the classes, the Institute developed a set of resources - a free book program, a semiannual periodical (Community Vitality), a website with various resources, and conferences.

After much consideration the team organized the delivery of the five classes into a five-year sequence: leadership development cohort 1, effective organizations, leadership development cohort 2, community collaborations, and leadership development cohort 3. This arrangement allowed each class to promote the next; for example, the asset mapping exercise in the first leadership class identified the organizations to invite to the following effective organizations class, and the effective organizations class brought in new contacts who seeded the second leadership class. The collaborations class filled with all previous class participants and their invitees who seeded the third leadership class.

To structure delivering five classes to each of the 88 hubs, the team brought four hubs into the five-class sequence each fall, and four more each spring. Once the pipeline was full, in 2007, there were 20 classes with about 500 participants offered each fall and each spring. Through this period the team’s “big, hairy and audacious goal” was to provide all communities with classes in ten years, by 2013; we expected to have 5,000 graduates.

The five-year commitment to each hub meant that the team got to know communities very well, and it soon became apparent that there were high capacity, motivated graduates of the leadership classes who were willing to volunteer their time to help with the next classes. Indeed, some class participants were current or former teachers and many had significant leadership experience. RDI developed a program to prepare “community ambassadors” who would help organize and present subsequent leadership classes. About ten percent of leadership class graduates, including youth, volunteered to become community trainers, creating a large pool, presently over 660 individuals, of talent for their hub, the Institute, and RDI. In 2012 the Institute moved forward
with a “Ford Community Fellows” program, where the Institute selected Fellows from among the best of the community ambassadors, provided advanced training and a small stipend, and asked the Fellows to “go forth and practice the art and science of community building.” This cadre of fellows, along with the hundreds of community ambassadors, serve as key liaisons between the Foundation and its communities, and as key liaisons to other foundations, organizations, institutions and agencies that wish to work in the community.

RDI and the Institute did not quite meet their goal of engaging all communities by 2013, in part as some proposed hubs subdivided, but by the spring of 2016 the team had offered at least one leadership class in all hubs, and the vast majority had participated in all five classes. There were 6,300 graduates of the leadership class and 3,000 more graduates of the organizations and collaborations classes. In 2012 the Foundation president and Institute director retired and new leadership began a process of closing the Ford Institute Leadership Program in favor of efforts to work directly with the graduates to promote projects and programs that would move communities toward vitality. These new efforts are still very young and have not be formally evaluated.

**Literature Review and Theoretical Framework**

There are numerous examples of leadership programs, including rural programs, in the nation (Kaufman & Russ, 2006; Russon & Reinelt, 2004; Flora et al. 2004) and the use of a structured curriculum presented in a class format is the norm (Knowlton, 2002). The Institute’s leadership program was given much of its theoretical substance by the Heartland Center and its consultants the Brushy Fork Institute and Rural Development Initiatives. While the Center selected and refined the module content the Brushy Fork Institute introduced the theory of how leadership promotes community vitality -- establishing the working hypothesis for the program -- called the Tupelo Model (Grisham, 1999; Brushy Fork Institute, 2016). The model posits a causal hierarchy beginning with (a) human development, followed by (b) leadership development, (c) organization development, (d) community development, and (e) economic development. The Institute, in deference to the mission statement of the Foundation, modified the highest level from “economic development” to “vital rural communities.” The Institute also defined the word “community” as being primarily about collaboration, or social capital. While the Tupelo Model is shown as a hierarchical sequence the model proponents recognize that in practice development may occur at several levels at that same time, that there can be a reverse linkage between levels, and that there are many more variables than leadership that influence vitality (Grisham, 1999). However, the Tupelo Model was found to be simple and effective in discussions with community members, and the Foundation board, as it made the point that the Institute program was about the leadership element of vitality, not the entire complex of variables that influence rural community vitality (Etuk et al, 2013).

An underlying principle of this model is that “local people must address local problems” (Brushy Fork Institute, 2016). One of the challenges of government and philanthropy is to not take a “top down” approach where expert professionals both define the problem for communities and then define a solution, often presented as a “best practice.” This challenge of being in service to communities had been encouraged in the early conferences and in the book “Challenging the Professions” (Chambers, 1993) offered to the Institute by staff of the W. K. Kellogg Foundation.
The wisdom of the book was: If professionals and academics in the Institute, including board and staff, do not trust the local community for problem definition and problem solution then the local knowledge and the local commitment critical to success would be lost. Each community needs to define and achieve its own vision of vitality.

The curriculum also expressed the hands-on experience of the Heartland Center and RDI. They were aware that the appreciative inquiry exercise (Cooperrider & Srivasta, 1987; Priest et al. 2013) and the asset mapping exercise (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993) helped people to shift from a glass half empty to a glass half full perspective. They also recognized that hands-on experience (Kolb, 1984; Richardson, 1994) in the class project would be important as graduates moved beyond the class project to “what’s next” in their community. The Heartland Center also designed the curriculum so that it emphasized guided and candid discussion with limited mini-lectures on selected topics (Galpin, 2009).

The Heartland Center incorporated much research on social capital into the curriculum, including team work, making meetings work, working across differences, and other aspects of social capital (Flora & Flora, 1990; Pigg, 2002). The RDI and Institute team furthered the growth of social capital through their program design, such as having meals between modules. The curriculum also drew on the related work of Castle (1998) called “total rural capital” with its attention to the importance of place and place-based resources and values. Oregon is one of the most geographically diverse states in the nation and it was critical that the leadership program work with people in their specific place and with their specific history. RDI trainers were prepared to engage class participants in the “genius of their place.”

As the Institute moved toward a program for delivery, it checked itself against the principles set down in the W.K. Kellogg Foundation report, “Better Than Bake Sales: A Leadership Programming Study” (Knowlton 2002). The report surveys several dozen community leadership programs and identifies seven common program limitations: lack of shared vision, siloed participation (too few participants from a single organization or community), fragile revenue streams, limited expertise (of trainers), home-grown (not built on proven principles), limited dose (time in training), and limited evidence of community impact. These principles helped the Institute anticipate weaknesses to address as the program developed rapidly from 2003 through 2007. It was of particular benefit to the Institute to have the financial resources, as well as a partner in Rural Development Initiatives, to avoid these limitations.

Evaluation

The Tupelo Model provided the basic logic for the evaluation. The challenge, at first, was to help the Foundation board members understand that causality is very difficult to prove, and that the expression of the Tupelo Model – from an investment in leadership to changes in a community vitality metric – takes time. The board members, most of whom were in private business, wanted immediate results but initially the team could provide little more than input and output data about the classes and participants. What did matter to board members, however, were informed opinions and stories that developed in communities and came to them via staff reports, but also informal channels outside the Institute. From these opinions and stories it was clear that the
Institute program was viewed in communities as very timely and important; a queue of communities wanting to be in the program began to form.

For early evaluation of classes the team used simple Likert-scaled and open-ended questions about the program, the curriculum, the trainers, and the facilities and food. These early responses helped to improve the entire program, from selection of participants, to changes in the curriculum and improvements in the class project criteria. As the project was where the “rubber met the road” that was where issues most often arose, ranging from the individual that was upset his or her project was not selected by the class, to excessively large projects that were beyond the ability of the class to complete, to projects that required local government approval that might take months or years. With time, the criteria limited projects to improvements in places such as parks and playgrounds, community entry signs, and bike racks around town.

As the number of class graduates increased into the hundreds and then thousands, the Institute contracted with faculty of the Oregon State University, Department of Family and Community Development to conduct formal evaluation beginning in 2007. At that time the Institute and evaluation team accepted the terminology used in the Logic Model Development Guide developed by the Kellogg Foundation (2000) of inputs/resources, outputs, outcomes (immediate, intermediate and late), and impacts. This decision, while academically defensible, created a vocabulary that was very difficult for staff and most board members to understand, and was very seldom if ever used with community members.

Rather than a large summative evaluation, the faculty proposed a series of annual studies that would move through the outputs, outcomes (immediate, intermediate, and late), and impacts as they developed; the mantra of the evaluation faculty was “evaluate no part of the program before it’s time.” The faculty provided annual reports from 2007 through 2012, each targeting several specific questions with formal methods. This paper concerns outcome evaluations from 2007 through 2011 (Etuk et al, 2009; Sektnan et al, 2010; Sektnan et al, 2011; Etuk & Sektnan, 2012). On a parallel track, to ultimately understand how the Institute investments might influence community vitality, the Institute contracted with OSU Rural Studies to develop a recommended set of indicators of vitality (Etuk, 2012). The effort started out with a review of hundreds of indicators used throughout the nation, and world, for community planning but ultimately settled on 29 indicators. To measure the changes in the indicators the Institute also contracted with Rural Studies to establish a database, the Rural Communities Explorer, which assembled available data from many sources, to monitor changes (www.oregonexplorer.info).

Results: Inputs/Resources, Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts

Inputs/Resources

The Institute did not suffer, as the W.K. Kellogg report warned, from lack of resources or inputs. By the time the leadership program was offering 20 classes a semester in 2008, the foundation’s corpus had grown to over $500 million, which meant, under Internal Revenue Service rules that it needed to expend 5% of the corpus, or $25 million, each year. The Foundation invested nearly half of those funds in its major college scholarship programs, which supporting over 1,000 students a year, while much of the remainder went into capital projects funded on a grant basis.
The Institute’s first budget in 2002 was about $200,000, which then grew incrementally until in 2007 it was over $2 million, but still only about 8% of the Foundation expenditure that year. Most of this funding was for RDI to deliver classes. It is important to note that this figure represented 40 classes each year, including all travel, pre-class coordination, facilities and catering, post-class project follow-up, curriculum review and development, as well as all office support services. The budget also grew with a host of additions, such as classes in Spanish language and classes for Native Americans, preparation of community ambassadors, and the program for Ford Fellows. A much fuller discussion of the Institute budget can be found in Gallagher (2012).

Outputs

The 2008 evaluation (Etuk et al, 2009) looked at outputs – the classes and the participants. At that time there were 1,279 graduates of the leadership class from 56 hubs with an average class size of about 20. The age range was from 13 to 84 (now 93) with 18% youth (teenage years) and 16% retired. Women outnumbered men about two to one and were the majority in all but one hub. Anglos made up 84% of the participants except in some communities with large Spanish or Native American populations. (Note: If a minority group was missed in the first leadership class cohort, a special effort was made, including offering the “prequel” classes, to engage them in one of the subsequent classes.) In terms of education level of participants, 29% were college graduates compared with 15% in rural Oregon, while 1% had not completed high school compared to 30% in rural Oregon. Class participants were much more likely to be, in the MBTI assessment, NF (45%), nearly three times the reference population (16%) in the MBTI literature (Myers et al, 1994). This group gave the classes a very future oriented character. Over 30% of county commissioners participated in the leadership class as did many city councilors, mayors, organization heads, sheriffs and others in law enforcement, school leaders, and church leaders. Each class had about eight “known suspects” but just as many who were either new to the community or were viewed as potential leaders. Participants gave the classes and instructors uniformly high marks (4.3 on 5.0 scale) with the MBTI module receiving the highest scores. With comments from participants and the experience of trainers, the curriculum was updated at the close of most years, and by 2012 was on version 6.0.

Outcomes – Immediate

For the program immediate outcomes were defined as changes within the individual participant, interpreted by the Institute as becoming a more successful citizen. The 2009 evaluation (Sektnan et al, 2010) found, with class participants self-reporting in a post-then-pre survey, that they had significantly increased leadership knowledge (competency) and increased leadership skill (behaviors) in the many topics in the curriculum, and they had increased motivation to engage in leadership. Participants felt the class increased the number of community leaders (82%), helped them create a better future for their community (85%), helped them appreciate community assets (89%), expanded their network and resources (90%), and helped them work more effectively in teams (92%). Potential leaders, including most youth, gained the most from the class, becoming more like known leaders. Most reported the class “was a life changing experience” and many noted the value of being part of larger network -- social capital one participant called “positive acquaintance.” The outcomes were very similar to those identified in the multi-program
assessment by Knowlton (2002), which was expected as the classes were based on solid experience.

Outcomes – Intermediate

The 2010 evaluation (Sektnan et al, 2011) focused primarily on how graduates used their new knowledge and skill in the community. Of particular interest was how they were strengthening community organizations and collaborations. Graduates reported voting at a perfect 100% of eligible voters, and 87% reported they were applying their new capacity in community organizations, 86% in their family, and 81% in the workplace. This evaluation used a 12-month follow-up survey where participants reported more than doubling their volunteer time from 14 hours to 33 hours per month in service to an average of 2.4 organizations. Many reported they had taken on new roles in community organizations, such as serving on the board or heading up a project. Building on their positive acquaintance with other graduates they often talked about new collaborations among organizations. And, the evaluation also showed that the effects of the leadership training did not decline with time; there was no significant loss of skills or motivation over seven years.

Outcomes – Late

This 2010 study began to examine changes made in the community by the graduates or their organizations, or late outcomes. The increased capacity in the community began to appear within the Foundation itself in many ways, for example, a significant portion of the youth in the leadership class went on to receive college scholarships from the Foundation; the Foundation began to receive stronger grant applications for well-supported and prepared capital projects; and the Foundation found that when it worked in a community on a special issue, such as a new initiative in early childhood development, it had a ready group of community leaders to help it. Other foundations that serve rural communities began to report that they were receiving stronger grant applications and government agencies and non-profits often sought out leadership class graduates to provide them guidance on working in the community. Also, stories began to accumulate that sometimes a community did not ask foundations or agencies for support, but simply identified a problem in the community and solved it with local resources – the ideal outcome of the Tupelo Model.

As part of the next year’s study, in 2011 (Etuk & Sektnan, 2012), the evaluators surveyed 1,844 leadership class graduates and asked how the actions of the graduates mattered in the community. More than 900 of 1,226 comments in an open-ended question about the benefits of the program were about community capacity and how the community now had a critical mass of leaders; there was an infusion of new blood in leadership circles, and a growing number of volunteers both in general and for leadership positions (More information about these evaluations is summarized in Gallagher, 2012).

Impacts

With the change in Foundation and Institute leadership the formal evaluation program was terminated in 2013 before it could explore late outcomes and impacts in depth. It is unclear to the
authors at this time if evaluation of the Institute program will be continued. There are, however, many score of stories that strongly suggest that the Foundation’s considerable investments in leadership training have impacted community vitality. Some of the stories are about individuals, such as class graduates who have gone on to be elected to leadership positions in local and state government where they have supported legislation important to rural communities. There are also stories about how the many graduates in the League of Oregon Cities and Association of Oregon Counties now collaborate to help these interest groups improve communities. Other stories are about physical improvements in the community; there are not fewer than 50 major capital improvements, such as community centers and libraries, which have been led by class graduates. And there are quite literally hundreds of small projects and programs such as improvements to parks, food banks, street landscaping, and even bioswales associated with the class projects and post-class projects by graduates. There are numerous stronger community organizations as well as new organizations, such as a community foundation, and collaborations among organizations to support a particular program or issue. Of the many stories that need to be evaluated in depth, we offer three as examples that are rich with the expression of the community’s social capital.

**Vernonia:** In December 2007 this community of 2,400 residents west of Portland suffered a 500-year flood that seriously damaged their three school buildings, health clinic, utility office, food bank, and scores of homes and businesses. The three schools were rendered uninsurable and the 600-plus students had to either meet in mobile classrooms or be bussed 30 miles over mountain passes to the next community. There was talk of abandoning the school district, but the 56 graduates of Institute’s two leadership classes held in previous years helped with the cleanup and immediate repairs then put their new knowledge and skills into action to lead the design, funding, and construction of a new K-12, LEED certified school and community library. That facility, which many dismissed as an impossible pipedream, opened for classes in the fall of 2012. (A more complete story is available at: http://www.rdiinc.org/news/vernonia_secret_garden. Google map: Vernonia High School, 1000 Missouri Avenue, Vernonia, OR.)

**Dorris:** This town of 930 people in the far northeast corner of Siskiyou County, Calif. had just 24 graduates of leadership classes held in a hub that included nearby residents of Oregon. In 2008 the graduates, who represented many of the organizations of this remote and self-reliant community, began work to develop a new community center. After much planning and fundraising (following the processes defined in the curriculum) they designed, funded, and constructed their new log-cabin style community center, which opened in 2011. The building now serves over 20 community organizations, provides classroom space for the regional community college, and is the interpretive center and offers parking for the nearby Lower Klamath National Wildlife Refuge (Google map: Dorris, CA -- Dorris Lion’s Club). Another project that resulted directly from the leadership classes is the Hood River Waterfront Park in Hood River, Oregon, which opened in 2008. The concept was developed when three members of the first leadership class—one each representing the city, county, and port authority—got into an animated discussion in class about how to replace a swimming hole in the Hood River that had been filled in by an outwash of gravel from Mt. Hood. The swimming hole was an important community meeting place, particularly for Hispanic families who worked in nearby orchards and vineyards. Within months land trades had been made, and within two years
a community park, designed with extensive community involvement, was constructed on the bank of the Columbia River near a favorite beach used by wind surfers. The native plant landscaping was installed entirely by volunteers. There were 24 graduates of the leadership program in that class, including the mayor, who brought that project to fruition. (Google map: Hood River, OR -- Hood River Waterfront Park).

For people in these three communities, there is no question that the projects they developed make their community more vital. It is without doubt that they also change indicators of vitality important to the community, such as having strong local school for Vernonia that keeps young families from moving away; having a meeting place for a score of community groups and community college classes in Dorris; and having a safe place to learn how to swim in Hood River, a community that had suffered several drownings in recent years and where there was a tradition of learning to swim in the river. These projects, and many more across the state, are awaiting evaluation.

While formal evaluation has apparently stopped, a summary comment is captured in a blog by Dan Kemmis, former Mayor of Missoula, Montana, and the author of three books on community development (Kemmis, 1990). About the Institute program he writes: “The evaluation set out to answer several questions, including these: Does the program develop effective community leaders? Does it contribute to increased civic engagement? Does the program build strong organizations? The … answers were all yes. The program’s overarching approach works: Community leaders who attend the classes learn skills, maintain them and use them” (Kemmis, 2012).

**Recommendations and Limitations**

There are many points of discussion regarding both what is working and what could work better in the program. For now, these points are outside the formal evaluation. Positive aspects of the leadership program, which we offer as recommendations to future programs, include:

- Use hubs to bring several communities in the same geographic area together, often bridging historic tensions and building a larger network that can learn from each other and address more regional issues.
- Meet in the community so funders and trainers get to see the specific places, to become more “place based” in their engagement, and so those who may find travel difficult, such as youth and elders, can attend the classes.
- Provide food and time to share it. Encourage participants to talk about topics other than class subjects during meal breaks. Think rural “social capital” in facility selection and program operation – help people get to know each other.
- Stay engaged with communities after the five-year sequence of classes, ideally with more classes and other learning support, but just as importantly support for community-defined projects (Scheffert, 2007).
- Engage a broad spectrum of the community, from youth to elders; the youth bring energy and perspective while elders can offer history and perspective on their place (Jones, 2009; Manning et al, 2006).
• Engage a mix of known, emerging, and potential leaders, and work with the known leaders to be good mentors. In some cases this required helping known leaders adapt from an executive or military style of leadership to a community style where they are working with volunteers.

• Engage a critical mass from each community, not “silied participation” where one or a few fellows are expected to precipitate community change. With most hubs having approximately 8,000 residents and 75 class graduates, the program typically engaged about 1% of the population, which was felt to be a critical mass.

• Promote class/community projects in each cohort. The projects were arguably the most difficult part of the class but also the most enjoyable. With three class projects in each community the projects were a visible reminder of the program and the new capacity of class participants.

• Offer a deep and complex dosage of training, including multiple leadership classes as well as supplementary training such as effective organizations and community collaboration classes. Support the graduates with publications, conferences, website, etc.

• Encourage and support on-going volunteerism. We would note that the 6,300 graduates of the Institute’s classes volunteer over 200,000 hours to their community organizations each month.

• Engage leadership class graduates to serve as community ambassadors, increasing their leadership knowledge and skill, creating valuable community representatives, and reducing the cost of the training. Consider bolstering support in the field using the best of the best as “fellows.” With the Institute leadership program now concluded, there is the possibility that community ambassadors will continue to offer classes.

• Partnerships build capacity. The partnership between the Institute and RDI brought together two entities with different cultures, capacities, and interests, creating synergy where both grew stronger in its own realm. While the Institute was RDI’s primary contractor, RDI, as a nonprofit, generated considerable support for rural Oregon by applying for grants and providing services. RDI enriched rural Oregon by winning a $2 million W.K. Kellogg Foundation grant to develop rural entrepreneurship. (See Connecting Oregon for Rural Entrepreneurship http://fieldus.org/publications/EDS08/EDS_2008CORECS.pdf).

On the limitations side, we learned:

• It is important to engage some elected officials in every class to assure the class doesn’t unknowingly develop a project that has fiscal implications for the elected governments and that the class has the opportunity to connect with local government.

• A few people will be annoyed by a leadership class, particularly those with their own agenda for the community, such as a cabal of historic leaders, a strong city manager with a personal agenda, or an organization or business that enjoys its dominance in a low-capacity community.

• It is important for the class to reach out to the broader community so that class graduates are not perceived as an elite or otherwise self-serving interest group.

• The bias in the MBTI toward the NF (intuitive feeler) type gave the class a very forward looking and caring style, but at the expense of the SP (sensing perceiving) type that was largely absent. Formal sit-down classes are not attractive to the SP type so a special
effort was made in selection of the class project to provide an attractive opportunity for the SP type, who prefer learning by doing, to get involved.

- It is very hard to keep contact with so many communities after the class series ends. This is a problem as there is a tacit expectation in rural communities that relationships are for the long term and that some level of engagement will continue. The Foundation and Institute, and RDI, developed a very positive statewide “brand” but it is very hard to sustain that relationship with both leadership turnover and program changes.

- Boards and staff are subject to burnout on a long-term program and there is an ongoing challenge to keep them from closing an existing program so they can “try their own thing.” This is our interpretation of what has happened to the Ford Institute Leadership Program following the change in board and foundation leadership after some 13 years. Of course, the new leadership is offering new programs, but it is not clear at this time if the new programs will gain traction in rural areas and be able to harness the “standing army” of leadership graduates.

**Conclusion**

We who worked with the Institute leadership program are very aware that we experienced the perfect convergence of founder’s intent, supportive Foundation board and staff, deep revenue and resources, thoughtful and generous partners and collaborators, and community members who stepped up to make the classes and program a success. Whereas most foundations suffer from the “delusion” that in three years a program can stimulate desired change, we were fortunate to have over four times that long. The unique convergence of factors enjoyed in this program is unlikely to be repeated again soon, particularly at such a grand scale.

However, there are foundations that have the assets to take on a similar leadership program commitment for their state, region, or community. The Institute program has been replicated at a smaller scale by others, including the Sherwood Trust, which serves the southeast corner of the state of Washington. The Trust uses the Ford Institute Leadership Program curriculum and offers one class each year, either to a rural community or to an urban, often Spanish-speaking, neighborhood. The Trust has worked with RDI to develop its own trainers and to share in what is learned. (As RDI has been responsible for the curriculum evolution over the years they are the official “keepers” now and it is appropriate to contact them for further information about its use. rdi@rdinc.org; http://rdiinc.org/leadership_development)

Another major conclusion is that only one entity needs to invest in leadership training in a place, and all will benefit. As mentioned earlier, the Institute’s leadership class graduates are well-known among other funders, organizations, and agencies that serve rural communities. The entity that provides leadership training improves the capacity of community overall, making it a good investment for those who care about their place, whether college/university, K-12 education, health care, public safety, faith-based group, public service group, philanthropy, or a collaboration of several or all. We feel strongly that philanthropies such as family foundations are well positioned to provide the training for the place they serve (Cugliari & Earnest, 2007) but are also aware that foundations tend to want to invest for just a few years. Given the longevity of universities, there is logic in having them serve as the focus for community leadership training. One of this paper’s authors (Gallagher, 2013) has developed this idea that higher education can
use community leadership training as an element in developing community wellness (Perez & Ode, 2013).

Before a final closing comment, we wish to note that the Institute’s success is built on prior investments, particularly by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, that seemed to have converged on the Institute. The Institute’s first two directors were Kellogg National Leadership Fellows, one of the directors had taught the Kellogg-funded Phi Theta Kappa Leadership Development Studies at the college level, featured guests and advisors at the early conferences were senior Kellogg staff, the Institute’s advisor within the Foundation had been a program director with Kellogg, the Institute looked to the Kellogg-supported Family and Community Leadership Program as a model, both the Heartland Center and Rural Development Initiatives are Kellogg grantees, and the program and evaluation design are based on Kellogg publications. Some of these investments date back nearly 40 years, but the confluence around this program is undeniable and we are thankful. We would add, here, that these investments support the notion that leadership is not a quick fix but rather an investment that can take years to be expressed. That said, we expect a host of outcomes and impacts from the Ford Institute Leadership Program in years to come.

**Special Closing Comment**

We close with a most serious comment about how leadership development may help rural communities, particularly in the West, respond to increasingly divisive issues: We offer two examples. First, John Day is a very rural community of 1,700 residents deep in the forested mountains of central Oregon. The community has been in economic decline since the 1980s with the reduction in timber harvest on federal lands. By 2010 the Institute had held three classes in John Day, with 62 graduates, when the Aryan Nation came to town prospecting for a new national headquarters. Class graduates met with RDI facilitators and, with great civility, over 350 community residents met twice and helped the visitors understand John Day would not be a desirable headquarters.

Second, we thought the John Day situation was a one-time experience, but then early in 2016 a group from Nevada occupied the offices of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge near the town of Burns in south central Oregon. There were 79 graduates of the leadership classes in this hub (Harney County) including several staff with the refuge, and most importantly the senior county commissioner (title of “judge”). It was the judge, seen often on national news, who, along with the sheriff, was central to the peaceful resolution of the situation. We hear from leadership class graduates that they are now working hard to find ways to help the community, now divided by recalls and lawsuits, to get back to working together.

In exploring this issue we found that the subject is of growing interest. Cartwright et al. (2005) explored the role of Extension Service in responding to community crisis and Perreaut (2012) examined how leadership matters to “civil civic dialogue across ‘enemy lines’.” More recently, Rachel and Stephen Kaplan (2010) proposed a “reasonable person model” that posits that when people can develop accurate mental models (leadership knowledge and skill), take meaningful action and find they are effective, they are prone to be reasonable. One of the authors, (Gallagher, 2015) links community capacity building, such as offered by the Ford Institute, to the model (Kaplan, R. & Basu, A., 2015) and proposes that civility is part of what a community
leader offers and strives to develop. Carvan (2015) has offered that “leadership for the volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous now” is a challenge to the field of leadership education. We concur and suggest much more research into this aspect of leadership, and note that the two communities of John Day and Burns can serve as real case studies. (For more information about working in the communities contact Rural Development Initiatives.)

There is so much yet to learn from this rural Oregon experiment, including studies that can build on the existing evaluation reports as well as new studies that examine specific class elements, participants such as youth, places or regions, or outcomes or impacts. In all cases the thousands of class graduates provide a ready support group for community access. The Ford Institute Leadership Program was a grand experiment in rural leadership development - in terms of the classes offered, people and towns engaged, years of offering, and dollars expended. For those who worked to deliver the program it was an unforgettable opportunity and experience and one that they recommend strongly to others, even if at a much smaller scale. Now that the leadership program has been closed, what matters most for those close to this program is that there are now thousands of community leaders in Oregon who are helping their community find and achieve their own vision of vitality.

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An Assessment of a County Government Agricultural Leadership Program -
Implications and Impacts

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**Abstract**

Agricultural leadership programs aim to expand the horizons of leaders through study and experiences. One particular agricultural leadership program was designed specifically for county officials in <state> in order to develop leadership, communication, and interpersonal skills. This study identified the impacts of this program both individually and program-wide through qualitative methods. Graduates of the program were interviewed and themes were generated based upon constructs within the data. A conceptual framework based upon adult learning theories and espoused theory versus theory-in-use was used to interpret the data. Impacts of the program were categorized as affective, cognitive, and behavioral outcomes. An overarching theme was identified related to an increase in networks and relationships. Impacts documented by this study can provide guidance for those developing similar leadership programs.

**Introduction**

Agricultural leadership programs have an impressive potential to initiate change because of their longevity and production of lifetime leaders and learners through study and experiences (Johnson, 1998; Carter & Rudd, 2000). These programs expose participants to a wide range of state and national agriculture issues that are not commodity specific as well as other issues such as the environment, interpersonal relationships, the political system, and urban interface. While some agricultural leadership programs are privately funded, others are mandated through state extension organizations. Although there is literature that addresses the evaluation of agricultural leadership programs (Black, 2006; Carter & Rudd, 2000; Diem & Nikola, 2005; Earnest, 1996; Van De Valk, 2011), there is a lack of research on the impacts of such programs specific to county leadership. According to Hartley and Allison (2000), the movement to incorporate leadership development in local government has emerged as a way to modernize and improve public service. Extension has historically served communities by offering programming to develop leaders for the contexts of public services and agricultural and natural resources (Carter & Rudd, 2000; Earnest, 1996; Horner, 1984; Langone, 1992). The <institution> Extension Service created the [Institute of County Government] in [year] to provide educational programs for <state> county officials ([State Agency], n.d.). In 2005, the Institute developed a two-year county government agricultural leadership program known as the [Leadership Academy] to further enhance the professionalism, broaden the knowledge, and enrich the experience of county judges and commissioners in the state of <state>.

The [Leadership Academy] provides leadership education and development for <state> county commissioners and judges. Throughout the two-year program period, participants commit to
participate in 16 days of educational sessions, including travel time. Participants attend three three-day sessions, each occurring at locations throughout the state, and one seven-day session in Washington, D.C. The [Leadership Academy] has graduated five classes of participants and boasts 54 alumni. However, prior to this study there had not been a formal evaluation of the program itself or the impacts of the program on graduates.

This study was a part of a larger study that encompassed both a formative and summative evaluation of the [Leadership Academy] program. The purpose of this study was to identify impacts of the [Leadership Academy] program both at an individual level and program-wide. This study solely focused on one extension-based leadership program for public servants in <state>; thus, the findings are not generalizable to other leadership programs.

This study closely aligns with the National Leadership Education Research Agenda, particularly with Priority II—Programmatic Assessment & Evaluation (Andenoro, Allen, Haber-Curran, Jenkins, Sowcik, Dugan, & Osteen, 2013). Priority II of the agenda emphasizes the need for leadership educators and program administrators to: 1. Increase understanding of the differences among leadership programs; 2. Establish the capacity for collaboration in programmatic assessments; 3. Explore the shared standards for leadership programs; and 4. Assess possible resources for programmatic assessment (Andenoro et al., 2013). The findings of this study will contribute to the understanding of different methods that can be used to assess leadership education programs while placing an emphasis on outcomes and intentional curriculum.

**Literature Review**

Many leadership programs assert that participants’ personal and professional networks are enhanced as a result of their participation (Van De Valk & Constanas, 2011) in the programs. Social capital is defined as “features of social organization such as networks, norms and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit” (Putnam, 1995, p. 67). However, in a review of studies on the evaluation of leadership programs using criterion established by Shadish, Cook, and Campbell (2002), Van De Valk and Constanas (2011) concluded there is not enough literature to support a causal relationship between leadership programs and social capital. Van De Valk (2008) noted that while networking is often cited as a benefit of participating in leadership programs and is an important step in enhancing social capital, research is still needed to better understand the dynamic relationship between social capital and leadership. According to Gopee (2002), social capital is important in learning because it is the main process by which adults learn in the context of organizations. In a qualitative study examining how a particular leadership-training program initiates social capital through established and maintained networks, Terroin (2006) found social capital to be beneficial to program success in several ways. The participants’ social networks formed as a result of the program helped to ensure their continuous, informal learning through ongoing interaction with their peers. Social capital as a result of programming was also found to enhance participants’ sense of belonging and bonding.

One example of an evaluation of a community leadership extension programs was a program administered by the state of Ohio. This evaluation assessed impacts on program participants’ leadership skills (Earnest, 1996). Ohio State University (OSU) Extension, in partnership with
Project EXCEL (Excellence in Community Elected and Appointed Leadership) works with counties in Ohio to develop and teach community leadership programs. Fifty-seven participants of seven county programs completed Kouzes’ and Posner’s (1993) Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) as pre- and post-assessments with an 85.1% response rate (Earnest, 1996). Program participants significantly increased their leadership skills in each area of the LPI, including challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, enabling others to act, modeling the way, and encouraging the heart. Face-to-face interviews were also conducted with the seven program directors, and focus group interviews were conducted with six alumni groups. Common themes of personal benefits, community benefits, program benefits, and program improvements were found from the interviews. The most common benefits reported by alumni included: increased networking, a greater understanding and ability to interact with people, increased self-confidence and personal motivation to become involved in community affairs, and recognition of their leadership responsibility as a citizen.

**Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework for this study was derivative from the conceptual framework of the larger study. Merriam and Caffarella (1999) discuss five orientations to learning: behaviorism, cognitive orientation, humanist orientation, social learning, and constructivism. Each of these orientations is described for the purpose of establishing a foundation for this study’s conceptual framework.

There are three basic assumptions to the behaviorist orientation of learning (Grippin & Peters, 1984). First, learning is observable through changes in behavior. Second, the learned behavior is determined and shaped by the environment and its elements and not by the individual learner. Third, the principles of contiguity, or how close in time two events must be to be connected, and reinforcement, or any means of increasing the odds of an event to happen again, are crucial to explaining the learning process. In the adult learning setting, the behaviorist learning process is manifested through behavioral objectives, competency-based education, and skill development and training (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999).

According to the cognitivist, “the human mind is not simply a passive exchange-terminal system where the stimuli arrive and the appropriate response leaves. Rather, the thinking person interprets sensations and gives meaning to the events that impinge upon his consciousness.” (Grippins & Peters, 1984, p. 76). The process includes insight, information processing, memory, and perception (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). Cognitivism is manifested in adult learning through cognitive development, learning how to learn, and intelligence, learning, and memory as a function of age.

Merriam and Caffarella (1999) describe social learning theory as combining elements of behaviorism and cognitivist orientations. Bandura’s (1986) work on social learning theory accounts for both the learner and the environment as interacting parts to learning; behavior is influenced by the environment, which is influenced by people. The learning process is a result of the interaction with and observation of others in a social context (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). Social learning is manifested in adult learning through socialization, social roles, and mentoring.
Humanist theorists like Rogers (1983) and Maslow (1970) assert that people: control their own destiny, are inherently good and seek to make the world better, are free to act and behave as they choose, and possess unlimited potential for growth and development. Humanism is built upon the understanding that perceptions are centered in experience along with one’s freedom and responsibility to achieve one’s potential (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). The humanist orientation to learning sees the process of learning as a personal act to fulfill one’s potential. Both affective and cognitive needs drive this process as the learner seeks to become self-actualized and autonomous. The humanist approach is manifested in adult learning through andragogy and self-directed learning.

The constructivist maintains the belief that “learning is a process of constructing meaning; it is how people make sense of their experience” (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999, p. 261). The constructed meaning is made by the learner and is dependent on the learner’s past and present knowledge structure. Learning is therefore a result of the learner’s internal construction of reality. Constructivism can be manifested in adult learning in the form of experiential learning, self-directed learning, perspective transformation, and reflective practice.

According to Argyris and Schon (1974), all human action is based on theories of action. Espoused theories of action are those that are reported as a basis for one’s actions (Argyris, 1976). Theories-in-use are the theories of action concluded from how people actually behave, including any relatively or directly observable behaviors. According to the behavioral findings of Argyris (1976), “most individuals studied seem to be able to detect the discrepancies between their espoused theories and theories-in-use of others, but were not able to detect similar discrepancies in themselves” (p. 367). According to Senge (1992), the recognition of the gap between espoused theories and theories-in-use is the first step in learning. Learning eventually results in changes of action and not just the taking in of new information and formation of new ideas.

Methodology

According to Geertz (1973), qualitative research methods add value to the study of leadership because they provide rich, thick description of phenomena, which helps in the capture of multiple views and voices. Also, qualitative methods in leadership studies offer ways to explore symbolic dimensions (Morgan & Smircich, 1980). A qualitative method’s approach was appropriate for answering the research question in this study. This research design allowed for special attention to be given to the exploration of program graduates’ opinions, beliefs, and experiences. The purpose was to identify impacts of the [Leadership Academy] program.

The target population was the graduates of the [Leadership Academy] program from 2005 to 2015. The researcher used a typical purposeful sampling, meaning the selection of participants took into consideration characteristics of the average person experiencing the phenomenon of interest (Merriam, 2009, p. 78). According to Patton (2002), maximum variation sampling is ideal for diversifying your sample population to “avoid one-sidedness of representation of the topic” (p. 109). In this study, maximum variation of the subjects was sought through a process of selection based on graduates’ [Leadership Academy] class number, class size, gender, geographic location, and position held in their counties. Of the 19 graduates selected based on
these criteria who were contacted for study participation, 11 graduates responded and agreed to participate in the study. After completing interviews with the 11 graduates, the researcher experienced data saturation and thus did not contact additional graduates for interview (Merriam, 2009).

The 11 participants represented all five graduated classes of the program. Three participants represented class I. Three participants represented class II. One participant represented class III. Three participants represented class IV and one participant represented class V. There were three female participants and eight male participants in this study. Four of the participants currently serve as county judges, and seven of the participants currently serve as county commissioners. Participants were geographical located across counties located in southeast <state>, central <state>, northwest <state>, and west <state>.

For this study, data collection consisted of interviews. An interview is considered to be “a conversation with a purpose” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 268). A semi-structured interview protocol was developed and utilized to in the interviews conducted with graduates of the [Leadership Academy] program. Areas covered within the protocol included their perceptions and opinions regarding the impacts of the program, the strengths and weaknesses of the program, and future engagement with the program. All of the selected graduates were interviewed either in person, by phone, or through email. Each interview lasted no longer than 90 minutes. Field notes were used to document the interviews.

Upon completion of each interview, the handwritten field notes were typed, coded, and organized by interview question. Participants were assigned a random number; these numbers were used to code the participants’ responses. All coded responses were then categorized by the interview questions asked; some responses were categorized under more than one question as needed. Interview question categories were broken down into similar areas using a constant comparative analysis strategy to identify emerging themes (Merriam, 2009). Through this method, categories of data were formed as the researcher recognized similarities and differences in the data. These similarities and differences were grouped on a similar dimension. The dimension was tentatively given a categorical name. The researcher continued in this process until patterns were identified in the data and conclusions were reached about the findings.

**Study Trustworthiness**

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), the appropriate criteria for the trustworthiness of the naturalistic paradigm include credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. This study confirmed credibility of the data collected through the use of triangulation in the data interpretation process. First, multiple sources of data allowed for triangulation of the sources as the data collected came from people with different perspectives (Merriam, 2009). Also, “methods triangulation” occurred through the use of different methods of data collection, including interviews and documents (Patton, 2002, p. 556). Second, peer debriefs, also known as analyst triangulation, helped with overseeing the data analysis so as to triangulate the interpretation of the data through independent perspectives (Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002). The researcher performed “theory/perspective triangulation” by using multiple perspectives or theories to interpret the data (Patton, 2002, p. 556).
This study also assured trustworthiness through respondent validation, or member checking. The researcher solicited feedback on data interpretations by taking the preliminary analysis of the data collected and sending it back to the participants in the study for their confirmation. Furthermore, maximum variation of the sample selected to use in this study ensured a greater chance of data trustworthiness. Rich, thick descriptions of the findings provided readers with enough contexts to understand the transferability of the study to their current situations. According to Patton (2002), rich, thick description “forms the bedrock of all qualitative reporting,” and “thick evaluation descriptions take those who need to use the evaluation findings into the experience and outcomes of the program” (p. 438). Lastly, audit trails were used to examine the data process and outcomes and establish dependability and confirmability in the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

**Findings**

The following themes emerged from the data: affective outcomes, behavioral outcomes, cognitive outcomes, and networking/relationships. The researcher describes “affective outcomes” as those outcomes identified in the findings that showed changes or emphasis in participants’ emotions and outlook from completing the program. The researcher describes “behavioral outcomes” as the outcomes identified in the findings that demonstrated changes in participants’ behaviors after completing the program. The researcher describes “cognitive outcomes” as those outcomes identified in the findings that indicated participants’ new knowledge or understanding upon program completion. Lastly, the researcher describes “networking/relationships” as those outcomes identified in the findings that have influence on the other three themes of outcomes because of the participants’ formed networks and relationships from the program.

**Affective Outcomes**

It was evident that participants’ enthusiasm for the academy was an affective outcome of the program. Participant P1 said that upon graduating from the program, both she and her classmates “had this energy to use what tools [they] had been given and seek more.” Participant P2 said to the researcher about her positive remarks of the program, “There’s nothing I haven’t told you that I haven’t told 20,000 people.” Participant P6 said, “I am passionate about [the academy] because I believe in it.” Participant P9 conveyed he couldn’t “say enough good things” about the academy.

A change in participants’ confidence levels was another clear affective outcome from program participation. Participant P1 expressed that she is now “more comfortable expressing [her] issues and concerns” in the context of her job. Participant P5 said, “[The academy] helped build my confidence as a speaker and a leader—especially with working with three levels of government.” Participant P7 shared a story about gaining the confidence to skydive after going through the program.

All 11 participants conveyed a desire to be engaged in the program in the future if the opportunity was made available. As one form of future engagement, participants desire to
volunteer and serve future classes (P3, P4, P5, P6, P8, P9, P10, & P11). Participant P3 said, “I’ve got 20 years of experience and I’d be willing to share that on a range of topics.” Participants P1, P4, and P6 all discussed time and feasibility as factors in their future involvement with the program. Participant P4 said about volunteering in the program, “All of us like to serve in some capacity, but do we have time? I have the time, but others may not.” Similarly, participant P6 said, “If I was 35-40 years old, I’d seek much more involvement…My involvement is limited because of my age and time in office.”

Participants also expressed interest in follow-up or next-level program opportunities for those who have been through the academy (P1, P2, P4, P5, P7, & P11). As participant P5 stated, “This is a great program, but it leaves you thirsty for more.” Participant P2 said, “Within a heartbeat, I’d participate in another program.” Participant P4 compared the benefits of going through a second level of the program to those of someone with a bachelor’s degree who wants to continue in a master’s program. Participant P7 said she “would be pleased to do another round of the leadership academy—an advanced program maybe…that [would] touch on [her] ability to work with others.” Ideas for another part of the program for graduates included “a follow-up annual event or class or conference” (P1), an “inspirational speech” (P5), a “two-day event” with a focus on problem-solving or “something hands-on” (P5), or an additional piece to one of the other <state> county conferences (P5). The participants also mentioned the idea of a program reunion as a form of future engagement in the academy (P4, P6, P8, P10, & P11). Participant P6 said, “One thing I have talked about with my classmates is that we wish there were more alumni type meetings…not only to reminisce but also to stay connected more and continue to be a part of the program.” Similarly, participant P8 remarked that she “would love to see reunions happen for the classes to mix and mingle again.” Participant P4 said he thought a reunion for the program could easily be incorporated as part of one of the association conferences.

Participant P9 conveyed that the academy helped him gain “an appreciation for our country and government.” In regards to this new appreciation he said: You know we hear the news and watch the news—we’re quick to judge national issues—but having gone to DC and see what goes on—but having walked through Arlington Cemetery and seeing those who have died for our country [while in DC with the program]—we know people are free to express different opinions, and our country is big enough for those different opinions” (P9).

**Behavioral Outcomes**

Participants reported having sought out and received other leadership positions as a result of going through the program. Participant P1 said, “Since the class, I’ve taken on even more leadership roles.” Two of the leadership roles that participant P1 said she received “because of the program” was the State Affairs-Vice Chair and Secretary of Election & Credentials for <state> Silver-Haired Legislature. Since graduating from the academy, participant P4 now works “a lot with the West <state> association and state association.” Participant P5 credits the academy for providing him with the leadership and confidence to “throw his hat in the running” for a county association officer position at the state level. He also mentioned that serving “as the president in 2012-2013 for the [region] <state> Association” (P5) was a result of going through the program. Upon graduating from the academy, participant P6 said he has served as a leading officer for four different associations tied to county government as well as in other leadership
Participants testified to having worked better with others since going through the program (P1, P2, P4, P7, P8, P9, & P10). Participant P10 said he learned how to “show [court members] the benefits [to his point]” and “get their ground.” Participant P9 said that because of the program he is now able to communicate and work with others who see things differently than him. He also conveyed that he learned how to “be more patient in working through problems” and to “not getting red-faced but staying calm” from the program.

Since completing the program, participants expressed a change in their interview skills (P1, P2, P7, P8, P9, & P10). Participant P1 said the program made her “more conscientious of [her] statements.” “I strive to speak with clarity because I now know how important it is to speaking with professionals” (P1). Participant P9 told a story about being interviewed previously. Participant P9 said, “That class really helped me with getting my thoughts together and stay focused…Every time I’m interviewed I go back to my core statements on public service and public safety.” Participant P10 told a similar story, saying, “We’ve had some issues in our county where I had to be interviewed…[Because of the academy] I learned some tools to deal with the media.”

Participants testified to having encouraged other county commissioners and judges to apply for the [Leadership Academy] program (P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, & P9). Participant P5 conveyed that he has encouraged a fellow county court member to apply for the program. Participant P6 has also encouraged others to go through the academy. Participant P6 conveyed the knowledge that the academy does not always have full classes. “[The academy] should have a waiting line… people should have a desire to grow in their leadership and grow professionally” (P6).

**Cognitive Outcomes**

As a result of the program, participants reported several cognitive outcomes, including an increased knowledge of government at the county, state, and federal levels (P2, P4, P5, P7, P9, P10, & P11). Participant P5 said the academy taught him things about “how the dominoes fall from the top down” in regards to how “legislature’s actions” lead to “reactions in the county.” Meeting different legislators through the academy was described as educational for how to be involved at state level (P10).

Just as participants reported behavioral outcomes from the program including working with others more efficiently, participants also expressed an increased cognitive knowledge of personalities and relationships (P1, P2, P4, P7, P8, P9, P10, & P11). Participant P2 said the lessons on personalities “allowed [her] to see the others in the program, and to see other commissioners.” Similarly, participant P11 said the lessons on personalities helped him work better with others serving with him on the commissioners court. Participant P10 said he learned about “conflict management” from the academy. “You need [conflict management] in the commissioner’s job because you deal with conflict a lot…You’re working with other commissioners on the court and you have to work through differences of opinion” (P10).

**Overarching Outcome: Networking and Relationships**
Participants claimed an increased network of relationships as a positive outcome of the program (P1, P2, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10, & P11). This outcome was recognized as an overarching theme that influenced the affective, behavioral, and cognitive outcomes identified in this study. Participant P1 said she gained a “lifelong engagement with other counties.” She said, “When I go to conferences, I feel like I got big brothers watching out for me” (P1). “The friendships we made from the program are still going on [today],” said participant P2. Participant P6 called upon friends from the program when he ran for office again. “The building of relationships and a network is important...There’s not way to quantify it,” said participant P6.

Participant P7 said he still talks to his classmates about his “personal life” and “county life.” Participant P8 remains “very close to [her] classmates,” calling them regularly to ask about their perspectives. “The networking was the most valuable part of the academy,” said participant P8. When participant P9 was charged with putting together a panel for a V.G. Young conference, he “called upon some of [his] classmates to serve on the panel.” Participant P10 told a story about calling upon a fellow classmate who had experience dealing with “unit road systems” in her county.

Conclusions

The methods used in this study do not allow for the findings to be generalized to other leadership programs. However, the findings do provide insight as to how participants describe a specific leadership program and its outcomes. Through the findings of this study, it was concluded that the impacts of the [Leadership Academy] program can be described in four ways: affective outcomes, behavioral outcomes, cognitive outcomes, and an overarching outcome of networking and relationships. Leadership programs similar to the one examined may be able to benefit from these findings.

Participants described several affective outcomes from participating in the academy. Participants described future engagement possibilities to include volunteering to serve the program, learning more from the program in a follow-up or second-level course, or attending a reunion for the program’s graduates. The affective outcomes identified in the findings align with the humanist orientation to learning (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). Internal changes in attitudes, beliefs, and self-perception can all be a part of one’s development as a whole person. Participants’ descriptions of future engagement possibilities also resemble actions associated with the three highest levels of Maslow’s (1970) hierarchy of needs: belonging, esteem, and self-actualization. For example, participants’ desire to engage in reunions with graduates demonstrates their motivation to belong with their fellow classmates. Participants’ desire to engage in higher levels of learning in the program may represent their motivation for esteem in their knowledge. Also, participants’ desire to engage in service could be linked to their self-actualization as servant leaders in their communities and within the program.

Participants described several behavioral outcomes from participating in the academy. The behavioral outcomes identified in the findings closely align with the behaviorist orientation to learning (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). The identified behavioral outcomes are all observable manifestations of what was learned from the program. Also, the behavioral outcomes are
outcomes that have reoccurred since the program and can be repeated in the future, thereby reinforcing the behavioral learning. The changes in participants’ behaviors are indication of the program’s external role in participants’ learning processes.

Participants described several cognitive outcomes from participating in the academy. The cognitive outcomes identified in the findings closely align with the cognitive orientation to learning (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). The identified cognitive outcomes required participants to process, remember, and perceive information provided by the program. These actions are all characteristic of cognitive learning.

The discussion of the differences and relationship between espoused theories of action and theories-in-use (Argyris, 1976; Argyris & Schon, 1974; Senge, 1992) helps with understanding the relationship between the identified affective, behavioral, and cognitive outcomes of the [Leadership Academy] program. Whereas the affective and cognitive outcomes that participants reported can be understood as espoused theories of action, the behavioral outcomes of the study can be understood as theories-in-use. For example, participants’ affective program outcome of increased confidence may have influenced participants’ behavioral program outcome of seeking and receiving other leadership positions. Likewise, participants’ cognitive program outcome of understanding personalities may have influenced participants’ behavioral program outcome of working with others better.

The findings also reflect the emergence of an overarching outcome of the program that influences the affective, behavioral, and cognitive outcomes of the program. Participants richly described the impact of a gained network of relationships as a result of participating in the academy. This network was described as beneficial to both the participants’ careers and personal lives. This finding aligns with the social learning orientation to learning (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). This finding as an overarching outcome also supports what is understood about social capital as a result of leadership programming (Terroin, 2006; Van De Valk & Constas, 2011). Although Van De Valk and Constas (2011) were unable to establish a causal relationship between leadership programs and social capital, Van De Valk (2008) and Gopee (2002) recognize the importance of social capital as it pertains to the purposes of adult leadership programs. The overarching outcome identified as a gained social network has implications for leadership growth and learning beyond the [Leadership Academy] program. Terroin’s (2006) conclusions about the impact of social capital on individuals who have completed leadership programs support this identified and overarching outcome.

**Recommendations for Further Research**

The findings of this study can serve as a foundation for several future studies. Further research should be conducted using interviews with the former [Leadership Academy] program director, the current program director, and fellow county commissioners and judges who work with graduates of the program but who have not gone through the program themselves. Although this study used self-reports of outcomes and impacts from the program, research shows that reports from second parties can enhance findings from self-reports of leadership development (Alimo-Metcalfe, 1998; Atwater & Waldman, 1998). The current program director and former program director may have insight on other possible outcomes and impacts from the academy as well as
possible testimonies to confirm this study’s findings. Also, interviews with coworkers of graduates may provide supporting evidence to confirm the participants’ self-reports of outcomes and impacts.

Recommendations for Practice

Although this study is not generalizable to other leadership development programs, it is quite applicable for the purposes of the [Leadership Academy] program. Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations for practice are provided. First, the researcher recommends for the program to utilize graduates of the program to advertise and promote the program to potential participants. This recommendation is based on the findings of the study that showed participants found peer recommendations to be influential in their decision to apply for the program. The researcher also recommends for years of experience in county government to be considered more in the application process for the academy than it is currently. This recommendation is based on the findings of the study that showed participants found some years of experience to help with their understanding of program sessions and application of learned concepts.

The program should also consider possible opportunities to utilize the networks of relationships formed through the academy. For example, the program outcome of networks may be instrumental for the mobilization of grassroots efforts in the state of <state>. Or, the highly developed relationships formed from the academy may be useful to researchers looking to study county leadership or social capital. Just as (2008) noted that there is a lack of research pertaining to social capital’s influence in leadership development, the findings of this study could point researchers to opportunities to examine how [Leadership Academy] social networks are enhancing leadership development in participants beyond the program.

Finally, it is recommended that the program continue incorporating “the horse whisperer,” the media training session, and the trips to Washington, DC, a state near DC, and [state], in the program structure. These aspects of the program were all described positively by the participants and should not be discontinued. A few slight modifications to these sessions are recommended. These recommendations include adding more meetings, expanding meeting sessions to allow for greater depth of learning, providing more opportunities for participants to practice learned skills, and considering the diversity of applicants’ experiences when selecting new cohorts of classes as a whole. Further, the program should continue to keep class sizes at smaller numbers and diversity as a central characteristic of program classes.

Recommendations for the Program Director

Based on the findings of this study, there are several recommendations and words of advice for the current [Leadership Academy] program director. Considering the fact that the current program director did not serve the population of this study, or the 54 graduates of the program, it would be highly recommended for the current program director to make efforts to develop relationships with the graduates. By connecting with the [Leadership Academy] alumni network, the program director will increase the chances that alumni will continue to recommend the program to other commissioner’s court members. Also, the current program director could use
this network of alumni to assist in enhancing the program. Based on the findings, it seems participants desire to have more opportunities to engage in the program, whether through service, reunions, or a second-level of the program. The current program could work with the graduates of this program to gain more ideas for what future engagement in the program could look like and to put these ideas into action.

Final Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to identify impacts of the [Leadership Academy] program. Through the collection and interpretation of participants’ experiences in the [Leadership Academy] program, identification of learning outcomes related to the program was accomplished and recommendations for program improvement were possible. Several recommendations for further research and practice were provided based on the findings. This study provides the [Leadership Academy] program a more complete picture of the program’s merits, deficiencies, impacts, and areas for improvement or change while also providing the larger research community documentation of the impacts resulting from the program. These findings, conclusions, and recommendations have the potential to guide the [Leadership Academy] program in better serving their participants that thus develop better leaders and county servants for the state of <state>.

References


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How students learn and develop leadership: A framework and preliminary data

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Abstract

Although student leader development is the goal of many colleges and universities, a framework and theory for how students learn and develop their leadership does not yet exist. Using a general learning model as a basis, we provide a framework for examining how we can encourage and support the leadership learning and development of students in college. We propose that we must first focus on providing triggers to students for engaging in leadership development, assessing and then building the readiness of student to learn leadership, and assessing then building the leadership learning readiness of the college/university as preliminary steps for developing students as leaders. Finally, we analyze data from a larger longitudinal study to provide preliminary support for our model.

Introduction

Those in higher education realize that their institutions are expected to play a major role in shaping the country’s next generation of citizens not just as active citizens, knowledge workers, and life-long learners, but also as leaders in organizations, in their communities, the nation, and the world. Colleges and universities across the nation are providing their students with leadership courses, curricular programs, and co-curricular programs that are designed to develop students’ knowledge about leadership, develop leadership competencies, and provide opportunities for students to practice as leaders. Although research demonstrates that students do increase their leadership knowledge, skills, abilities, and characteristics during their college years (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005), few studies have taken a comprehensive look at the process of leadership learning and development of students during their entire tenure at college, nor have they used a framework or model for understanding how leadership development in college students occurs.

This presentation draws from a larger longitudinal study in which we are using a learning model we apply to leadership in order to assess college students who demonstrate an early interest in leadership development throughout their years at college plus two years post-college. We hope to answer to the following questions: 1.) What characteristics predict which students will pursue leadership development activities in college versus those who do not pursue leadership development? 2.) What triggers students to pursue leadership development opportunities while in college? 3.) How ready are students to learn leadership and how does this impact students’ pursuit of leadership development opportunities? 4.) What paths of leadership development do students pursue? 5.) What environmental and other supports encourage or discourage students to engage in leadership development activities? 6.) How do those who pursue leadership development activities differ at the end of their college years from those who did not pursue leadership development activities? 7.) How do students who pursue one path differ from students who chose another path? 8.) Are those who pursue leadership development in college more likely to have the motivation and competencies to pursue leadership opportunities post-
For this presentation (2 years into this study), we are focusing on the following research questions geared towards understanding how to best set the conditions to successfully develop students before convincing student to participate and placing them in leader development programs or experiences: 1.) Who are the students who participate in the first semester freshman leadership development opportunity? 2.) What predicts continued participation in leadership development beyond the freshman experience? 3.) How do environmental and social supports impact student decisions to pursue leadership development activities?

**Research question 1:** Who are the students that participate in first semester freshman leadership development opportunities? There is little research regarding who participates in first semester freshman leadership development opportunities. In this presentation, we will be exploring the demographics of freshmen who participate including age, race/ethnicity, gender, social economic status, high school GPA and SAT scores, and beliefs about leadership. Some evidence suggests that race and gender explain 1% to 2% of college leadership development outcomes (Dugan & Komives, 2007). Other evidence suggests that socioeconomic factors predict student participation in leadership positions held in college (Soria, Hussein, & Vue, 2014). We could locate no research regarding who participates in freshman leadership development programs. As many of these programs are based on student choice to participate, more research is needed to understand which students these programs are attracting.

**Research question 2:** What predicts continued participation in leadership development beyond the freshman experience? To help us determine the answer to this question, we used a general learning model and applied it specifically to student leadership learning and development. Here we briefly summarize the general learning model (Sessa & London, 2005, 2006).

![Figure 1. General learning model](image-url)
Learning mechanisms are built into the core of an individual’s being and are necessary for them to be successful in their life. Individuals need to maintain themselves in an ever-changing environment and in their intention-bound work. Individuals engage in learning on a regular, continuous basis as they proceed through their lives in every activity that they engage in. That is, individuals are continually deepening and broadening their capabilities in (re) structuring to meet changing conditions, adding new skills and knowledge, and (re) creating themselves into a more sophisticated individual. Three basic learning processes regulate this loop: 1) adaptive learning or a process that leads to a change in behavior as the result of a stimulus in the environment 2) generative learning or purposefully adding and using new behaviors, knowledge, ways of thinking, feeling, and skills, and 3) transformative learning or reframing what is known into a broader and more complex understanding in the way the individual sees her or his self and the world. As individuals engage in these processes, their brains change in structure and the way they function and manifest in changes in knowledge, ways of thinking, behavior, and emotions. The learning processes are triggered by pressures, demands, challenges, and opportunities that affect the individual in such a way that they cannot continue what they are doing in the same way and be successful. That is, individuals do not learn unless they see a need to learn because old ways of doing things are no longer effective (or rewarded). But the world is complex and there are many potential triggers. When and how a person notices a trigger for learning depends on their readiness to learn. People vary in their readiness to learn depending on their openness to learning, learning motivation, level of persistence, and use of self-regulation. Also, changing behaviors, skills, feelings, and knowledge is not enough to cement these changes. Individuals need to reflect on the changes to determine if the changes “worked”. This in turn will allow them to deliberately choose triggers to challenge themselves (or deliberately choose an easier route) in the future as well as strengthen their readiness to learn. Our large scale longitudinal study focuses on applying this entire learning model to student leadership development, but in this presentation, we focus on triggers for participating in leadership development and on student readiness to learn leadership.

**Triggers for learning leadership.** Triggers are experiences that are new and different; that call for skills and perspectives that students have never used or developed or experiences that create imbalance for them and provide an opportunity to question established ways of thinking and acting. When an individual is unfamiliar with a task or situation, or is exposed to a circumstance that is either extremely intense or highly meaningful, their activation level increases. This activation level stimulates learning processes (DeRue & Wellman, 2009).

Recent research suggests that the following experiences are triggers for leadership learning and development in college students: challenging experiences, other people, and leadership development courses and training programs (Sessa, Morgan, Kalenderli, & Hammond, 2014). These findings are similar to triggers for leadership learning in executives (McCall, Lombardo, & Morrison, 1988). Additional research asked the question: What was it about these challenging assignments, dealing with others, hardships, and courses/leadership development programs that caused leadership learning processes to be activated? Or what are the characteristics in the environment that are necessary to trigger leadership learning processes? Five characteristics were found to be more likely to make experiences into leadership learning triggers: dealing with unfamiliar responsibilities, higher levels of responsibility, creating change, working across
boundaries, and managing diversity (McCauley, Ohlott, & Ruderman, 1999, McCauley, Ruderman, Ohlott, & Morrow, 1994, and Ohlott, 2004). We believe that students with more triggers for participating in leadership before college and within their freshman year will predict students’ decisions to continue their participation in leadership development activities beyond their freshman experience.

**Leadership learning readiness:** Learning is a function of both situational (i.e., triggers to learn) and individual conditions. One individual condition of interest is that students need to have the ability and motivation to attend to, make meaning of, and make appropriate changes to their behaviors, knowledge, ways of thinking, and feeling. Readiness to learn is how individuals recognize when triggers for learning are occurring and that they need to change accordingly: they must learn something in order to accomplish their task and then actually make a decision to take some sort of action. For students to be ready to learn and develop their leadership, they need to be ready to learn in general as well as ready to learn leadership in particular.

**General Readiness to learn.** General readiness to learn is composed of openness to learning, self-regulation, and resilience. In terms of openness to learning, an individual may notice a trigger in the environment that requires them to learn and change to be successful, but they don’t believe that they can learn what is needed to deal with it. Dweck (2012) suggests that people tend to fall in one of two categories regarding their beliefs about intelligence and ability and a corresponding two “goal orientations” or “dispositions toward demonstrating or developing ability in achievement situations”. Some people believe that intelligence and ability are fixed personal attributes. They are mainly concerned with demonstrating how smart they are and they prefer tasks they can already do well and avoid ones on which they may make mistakes and not look smart. They focus on demonstrating their competence and receiving favorable reactions from others or on avoiding failure and negative reactions from others. This is called a performance goal orientation, and individuals in this category tend not to believe or at least internalize that they can learn and change. Other people believe that intelligence and abilities are something they can change and develop through experience and effort. Individuals with this belief view effort as a way to develop the ability they need for mastering the task, and they are likely to exert effort to learn, especially if they think they currently lack the ability needed to perform the task. This is called a learning or mastery goal orientation, and individuals in this category believe they can learn and change if they put their mind to it. A second factor that influences readiness to learn is self-regulation, or the self-generated thoughts, feelings, and actions for attaining one’s goals (Zimmerman, 2000). Individuals may notice a trigger in the environment that requires them to learn and change, and may be open to learning, but may not have the skills to follow through the learning process. Self-regulated learners set clear and realistic goals, use strategies, self-monitor, and evaluate their progress (Zimmerman, 2000). Learners who are highly capable of self-regulating are more likely attribute poor performances to strategy deficiency rather than to lack of ability than are poorly self-regulated individuals (Kitsantas, 2002). This attribution may make self-regulators more likely to persevere when their first leadership attempts are less than successful. A third factor that influences readiness to learn is resilience or the ability to adapt to stress and adversity. Learning and change in general is hard work. University life itself is also stressful; students need the stamina to persevere within university life and in their academics. This requires working strenuously toward challenges, maintaining effort and interest over the college years despite obstacles that they encounter along the way. Adjustment and academic
success at university require high levels of resilience (Munro & Pooley, 2009), although research on resilience and university life is limited.

**Leadership specific readiness to learn:** Students may be open to learning, and may have the self-regulation and resilience needed to learn, but they also need to be interested or motivated to learn leadership in order to engage in leadership learning and development. In this section, we adapt Bandura’s (2001) human agency to the idea of a leader agency construct. Core features of agency facilitate individuals’ ability to play a part in their own self-development and adaptation (Bandura, 2001). Human agency includes: 1.) Forethought or future goals, 2.) Intentionality or plans of action to reach those goals, 3.) Self-reactiveness (self-regulation as discussed above), and 4.) Self reflectiveness, which is the process for self-appraisal of one's efficacy. Self-efficacy is an individual's beliefs in their capability to exercise some measure of control over their own functioning and over environmental events.

We believe that students with higher readiness to learn in general and readiness to learn leadership in particular will be more likely to continue their leadership learning and development beyond their freshman experience.

**Research question 3:** What is the readiness of the college to develop leadership in its students? For the purposes of this presentation, we have added a new variable to the general learning model as suggested by Avolio and Hannah (2008): college leadership learning climate. When students perceive the context to be supportive of their leadership learning and development, they more motivated to make meaning of triggering events and learn and develop. Avolio and Hannah (2008) suggest that enhancing the organization’s climate to support development, allows students to feel safe and able to address difficult and challenging trigger events, particularly those that may not be so positive. Based on tenets of self-determination theory (Niemeic & Ryan 2009), students who perceive they are receiving autonomy support (feeling minimal evaluative pressure, low coercion, as well as feeling they have a voice and choice), competence support (feeling that activities are optimally challenging and that they have the resources to be successful), and relatedness support (feeling liked, respected, and valued) will be more likely to be internally motivated to learn.

**Research question 3b:** Do students who perceive their university setting to be autonomous, competent, and relatedness supportive towards their leadership development more likely to continue their leadership learning and development beyond their freshman experience?

**Methods**

**Participants.** The 440 participants were drawn from 1,820 first-semester students enrolled in leader development programs at five schools. The researchers approached administrators in charge of the freshman leader development programs to elicit participation from these particular five schools because they had a freshman leadership development experience and a variety of curricular and co-curricular leadership development programs. Three of the five programs are co-curricular and two are curricular programs. We surveyed freshman samples in 2014 and 2015 (in one school we piloted the program in 2013 for a total of 3 years). These institutions differed on a variety of characteristics such as size (4 large, 1 small), Carnegie classification (1 teaching,
4 research), and public/private (4 public, 1 private). We conducted a pilot study the first year with 36 students. The second year we had 254 participants in the study and the third year we conducted the study with 150 students for an overall response rate of 24%. Students were compensated for their participation. This spring, we will collect second year data from the 254 participants and 3rd year data from 36 students.

Methods. Students were asked to participate in our study by three means. At three schools, the administrators sent an email to the students enrolled in their freshmen leadership development program asking for volunteers to participate. Students who agreed to participate were then emailed. From one school, we were provided a list of names and emails of students participating in their program and emailed them directly with a request to participate. At the fifth school, a graduate student elicited student participation by visiting classes of the leadership development program and asking students to participate. Those who signed up were then sent an email. All emails contained an explanation of the study with a link to an online survey and reminders were sent 3 times in a span of two months, after which the surveys were closed. The students completing at least 90% of the survey questions were compensated for their time.

Measures. Demographics collected included age, gender, race/ethnicity, current residence, high school GPA, SATs, and beliefs about leadership.

A beliefs about leadership scale was developed based on Drath’s (2001) principles of leadership. Drath (2001) proposes three general ways of understanding leadership that he calls “principles of leadership” which proceed from leader as an individual to leader as relational and then to leadership as a collective entity. In Drath’s first principle of leadership, “Personal Dominance”, leadership is seen as coming directly from the formal leader. Leadership is a personal characteristic of the leader. In “Interpersonal Influence”, leadership is seen as an influence process and a leader emerges from a process of negotiation with the rest of the group where the individual of greater influence emerge as the leader. In “Relational Dialogue”, leadership is understood to happen when people participate in collaborative forms of thought and action to complete tasks and accomplish change. 16 items were developed for this instrument. A Principal Components Factor Analysis with varimax rotation was performed and 4 scales emerged: Personal Dominance (Cronbach’s alpha=.7, a sample item is “Leaders have characteristics or skills that followers do not have”), Interpersonal Influence 1 (Power and Influence, Cronbach’s alpha=.71, a sample item is “Leadership occurs when one or a few people in a group or community hold more power than others”), Interpersonal Influence 2 (Leadership as a Role, Cronbach’s alpha=.77, a sample item is “You do not need to hold the title of ‘leader’ in order to do leadership”) and Relational Dialogue (Cronbach’s alpha=.64, a sample item is “Leadership can occur when a group or community of people share power equally and achieve goals”).

Triggers for leadership development was measured by assessing past leadership experiences, presence of mentors and role models, and triggering events. Past leadership experience: A short five-item past leadership survey was adapted from Murphy (1992) to measure each subjects’ recall of their months of experience in particular leadership situations in high school as well as their overall leadership ability as compared to their peers. The first three items measured the length of leadership activities undertaken (in high school), for example, “For how many semesters during high school did you hold an elected office in either school government or
organized clubs?” While the last two items measured the leadership role, for example, “In general, how much leadership experience do you have compared to others your age?” These five items were collapsed into one scale measuring students’ overall past leadership experience, Cronbach’s alpha was .77. **Mentor and role model**: Two questions were developed for the purpose of this study to get information on whether students had a role model. **Triggering event**: the presence of a triggering event was asked stating, “Can you recall an incident or conversation that encouraged you to develop leadership skills?” Open ended responses will be coded and assessed for reliability.

**Readiness to learn** was measured by measuring openness to learning, self-regulation, persistence, and motivation to learn leadership. **Openness to learning** was assessed using the goal orientation, a 13-item scale was developed by VandeWalle (1997), the Likert scale was reduced from its original 7-point scale to 5-point scale, ranging from 1 = ‘strongly disagree’ to 5 = ‘strongly agree’. The instrument has three subscales: five items measured the mastery goal orientation, four items measured the ‘prove’ dimension of performance goal orientation, which is the desire to prove one’s competence and gain favorable judgments. The last set of four items measure the ‘avoid’ dimension of performance goal orientation, which is the desire to avoid the disapproving of one’s competence and to avoid negative judgment (Brett & VandeWalle, 1999). **Self-regulation Questionnaire**: The Self-regulation Questionnaire was developed by Brown, Miller & Lawendowski (1999) and is a 63-item scale to assess the self-regulatory processes to describe general principles of behavioral self-control. The Self-Regulation Questionnaire was developed as a first attempt to assess these self-regulatory processes through self-report since until this scale, it was not known whether people could reliably and accurately report their own self-regulatory capabilities (Brown, Miller & Lawendowski, 1999). Items were developed to mark each of the seven sub-processes of the Miller and Brown (1991) model (receiving, evaluating, triggering, searching, formulating, implementing and assessing), forming seven rationally-derived subscales of the SRQ. Published reliabilities indicate excellent Cronbach’s alpha of .94. Internal consistency of the scale was also high (α= .91). **Resilience Scale**: The Resilience Scale (RS) is a 25-item scale using a 7-point rating (1–7) (Wagnild, 1993). The scale has two factors, personal competence and acceptance of self and life, which measure the construct of resilience (Ahern et al., 2006). Although originally tested with adult subjects, numerous studies have validated that the scale has worked well with samples of all ages and ethnic groups. For the purpose of this study, this scale was reduced from a 7-point to a 5-point scale, each item was scored from 1 = ‘strongly disagree’ to 5 = ‘strongly agree’. The Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for the Resilience Scale ranges from 0.85 to 0.94. The validity of the scale has been supported in many published studies and demonstrates good validity.

**Motivation to learn leadership** was assessed in three ways. **Leader intentionality** is measured by the outcome expectations of an individual. A five-item scale was developed for the purpose of this study and each item was measured on a scale of ‘1’ to ‘5’ (‘1’ = ‘Strongly Disagree’, ‘2’ = ‘Slightly Disagree’, ‘3’ = ‘Neither Disagree nor Agree’, ‘4’ = ‘Slightly Agree’, ‘5’ = ‘Strongly Agree’). Originally, the five items that constituted this scale were, “My main goal professionally is to achieve a leadership position”, “I have plans to develop myself as a leader during college to achieve my professional goals after college”, “I plan to be in a leadership position in college in the near future”, “I do not see myself in charge of others in my future”, and finally, “I see myself continuously furthering or advancing in the development of my leadership throughout my life”.
However, the original Cronbach’s alpha with these items were displayed to be .62, but when the fourth item was deleted from the scale, the Cronbach’s alpha was seen to increase to 0.88 thus, developing a 4 item scale for leader outcome expectations. Motivation to lead: The scale developed by Chan & Drasgow (2001) to measure the MTL construct describes three types of motivation to be a leader and was used to measure leader MTL. The original 27 item scale was reduced to 17 items; only items with factor loadings of over 0.60 were retained. The first section of this scale is designed to measure Affective-Identity MTL for example, “Most of the time, I prefer being a leader rather than a follower when working in a group”. The next section is designed to measure Non-calculative MTL, for example, “I am only interested to lead a group if there are clear” and the last section is designed to measure Social-normative MTL, for example “I feel that I have a duty to lead others if I am asked”. However, for the purpose of this study, we looked at MTL as a single construct and measure the participants’ overall MTL. The Cronbach’s alpha for this scale was found to be .88. For the purpose of this study, MTL will be examined as an overall construct, rather than a multi-faceted construct. Leader self-efficacy: Leader self-reflectiveness is measured by LEQ. We measured leader self-efficacy using a 22-item scale adapted from Hannah & Avolio (2013) that looks at three components of leader efficacy, leader action self-efficacy, leader self-regulation efficacy and leader means efficacy, as well as an overall score. Participants were asked to rate their own leader self-efficacy by indicating their level of confidence for each statement. Items were rated from “0,” meaning the participant had no confidence in their ability, to “100,” the participant has total confidence in their ability. A sample statement for leader action self-efficacy is “As a leader I can energize my followers to achieve their best” (Cronbach’s alpha =.9). A sample statement for leader self-regulation is “As a leader I can determine what leadership style is needed in each situation” (Cronbach’s alpha =.93). A sample statement for leadership means efficacy is “As a leader I can effectively lead working within the boundaries of the organization’s policies” (Cronbach’s alpha =.9). The Cronbach’s alpha for the overall scale was .96.

For the second round of data collection we use the following measures:

Current leadership development. Applied leadership development. Students are asked to divulge what leadership positions they hold and which leadership programs on campus they are participating in, if any. Sample questions include “Are you on the executive board of an organization, club or association? If yes, list club name and position title.” Students are also asked about internships they may have had. Academic leadership development. Students are asked about any academic leadership development they have taken part in. A sample question includes “Name the for-credit leadership focused course you have taken in the past two years.” Students are also asked about any service learning courses they have taken. Role model. Students are asked about any peers, friends or adults in their life that have served as a mentor, and to discuss how that person has influenced their leadership in the past two years. Leadership experience. We ask students “During the past two years, for group situations during classroom activities in college, what percentage of the time would you say that you assumed the leadership role?”

Learning Climate. Students’ perception of the learning climate, and thus their leader autonomy support, at their school was attained using the LCQ developed by Deci & Williams (1996). The original LCQ contained 15 items with participants responding on a 7-point Likert scale, there is...
also a shorted version with 6 items, which was used for this study. A 5 point Likert scale was used and each item was measured on a scale of ‘1’ to ‘5’ (‘1’ = ‘Strongly Disagree’, ‘2’ = ‘Slightly Disagree’, ‘3’ = ‘Neither Disagree nor Agree’, ‘4’ = ‘Slightly Agree’, ‘5’ = Strongly Agree’). A sample question is “I feel that my college instructors and college administrators provide me choices and options.”

Environmental Constraints. Students are asked whether there are reasons for not participating in leadership development outside of school such as caring for a family member or holding a job.

Results and Conclusion

The purpose of this manuscript is to describe a framework and theory for how students learn and develop their leadership while in college. We propose a framework using a learning model and apply it specifically to student leadership learning and development (Sessa & London, 2005, 2006). We will present preliminary data from a longitudinal study focusing on student triggers for learning leadership, student readiness to learn leadership, and the college/university context for learning leadership. We argue that these three antecedents to learning are necessary to understand and address as preliminary steps towards developing students as leaders.

Research question 1. Who are the students that participate in first semester freshman leadership development opportunities? All participants were 18 years or older with the average age being 18.4 years, (94% were aged 17-19). 66% of participants were female. Of those who reported their ethnicity, 48% were Caucasian, followed by Asian-American (17%), Hispanic/Latino (16%), and African-American (9%). 61% of students reported that their father had an associate’s degree or higher and 53% reported their father held a professional level job. 65% of students reported that their mother held an associate’s degree or higher and 51% reported their mother held professional jobs while 21% were unemployed or stay-at-home moms. The majority of students lived on campus (71%). Mean SAT scores were 1731 (or 73rd percentile) with a mean high school GPA of 3.6. Results suggest that the majority of students participating in our programs were racially and ethnically diverse, but more likely to be female, middle class, and living on campus.

However, there is an indication that students from different demographic backgrounds and difference leadership experiences are entering into these freshman programs with different beliefs about what leadership is. We correlated past leadership experience with the 4 beliefs about leadership and found that those with more leadership experience were more likely to believe that leadership is a role than those with less leadership experience (r=.19, p<.05). We correlated gender with the 4 beliefs about leadership and found that men were more likely to believe that leaders are born than women (r=-.13, p<.05). We correlated race/ethnicity with the 4 beliefs about leadership and found that whites were more likely to believe that leadership is a role (r=.12, p<.05) and less likely to believe that leadership is power and influence than non-whites (r=-.13, p<.05). We correlated the SES variables with the 4 beliefs about leadership and found that students whose parents have higher education levels were more likely to believe that leadership is a role than students whose parents have lower education levels (r=.14, p<.05).

Research questions 2 and 3: We are collecting Time 2 data this spring. This data includes
activities participated in after the freshman leadership experience (including memberships, leadership development activities, work, etc., perceptions of learning climate, and other variables that might impact participation in school activities). Analysis for these two questions regarding the relationship between triggers for learning, readiness to learn, and continuing learning past the freshman experience will be included in our presentation.

References


Learning Leadership: A Qualitative Study on the Differences of Student Learning in Online versus Traditional Courses in a Leadership Studies Program

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Abstract

As online education offerings are extended to more students, organizations are increasingly interested in the effectiveness of online learning compared to a traditional classroom. The need for research on the learning outcomes of students is imperative. The purpose of this study is to compare student learning in a traditional classroom with the equivalent online course. This research explores the research question: What is the difference between student learning in a leadership studies course through online versus traditional delivery methods? This study utilizes a directed content analysis to investigate student assignments using Kolb’s Experiential Learning Model as a foundational theory. Previous research reveals a contradiction on student outlook on the instructor and format of the class, as well as understanding the effectiveness of each method of delivery. Findings in this study indicate that online students may engage more often in deeper learning on assignments than those in the traditional classroom environment.

Introduction

A traditional classroom is becoming less and less relevant in this day in age. Technology is slowly taking over the undergraduate student experience including daily tasks, news outlets, and the learning environment. It is imperative that higher education institutions continue to compete in evolving educational environments. Through the help of technology, online courses have become readily available to students. The demand for these courses has risen, however online courses are not free from criticism. It is important for educators to research the benefits and effectiveness of online learning compared to the traditional classroom. By researching the benefits and effectiveness of online courses, educators can examine what students might be missing in their learning process, why they are unable to transform their educational experiences, or why they are not engaging with material. Furthermore, examining the student learning process of online and traditional classrooms helps to understand how and what to incorporate into course structure for students.

Research Purpose and Questions

In reviewing online learning literature, very few studies examined a simultaneous course in two formats. This study employs a qualitative stance on the learning process on course assignments in both the online and traditional classroom-learning environment. In particular, we investigate one leadership studies course instructed by the same faculty member in two delivery methods – online and traditional. We posit the importance of instituting a qualitative methodology in this study is to examine learning through a content analysis to better understand learning style on course assignments. Further, previous research studies examine differences in surface and deeper learning, but often do not employ the Kolb Experiential Learning Theory (ELT). Our
work fills the gap in previous literature and also utilizes the Kolb’s ELT as a framework for understanding student learning through assignments. This study centers the research question:

1. What is the difference between student learning in a leadership studies course through online versus traditional delivery methods?

**Literature Review**

Over the past 15 years, literature continues to provide conflicting answers about learning in online and traditional classroom formats. Moreover, one of the largest studies to date by Russell (1999) indicates that there are no significant differences in online and traditional classroom learning. While the Russell (1999) study is large-scale, several researchers are critical of this research. Examining the effectiveness of an online course is important because college tuition is steadily increasing, college debt is at its highest and a secondary degree is the most sought after form of advancing one’s life. Online courses are attractive because they are cost effective, convenient for college students, and often times fit better into an individual’s schedule. The topic of online course effectiveness is central to many university administrative conversations because of revenue and research studies prove to be optimistic about online courses (Hill, 2016; Lapovský, 2015). However, research studies also continue to contradict in areas surrounding engagement, instructional design, retention of information, and expose some of the negative influence on student learning. Finally, research on learning technologies needs to remain current so the importance of timely data and research is a significant concern for faculty and staff. In the preceding section, we review the foundational literature examining previous research on online and traditional student learning.

**Instructional Course Design**

Researchers and faculty have much to learn from course design and delivery. The amount of literature on course design is extensive and investigates the influences on students’ success in courses. In particular, online courses can provide diverse access which assists in the flexibility of student learning at any time or place, yet it is incredibly important to use intentional design and curriculum to support deeper learning (Ally, 2014; Cole, 2000). Faculty must pay particular attention to the design of a course and support learning and engagement (Ally, 2014). Specifically, Nash (2005) and Picciano (2002) discuss a crucial component to course design is social presence. Picciano (2002) cites, “the success of many online courses is dependent upon the nature of student to student and student to faculty interaction” (p. 33). Course design should provide multiple outlets for social presence and interactions that are intentional.

Intentionality and clarity of design is essential in both traditional and online courses. More specifically, there are several components to intentional and clear courses identified by several researchers: a) variety of presentation, b) frequent and clear feedback, c) follow up, d) consistent layout, e) concise navigation, and f) support (Janicki & Liegle, 2001; Mazzolini & Maddison, 2007; Nandi, Hamilton, & Harland, 2012; Swan, 2001). The design structure of a course is complex, but drives how persistent and successful students are in the course. More specifically, Nandi, Hamilton, & Harland (2012) posit, “that rather than designing a fully student-centered or instructor-centered discussion, a combination of both approaches can be advantageous” (p. 27).
Their work highlights the design approach that is most beneficial to student learning and how student persistence is centered in devoting a mixed-method pedagogical approach.

Finally, course design should include specific learning objectives in which the instructor assesses mastery of content. In higher education, learning objectives are broadly referred to as anything that has an educational purpose (McGreal, 2004; Nash, 2005). Designing a concise and effective course includes defining clear objectives and building around those (Janicki & Leigle, 2001; Nash, 2005; Picciano, 2002). Students should also understand and identify those objectives when completing work within modules or lessons for increased learning (Ally, 2014). Instructors should consider an overall learning objective approach when designing courses for transparency and optimal student learning.

**Online Classroom**

Research studies indicate that regardless of the background of demographics of students, there is an increase in student-learning outcomes for online learners, compared to traditional learners (Ally, 2014; Nguyen, 2015; Schutte, 1997). Findings expose that students were often times more satisfied with online learning versus traditional classroom environments (Navarro & Shoemaker, 2000; Nguyen, 2015). Satisfaction in online courses is connected to instructor presence and interactions contribute to overall higher scores within an online environment (Richardson & Swan, 2003). Moreover, researchers also note, that an advantage of asynchronous learning is it allows students to reflect upon the materials and their responses before responding, unlike traditional classrooms (Richardson & Swan, 2003, p. 69). The authors indicate the ability to process material and make sense of the concepts before responding to the question or prompts in the online format.

There are few studies that examine the differences in learning through the same course in two delivery methods. One study conducted by Schutte (1997) investigated 33 students in a social statistics course. Students in the study were split into two groups, a traditional classroom and an online version. Results demonstrated the online class scored an average of 20% higher than the traditional classroom on examinations. Overall, the online course had a higher understanding of the material at the end of the semester (Schutte, 1997). Further, researchers have found that in the online environment, students learn more by doing rather than watching (Koedinger, Kim, Zhuxin Jia, McLaughlin, & Bier, 2015). More specifically, research indicated that short educational videos did not engage and increase mastery of content. Actively engaging students in the online environment may have a significant influence on student learning (Koedinger, et al., 2015).

To the contrary, studies also indicate negative feelings toward online education. A study on a microeconomics course completed by Brown and Liedholm (2002) resulted in students performing worse on tests than students in the traditional classroom even with higher overall grade point averages and ACT scores. Several criticisms of online learning include the lack of stability in the learning environment, partly due to continuously changing technology (Brandt, 1996). Other studies indicate that online instruction threatens to commercialize education, continues to isolate students and faculty, and may have an effect of the overall value of a degree or credibility of an institution (Gallick, 1998; Johnson, Aragon, Shaik & Palma-Rivas, 2000).
This evidence provides a justification for faculty and staff to examine the online student experience to better their mastery of course material.

Traditional Classroom

According to Brandt (2006), students in a traditional classroom had a more positive perspective on the learning environment through a study that examined English and math courses at a community college. The results of the study suggest that students tended to do significantly worse in online courses when compared to traditional classrooms (Brandt, 2006). Success in traditional classrooms versus the online format is often measured in course persistence and end-of-course grades (Xu and Jaggars, 2011). Further, research conducted by O’Malley and McCraw (1999) posits that students believe they learn more in traditional classrooms and overall preferred a traditional classroom environment to online courses.

Finally, researchers have identified that the concept of “anytime, anywhere” learning in an online classroom may create some complications compared to the traditional classroom (Johnson, et al., 2000; Xu and Jaggars, 2011). The ability to log-in whenever and from any location, limits the ability of immediate constructive feedback. Research indicates that the proximity of feedback to questions and discussion in traditional classrooms has a direct and positive influence on student learning and cognitive outcomes (Brandt, 2006; Gorham, 1988). Immediate response is challenge for online instructors and students, but should be considered in course design (Richardson & Swan, 2003). There is a presence in the traditional classroom that faculty have control over to influence learning and engage active learning and live feedback critical to a student’s success (Brandt, 2006; Gorham, 1988). Overall, traditional classrooms serve as a space to verbalized information in a captive audience and discuss queries about a particular subject.

Learning Process: Online and Traditional

Several research studies suggest social presence and interaction among students and the instructor contribute to the effectiveness of an online course (Ally, 2014; Davies & Graff, 2005; McLaren, 2004; Swan, 2001). Specifically, Davies and Graff (2005) found that greater online interaction was not significantly associated with higher performance for students achieving passing grades; however, students who failed in their online classes tended to interact less frequently (Davies and Graff, 2005). Swan (2001) concluded, “interaction with instructors seemed to have a much larger effect on satisfaction and perceived learning than interaction with peers” (p. 322). The significance of engaging faculty to student communication and connection is essential to student success in both contexts.

Studies indicate how crucial it is for a deeper learning experience to have interaction between fellow students and the instructor (Garrison &Cleveland-Innes, 2005; Kop, Fournier, & Sui Fai Mak, 2011). In a deeper learning approach, students search for meaning and have thought provoking answers to the material they are studying. In surface learning, students work to complete the task at hand, instead of putting in effort to understand and learn the material and work towards a grade (Garrison & Cleveland-Innes, 2005; Smart & Cappel, 2006). Further, numerous studies have demonstrated that a student’s active involvement in the learning process enhances learning (Benek-Rivera & Matthews, 2004; Sarason & Banbury, 2004, Smart &
Cappel, 2006). Moreover, Ally (2014) stresses the importance of interactive learning in an online setting and to inform online learners of learning objectives to engage deeper learning. In the subsequent section, we discuss the framework of our research study in which we examine student learning in online versus traditional formats.

**Theoretical Framework**

This study employs a qualitative framework as we explore the learning cycles of students enrolled in the Leadership Styles and Strategies in a Diverse Society course through two methods of delivery, a) online and b) traditional classroom settings. In particular, we call on the work of David Kolb and ELT. Experiential learning is categorized as knowledge transpired into reality through transforming experiences (Kolb, 1984). ELT is related in two engaging experiences - Concrete Experience (CE) and Abstract Conceptualization (AC) and two methods of transforming experiences - Reflective Observation (RO) and Active Experimentation (AE) (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). Further, Kolb (1984) also noted learning styles within the learning process, which are situated in each experience – diverging and assimilating, as well as accommodating and converging (Kolb, 1984). ELT guides how students process and make meaning of the course material and discussions. We institute this model as a framework to guide analysis of student learning from student coursework data.

**Methodology**

Employing a qualitative methodology allows us to examine how students reflect, process, and make meaning of their course assignments. Qualitative methods are beneficial for this study because it allows the researchers to better understand how students learn in an online and traditional classroom environment. The goal of this study is to examine the students’ ELT learning process on course assignments in both online and traditional classrooms. Maxwell (2005) highlights personal goals and experiences having influence on the choice of qualitative research. In other words, our purpose is to uncover the college student learning process through how students understand course concepts in their homework. As researchers and course instructors, we have an interest in learning how students engage and make meaning of material on assignments to improve upon the course materials and design. Charmaz (2006) states “methods alone -- whatever they might be – do not generate good research or astute analysis. How researchers use methods matters” (p. 15). In other words, we posit that qualitative methods will provide an extensive portrait of student experiential learning to understand how learning environments differ.

This study examines coursework data from the spring 2016 semester (January 2016 to May 2016) from 30 students enrolled in the 300-level leadership studies course at a large, public, Midwestern university. Unlike previous research on online courses, this study solely examines identical courses assignments in an online and traditional course, both submitted electronically through the university course management system. Previous research also examines online courses in their entirety through student discussions posts, perceptions, and grades. We specifically intend to examine learning style on course assignments in both online and traditional deliveries.
Procedures

Researchers examined and coded three identical student assignments through two course delivery formats: a) online and b) traditional classrooms. The primary investigator and instructor of the course, designed assignments as reflection worksheets that illicit student meaning of the course material. The instructor of the targeted leadership course established assignments utilizing a rubric for evaluation over the course of three semesters (spring, summer, and fall 2015) prior to the targeted spring semester course. In addition, the course employs teaching assistants to grade each assignment utilizing the established rubric. Further, the instructor addressed reliability of selected course assignments by choosing previously graded coursework in which 80% of students scored 85% or higher over a span of three semesters. Students in both teaching formats completed their work in word documents and submitted through the university’s course management system.

Participants

We employed a purposeful sample in which the leadership courses’ teaching assistant invited 79 students (37 in the traditional course and 42 in the online course) to participate in the study via email (in both the online and traditional course) and through a verbal announcement in the traditional classroom during students’ spring 2016 semester. Of the 79 invitations to participate, 67% (17 from the online course and 36 from the traditional course) of students consented to participate in the study.

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We randomly sampled 15 students’ assignments in the online course and 15 students in the traditional course for a total of 90 course assignment documents covering three leadership approaches from the course: 1) chaotic leadership, 2) strengths-based leadership, and 3) the five practices of exemplary leadership. Researchers intentionally selected assignments spread across the 16-week semester to examine student understanding as a transformative process. Specifically, these assignments were pulled from week three, five, and ten.

As noted in figure 1, of the 30 participants in the study, 80% were women and 20% were men in the online course and 47% male and 53% women traditional section. The course was comprised of a plethora of student classifications in both course deliveries: ten seniors, two juniors, two sophomores, one freshman in the online course and three seniors, nine juniors, two sophomores, and one freshman in the traditional section.

Data Analysis

Qualitative content analysis is a natural fit for examining coursework and text (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009). This study engages a content analysis of student data from a 300-level leadership studies course. In particular, we institute a directed content analysis approach to analyzing student coursework. “The goal of a directed approach to content analysis is to validate or extend conceptually a theoretical framework or theory. Existing theory or research can help focus the research question” (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1281). Further, we employ this method of inquiry during analysis as we intentionally coded documents utilizing Kolb’s ELT as a conceptual framework (appendix A). Identifying a theoretical perspective prior to examining the data allows us to purposefully add to the understanding of an existing theory. This structure provides a premeditated examination of key identifiers and concepts when scanning coursework documents during data analysis (Hickey & Kipping, 1996; Potter & Levine-Donnerstein, 1999).

A directed content analysis of student data enhanced the understanding of how student learning differs in the online and traditional classroom environment. Specifically, the researchers called upon the work of David Kolb and ELT to guide their content analysis of student assignments. Employing this framework assists in narrowing the coding process to view for key terms, words, or phrases that students might use to exemplify a particular mode of learning through experiential learning. Hsieh & Shannon (2005) suggest, “the findings from a directed content
analysis offer supporting and nonsupporting evidence for a theory. This evidence can be presented by showing codes with exemplars and by offering descriptive evidence.” (p. 1282). This study intends to provide evidence or student learning on course assignments using Kolb’s ELT to better understand online and traditional course deliveries.

Prior to the coding process, the researchers met to establish a coding key, which identified the key terms, phrases, and content connected to Kolb’s model analyzed in student assignments. Initially in the coding process, researchers scanned the student electronic documents for key terminology around learning and understanding such as “I applied”, “This means”, “I attribute”, “the connection”, “I learned”, “reflection of theory”, “I understand”, “I observe”, “I think”, etc. (appendix A). These terms were highlighted along with any other emergent learning connected phrases. Next, the researchers coded each term with a predetermined code associated with experiential learning. The researchers placed the codes CE, AC, RO, and AE based on the Kolb model of experiential learning with phrases that were initially highlighted (Kolb, 1984) (appendix A). The researchers initially assigned the codes to the terms and phrases the students used in their assignment documents. In addition, researchers coded whether the phrases and categories were engaged or transformative learning (Kolb, 1984).

Further, the researchers addressed intercoder reliability through peer coding, in which the research assistant coded all electronic documents after training on association phrases and words to the Kolb model described in appendix A. The primary investigator then coded the electronic course assignment documents for consistency and to increase the trustworthiness of the findings. After two rounds of coding with the predetermined graphic on association phrases and terms (appendix A), the researchers consulted on their analysis to determine the intercoder reliability. The review process provided clarity to the level of learning in Kolb’s Model. Finally, a colleague outside of the research project examined the researchers coding and findings as part of the member checking process.

Qualitative research suggests that as studies evolve, there can be cases of data saturation or examples of no new emergent themes or categories (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Krippendorff, 2004; Marshall, 1996). Our study reached data saturation after we coded and analyzed 12 out of 15 student assignments in each theory category for any new phrases or words associated with Kolb’s model. After reviewing the first 12 students’ assignments in each category, we did not discover any new phases of content associated with Kolb’s model. Overall, we analyzed and coded all 30 participants and 90 documents.

**Results**

**Online Leadership Course Delivery**

Research findings signify a predication toward particular experiential learning areas (AC and AE) for the online students (Kolb, 1984). Through analysis of student narrative course assignments in the online section of the leadership studies course, students processed their application of theory more in depth than the traditional course. Specifically, students contextualized the material through their personal leadership experiences without being prompted in assignments. For example, course assignments asked, “in your own words, how do
you understand the meaning of Chaordic leadership?” To that end, students in the online section developed a response surrounding personal leadership situations that assisted in their comprehension of the approach. More than 60% of the students in the online sections went into detailed explanations of their reflections, connecting their experiences and concrete examples of how they exemplified and have enacted the theoretical perspective or leadership approach. The application and transformative examples are situated in AC and AE spectrum of Kolb’s learning model and within the accommodating and converging learning style.

Findings suggest that of the online course participants, 87% of online students used an applied understanding of the course material without being promoted for their experience. The weekly course processing assignments selected to code for this study include three different sets of questions:

1. Chaordic Leadership Assignment. In your own words, identify the key three points of the chapter (Hock, 2000).
2. Strengths Base Leadership. Reflect on your own insights after reading these chapters (Rath & Conchie, 2008).
3. 5 Practices of Exemplary Leadership. Gathering your reflections of the chapters, discuss the practice and what it means to you (Kouzes & Posner, 2012).

Eighty-seven percent of online students used the opportunity to reflect on the main themes from each chapter or course material, however compared to the traditional course, online students provided further contextualized meaning by adding their personal experiences and connecting it to the reading and course material. This contextualization occurred without a question prompting them to share an example or a situation in which they exemplified the topics. This created a meaningful reflection and conceptualization of the topic material. Once example is Byron:

I really struggle with letting these assessments shape my perspective because I find they fit me so well that I feel like I should start acting more like they say someone with these characteristics should act. I let things like StrengthsFinder occupy my thoughts for days and in every new situation I ask myself whether my strengths are shaping my actions or if my actions are what are determining my strengths. As leaders in a global society, we are charged with both the responsibility and privilege to use our abilities to improve our world. For us to do the most good with the skills we have a tour disposal, we first need to know what our skills are so we can organize ourselves and others into complementary positions so everyone can do what they do best. I am not the best relator or “woo” person so I need to know that when a certain circumstance requires someone with these abilities, I should not be the one to handle this type of situation. I want to enable opportunities for other people to grow and develop their own skills and build upon their strengths, which I can only do after identifying what my strengths are.

Byron is able to examine the concepts of the text through his personal experience and use the framework to process his daily skillsets. He uses analogies and how he would like to exemplify the strengths that the assessment presented to him. He synthesis is one that is thoughtful and connects concepts through an accommodating learning style.
When asked for their insights and without a question for their applied knowledge of the chapter reading, participants’ in the online course provided future goals as well as insights. Further, they indicated how the theory relates to their personal experiences as a leader within secondary or postsecondary education. When compared to the traditional course assignments on Rath and Conchie’s, (2008) Strengths Based leadership, 60% of online students provided a concrete situation that they would like to improve upon in the future to connect their meaning of the selected theory of leadership. For example, Tara, an online student, stated:

The biggest thing that I learned from reading these chapters is that “The most effective leaders surround themselves with the right people and then maximize their team.” As I move forward throughout life, I need to do a better job surrounding myself with high achieving individuals who can push our group to become the best version we can be. If I am going to be a leader among a group like this, I need to improve my skills in team engagement so I can invest in my team members more. Ideally I would like to be able to plot the strengths of my team based on the four domains of leadership that are described in the book to hopefully have more successful teams.

Tara is able to position herself through the material and see herself as a “doer” of the approach and how this applies to future goals and reality. She uses terms like “push our group”, “best version we can be”, and “need to improve my skills” that create a sense of decision-making and solving problems. Her futuristic response was unsolicited yet focused on the question surrounding what the theory of strengths leadership meant to her. Tara’s dialogue exemplifies Kolb’s AC and AE areas of learning (appendix A).

Moreover, 73% of online students indicated reasoning and critical thought in their examples of all three theoretical approach assignments. This reasoning became prevalent when they cited several instances of participation in leadership behaviors that supported the concepts presented in their readings. One student described and attributed the same thinking in their assignment, which positions the style of convergent learning in the online setting. Michaela writes:

I could relate to all three of these findings because I have been a leader and I have been a follower. It really comes down to the situation and how confident I am. I really agree with surrounding yourself with the right people. I tend to become friends with people who are goal driven and like to achieve success. I don’t like to judge people, but you can tell right away when someone doesn’t like to get stuff done and is lazy. Surrounding yourself with others who are goal oriented can inspire you to be your best and to not be lazy and to be successful. I have a lot of friends who I look up to and I am so happy to have them in my life because they push me to be the best I can be at whatever I undertake and that is very important to me.

This narrative provides a perception of how one student—Michaela, can make better decisions in her own context. She uses deeper thinking to engage how she could better her personal leadership through the approach offered in the readings for the course. She uses the terms “goal driven” “surrounding yourself”, and “inspire” to shape her own decision-making. Once again,
this critical thinking and process of learning connects to the convergent learning style of Kolb’s ELT without being prompted to apply the theory.

**Traditional Leadership Course Delivery**

To the contrary, findings suggest that traditional students did not reflect in similar areas of Kolb’s learning style in their assignments. When prompted to reflect on their insights on the readings, 80% of the traditional students synthesized the material, but did not critically examine their application of the approach like the online students completed. This type of learning process is congruent with AC and RO of Kolb’s ELT (appendix A). One student, Meg writes:

> It was very interesting to study the leader/follower relationship from the perspective of the follower. I was initially surprised that the most basic needs that a leader must meet for their followers is so personal and intimate, such as trust, compassion, and hope. However taking a step back and thinking about it, it makes perfect sense. Would I follow someone I don’t trust? Or someone who doesn’t treat me with compassion? How about someone who provides me with no stability or hope? The answer is no. I am so glad this book has given me a better perspective of the follower, because without followers, there is no leader. A leader is dependent on their followers.

Meg’s reflection and processing of the material is describing the reflection and knowledge of the material and how she feels about it. She does not provide the action steps or plan to engage the material how she has experienced this concept, but more of her reflection on the reading and her thoughts about the concepts. Meg makes sense of the reading in her assignment through her emotions and by “watching” the information. This is a characteristic of AC because of the passivity of learning and minimal connection to experience.

Subsequently, other students exhibited this learning style on their course assignments in traditional course delivery. At least nine of the 15 students sampled reemphasized the reading material, but did not place it into their own words. Further, they added sentences stating their stance (i.e. agree or disagree) on a concept presented by the author but did not provide support for this claim. Jack provides minimal reflection on the course material:

> Another point that I found astounding is the differences in organizations who focus on their employee’s strengths rather than their weaknesses. It is amazing the effects that these two perspectives have on organizations. Personally, I think it makes perfect sense that organizations who focus on strengths rather than weaknesses have more engaged and productive employees.

The minimalistic processing of the course reading creates a basic understanding of the information. Jack uses phrases such as “I think it makes sense” and “I found astounding” to connect with the information. This exemplifies RO in Kolb’s ELT because it is a way to summarize the material to understand its purpose rather than placing it in contextual knowledge or application.
Further, traditional course students minimalized their learning by paraphrasing the readings rather than forming the material into their own words. This was prevalent in all course assignments examined in the study. The minimal reflection stands out because students used similar terms and language without processing the information in a way that made sense to them. Little comprehension and application clouded the student’s understanding of information beyond the author’s dialogue. One example is Aaron:

Hock also suggests that leadership "is about making a better person of oneself." He claims that we should spend 50% of our time managing ourselves, 25% managing our superiors, 20% managing our peers, and 5% managing our subordinates. Viewing management as an "exercise of authority" is incorrect; rather, we should view it as a way to improve ourselves. Finally, Hock reveals his belief that "the most abundant, least expensive, most constantly abused resource in the world is human ingenuity." In other words, if we gave people the freedom and encouragement to innovate, we could accomplish great things. Giving people these opportunities is exactly what leadership is about. Leadership doesn't necessarily relate to whether a person is a superior or a subordinate.

Aaron uses the language of the author, specifically using phrases such as “Hock suggests”, Hock reveals” and “he claims”. His minimal reflection of the material is a reiteration of the author’s information and is positioned within RO of Kolb’s learning style (appendix A) because of the basic terminology and lack of independent learning or applied knowledge.

Finally, student assignments in the traditional classroom served as a space to process the author’s material through reactionary complacency. Ninety percent of the traditional classroom students wrote initial reflective statements that agreed with the author’s approach to leadership. There was little critical thinking framed around the concept and how the student might have critiqued the theory. Students often situated their comprehension through “liking” or agreeing with the author’s points in the articles. One student writes:

Out of all of the leadership styles we have talked about so far, only McGregor’s Theory X and Y talked about how the followers affected the style of leadership. I also really liked how they talked about focusing on making your strengths stronger.

The student is able to select among theories of the semester that are prevalent in their learning style, however their reflection is lacking deep connection to the material. The student expresses that they liked the author’s information without identifying a comprehension of the material outside of their reading reflection. This is categorized in the RO phase of Kolb’s ELT because of its predication towards complacency with the author instead of contextualizing the information.

**Discussion and Conclusion**

The study indicates a difference in learning process and reflection of material in course assignments in the same class delivered in two formats. Using Kolb’s ELT to understand the student data provides a context for how students may process and make meaning of the information in each setting. There are several differences to conclude in the study. This section
will address what the findings mean, limitations of the study, future research, and recommendations.

Discussion

This study qualitatively examines student assignments from the two different formats of the same leadership studies course. Unlike previous studies that examine the online courses in its entirety, we specifically wanted to examine course learning through assignments that were identical to the traditional class assignments and submitted through the Blackboard learning management system. Further, we did not analyze course discussions from each format or additional dialogue that may exist in-group work or in-class situations. We analyzed 3-targeted assignments using Kolb’s experiential learning and highlighted findings within the study.

This study’s findings support previous studies that indicate students in an online format have a greater opportunity and more time to reflect before responding (Matthews, 1999; Simonson, Smaldino, Albright, & Zvacek, 2000). We found the difference in online and traditional classroom learning is that a deeper level of application in the online course occurred without prompting in course assignments. This is supported by the Schutte (1997) study, which indicated a 20% higher student score in the online class versus the traditional classroom. The difference in levels of deep application in the online format may be attributed to traditional classrooms offering a captive space for students and faculty to verbally reflect and discuss the subjects in detail prior to the submission of assignments. In addition, traditional classrooms provide a physical space to analyze, actively engage, and apply the student’s experiences through peer-to-peer interactions and online courses may not offer a space dedicated to engage immediate peer-to-peer interactions. The access and space in a traditional classroom for verbal processing of material may serve as the vehicle for immediate student verbal reflection and serve as a catalyst for application for students. Moreover, the online environment may not provide the same captive space where students have immediacy in reflection and feedback to verbally think and process the information. Therefore, the online assignments are one of the few spaces that students can intently and deeply process the course material and do not need prompting to apply it to their personal experiences. Traditional classroom students may already verbally process and apply the information before turning in an assignment. By the time students submit work, their learning is simplified to critique only the author’s work.

The online classroom is a space where a multitude of material and information is located. Students must sift through dense information and connect learning, application, and reflection in an isolated environment. The online method of delivery allows space to synthesize material without prompts or verbal indicators from the instructor like the traditional classroom space. Online classrooms may offer this processing through video or discussion posts, yet the physical space and connection to the instructor and students is electronic and not as engaging as previous literature indicates. Our findings suggest the largest difference in learning process and application of experience to material is that online students create transformative learning without prompting. This overall theme lays a foundation of how we can adjust curriculum in the online and traditional environment and help support students in online and traditional courses. This study begins a conversation of how to evaluate and adjust course delivery methods.
Further, we posit that the traditional classroom setting can be overlooked when designing, delivering, and assessing courses. As the study indicates, faculty can be more cognizant of traditional learning on coursework assignments and how the classroom environment is designed for optimal learning. The physical classroom is a powerful space where students have verbal interaction across students and faculty. Their immediacy of reflecting and processing material is essential how they make-sense of theories and material. Faculty can assess these in-class conversations, but often do this through course assignments, which may be too late. The study solidifies that assignments in the traditional classroom should be designed based on classroom dialogue and how students connect with material to their experience. Traditional classroom assignments should deliberately ask students to connect back to course dialogue and how the student can apply the material to their realities.

Limitations

Our study applies Kolb’s ELT to one course in two delivery methods. One major limitation of the study and critique of Kolb’s model is that it does not account for gendered learning styles as previous research has indicated that women learn differently than men; specifically calling on the work of Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, (1986). The study incorporated an equal distribution of men and women in our data analysis, yet the framework did not account for gendered learning differences.

An additional significant limitation is that this study examines one leadership studies course, which enrolls students from multiple disciplines at a major research university. Given the discipline, student’s ideologies and conceptual framework of learning may differ. Their reflections and applications will vary based on their discipline’s overall culture, theoretical structure. Students’ reflections and learning style influence their coursework and applications of material. Additionally, the study includes students from a range of ages and university classifications. The selected leadership studies course enrolls students from various levels (i.e. sophomore, junior, and senior). Given the phase of student development and educational background, student experiences and knowledge will vary based on the classification in their major and at the university.

The final limitation is faculty experience and ease with teaching in a traditional format versus the online course environment. Some faculty may have a predication toward one format or another and excel at one over another. There are several factors that influence this – years in the classroom, institutional faculty teaching support, training, funding, and faculty appointment. This study examines one faculty member teaching from two formats and does not assess the course evaluations and student’s perceptions of the course information. Moreover, the study does not assess faculty perception of course design.

Recommendations

Instructors for online and traditional platforms should consider using explicit language in the assignments that ask students to not only reflect on course materials, but also provide specific examples of how they apply and demonstrate the information in their reality. Further, implicit learning outcomes for each module, activity, or classroom assignment help to facilitate deeper
student learning. In traditional classrooms, faculty have the opportunity to guide students through deep reflection and process material through an attentive audience, peer-to-peer dialogue, and faculty interaction. This study indicates that traditional classroom assignments did not serve as a space for students to apply material to their experiences whereas the online classroom did. Moreover, traditional classroom assignments should serve as a follow up from classroom dialogue and implicitly ask students to apply their classroom discussions to the course material. The ability to create experiential learning situates itself in the learning transformation and connects the learner to knowing a reality congruent with Kolb’s ELT. In addition, this affirms what previous research explains is the most significant part of online and traditional classrooms: active learning.

Furthermore, faculty should consider cognitive development and learning process of students in the online and traditional classroom setting. Moreover, faculty should encourage engagement with material over videos and passive forms of information distribution. More specifically, the online space should encompass a four-tiered approach to traditional and online learning such as this:

1. Review course information through reading material, watching videos, and lectures
2. Synthesize material through your cognitive process in assignments deliberately indicating an application of personal experience to the material
3. Apply the information through discussion, posts/videos, blogs, journals, etc.
4. Further your knowledge and synthesis of concepts to concrete experiences such as papers and projects

Finally, given the increase in online learning prevalence, higher education administration should continue to offer and train faculty on the design and delivery of online courses as well as continue faculty teaching workshops to increase the strength of teaching at the university level. A recent article by the Chronicle of Higher Education (2016) offers recommendations for preparing faculty to teach online, suggesting providing studio time and continual training on learning management systems. These programs serve as professional development and adjusting spaces of learning for the evolving student culture entering postsecondary institutions. Ongoing assessment and evaluation of courses is another method to strengthen and adjust design of faculty-taught courses.

With the growing offerings and attraction of online courses, the traditional classroom space maybe overlooked. As this study indicates, the traditional classroom delivery should be continually adapted to serve diverse student populations. One way is through teaching hybrid models or adding digital media to the traditional course. There are ways to engage immediate feedback and how to offer additional follow up spaces to employ constructive conversations from face-to-face course online. Specifically, offering reciprocal dialogue online in addition to the traditional course helps to expand participation for students that internally process information.

Future Research

This study utilizes Kolb’s ELT, which is often critiqued for not considering gender differences in learning. Genders learn and cognitively develop differently as we know from the foundational
study by Belenky, et al. (1986). These differences offer better insight into adjustments and inclusivity in the learning environment. Furthermore, the study did not account for differences in student learning through disciplines. The investigated course for this study examined a multidisciplinary course with a variety of majors. Future studies should examine the different in learning process based on gender and academic discipline for college students. Moreover, disciplines and gender may dictate the assumptions and previous experiences of students that could influence online engagement and other styles of learning in the traditional classroom.

References


Appendix A

Coding Key

**Accommodating**

**CE**
Applying knowledge, experience & deep meaning of theory
Terms/phrases: I know, understand, comprehend, realize, evaluate, synthesize

**RO**
Summarization, reflection, external knowledge
Terms/phrases: According to, the author says, see, states, tells

**Converging**

**AE**
Application of material to self
Terms/phrases: I apply, for example, use, relate, identify, association, conceptualize, make sense

**AC**
Surface-level learning
Terms/phrases: I think, feel, agree, believe, recognize, reflect, grasp

**Diverging**
How Can Service-Learning Prepare Students for the Workforce? Exploring the Potential of Positive Psychological Capital

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Abstract

Although service-learning increases several important development and learning outcomes in college students (Yorio & Ye, 2012), it is not clear whether service-learning is better preparing these students for their future careers (Gray, Ondaatje, Fricker, & Geschwind, 2000). To better understand the influence of service-learning on student development, an exploration of a leadership service-learning course and an important workplace attribute, Positive Psychological Capital, are theoretically explored.

Introduction and Purpose

Service-learning is an experiential pedagogical tool that enhances learning through students engaging in course content in applied community service projects and reflection activities (Madsen, 2004). The use of service-learning in leadership courses is well documented (Zimmerman-Oster & Burkhardt, 1999), and researchers exploring the impact of service-learning have provided evidence for some of the expected benefits, including increases in learning (Strage, 2000), civic responsibility (Myers-Lipton, 1998), choosing service-related occupations (Reed, Jernstedt, Hawley, Reber, & DuBois, 2005), and social justice (Keen & Hall, 2009). The potential impact of service-learning in leadership coursework however is not simply limited to promoting students’ civic and community engagement. Through service-learning, students are also expected to develop knowledge, skills, and dispositions to help them in their future careers (Govekar & Rishi, 2007; Papamarcos, 2005), even if those careers are not in the government or not-for-profit sectors. For example, service-learning provides students the opportunity to engage in the community through volunteering, and the experience provides a relevant context for learning about important leadership skills, including adaptability and innovation (Govekar & Rishi, 2007) and interpersonal and problem solving skills (Moely, McFarland, Miron, Mercer, & Ilustre, 2002). However, the direct link of service learning to career preparedness has had mixed results (Gray, Ondaatje, Fricker, & Geschwind, 2000). Specifically, the impact of service-learning on self-evaluative processes, including self-efficacy and self-esteem, which are largely regarded as having a positive relationship with job satisfaction and work performance (Bono & Judge, 2003; Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998), are mixed (Bernacki & Jaeger, 2008; Knapp, Fisher, & Levesque-Bristol, 2010; Osborne, Hammerich, & Hensley, 1998). Furthermore, a recurring criticism of service-learning research is the lack of quality research using defensible, well-established assessments (Bringle & Steinberg, 2010; Moely, Mercer, Ilustre, Miron, & McFarland, 2002; Papamarcos, 2005; Reeb, 2006). Despite the recommendations to use service-learning, the mixed findings on self-evaluative processes (e.g. self-efficacy and self-esteem) demonstrates a gap in the research. Furthermore, a sound theoretical foundation is the first step to generating research that is likely to address this gap.

In an effort to build the empirical foundation for the appropriateness of service-learning in
preparing leadership students for future careers, a relatively new self-evaluative construct is explored, positive psychological capital (PsyCap; Luthans, Luthans, & Luthans, 2004). Because evidence suggests that PsyCap (Luthans, Avolio, Avey, & Norman, 2007) has a reliable measure that demonstrates predictive validity with workplace success, this study will provide needed insight about the potential impact of service-learning on career preparedness. The purpose of this paper is to describe how students’ levels of PsyCap could be impacted by a service-learning leadership course, and to provide practical applications of pedagogical strategies to promote workplace readiness development.

**Literature Review**

**Service-Learning**

Service-learning is an experiential teaching and learning pedagogy, as students are provided direct experience to link the course content to real-world situations. The reciprocity between student learning and community partner benefits provides the framework for preparing future civic responsibility. As such, considerable amount of research on service-learning has focused on student outcomes associated with social/civic responsibility (Myers-Lipton, 1998), social change (Lewis, 2004), moral development (Bernacki & Jaeger, 2008; Boss, 1994), personal value development (Markus, Howard, & King, 1993), cognitive complexity (Osborne et al., 1998), and awareness of differences and appreciation of diversity (Einfeld & Collins, 2008; Roodin, Brown, & Shedlock, 2013). Furthermore, given that service-learning occurs in institutions of higher education, it is no surprise that much of the research has also established broad support for the positive impact service-learning can have on cognitive development and enhancing content knowledge (Conway, Amel, & Gerwien, 2009; Yorio & Ye, 2012). In contrast, very little research has explored how service learning might impact student preparedness to enter the workforce. Even when outcomes expected to be associated with preparing students for the workplace (for example the Civic Attitudes and Skills Questionnaire includes a leadership and social skills factor; Moely, Mercer, et al., 2002), the measures used to assess the constructs have not been tested for predictive validity within the workplace environment.

A recent meta-analysis conducted by Yorio and Ye (2012) analyzed 40 studies categorized into one of three learning outcomes, cognitive development, understanding social issues, and personal insight. Though the reported effect sizes were significant for each learning outcome (cognitive development, Est. δ = .52, p<.01; understanding social issues, (Est. δ = .34 p<.01; personal insight, (Est. δ = 0.28, p<.01), one caveat should be explained about these results in relation to the personal insight outcome. The meta-analyzed effect sizes were taken as absolute values even though there was evidence that the effects of service-learning with the personal insight criterion variables were both positive and negative. After reporting a decrease in self-esteem after students completed their service-learning course, Osborne and colleagues (1998) suggest that the decrease “may represent a more realistic assessment of self-worth than at the onset of the semester” (p. 9). Yorio and Ye (2012) build off this work to suggest that a decrease in criterion variables associated with personal insight (e.g. self-esteem, self-efficacy) after a service-learning course may not be a negative effect because these changes represent a more realistic self-image. Though this may be true, predicting the direction of expected changes in the criterion as a result of service-learning classes is absolutely necessary in order to grasp the impact and evaluate
Psychological Capital

The positive psychology movement lead researchers to focus not only on mental illness, for example depression and schizophrenia, but on psychological issues that have a positive impact on people’s live, for example happiness (Diener, 2000), optimism (Seligman, 1998), and hope, (Snyder, 2002). From this foundation, researchers also began applying the ideas of positive psychology to organizations. Specifically, the movement of Positive Organizational Behavior (POB), which was introduced by Luthans (2002a), initiated a call to conduct rigorous research, as is done in the fields of psychology and the social sciences, to investigate the potential impact positive psychology could have on organizational behavior. In this effort, the conception of POB to create a scientifically measurable impact on leadership and human resource development within organizations was initiated by five criteria for inclusion (Luthans, Youssef, et al., 2007):

1. Constructs must be positively-oriented (as opposed to negatively-oriented)
2. Positive constructs that are theoretically-based and empirically researched
3. Measurable with an assessment-tool that had been found reliable and valid in scientific research
4. Be able to be developed, that is, people must be able to learn them
5. Be related to performance and relevant organizational outcomes, for example job satisfaction

The desire to focus on positive psychological constructs helps organizational behavior pivot from the disease model often used in psychology research. Instead of focusing on only helping people overcome their deficits in order to achieve “normal behavior”, the first inclusion criterion for POB is that the constructs be positively-oriented. This criterion helps researchers flip the paradigm to developing positive psychological capacities that will help people achieve greater than average organizational outcomes (Luthans, Youssef, et al., 2007) because sustainable organizations require more than average performance (Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 1997).

The second criterion for inclusion ensures that the scientific rigor that had been applied to the study of mental illnesses would also be applied to the study of positive psychological constructs in organizations. The impact of this criterion provides the foundation for which experimentally-based research can be conducted. If the goal is to develop interventions that cause changes, then they must be based on well-constructed research-based theories.

Measurement is the foundation for scientific inquiry. Researchers must be able to reliably measure the constructs with assessments that meet validation standards in order to advance scientific inquiry. The third criterion for inclusion ensures that scientific research can be conducted with established measures.

Trait psychology postulates that people have enduring individual differences in the way they think, feel, and act (Costa & McCrae, 2008). Trait-like constructs are thus enduring and are relatively stable over time (Judge, Higgins, Thorese, & Barrick, 1999) and are significantly predicted by biological genes, ranging from 41% to 61% for the five-factor model (Jang,
Livesley, & Vemon, 1996) and approximately 50% for general cognitive ability (Plomin, 1999). The fourth criterion for inclusion for POB required that the construct be relatively more malleable than trait-like constructs. Both the five-factor model, also known as the “The Big-Five,” and general mental ability are considered trait-like constructs that have relatively strong predictive power in terms of career success but are relatively stable over one’s lifespan (Judge et al., 1999). Including factors that can be developed is an important characteristic in professional development contexts, where the goal of a training session or intervention is to change the way people think and act.

The last criterion for inclusion of positive constructs into POB is that they must be related to performance and relevant organizational outcomes. Accountability is a key concern in organizations, and justification must be provided to ensure training and development investments are producing measurable results.

Based on the inclusion criteria, the four constructs initially included within POB are hope, efficacy/confidence, resilience, and optimism and led to new thinking about capital in organizations, positive psychological capital (PsyCap; Luthans, et al., 2004; Luthans & Youssef, 2004). Creating a competitive advantage using a resource-based model, for example, increasing resources and capital to enhance performance, is not a new concept in enhancing organizational performance (see Peteraf, 1993 for example), and there are many different types of capital. For example, creating a competitive advantage to increase organizational performance has been linked to economic capital (Cooper, Gimeno-Gascon, & Woo, 1994), social capital (Lepak & Snell, 1999), and human capital (Kim & Ployhart, 2014). Luthans and colleagues (2004) present a framework for understanding the different types of capital used to create a competitive advantage: (a) economic capital is what you have (i.e. finances, tangible assets); (b) human capital is what you know (i.e. experience, education, skills); (c) social capital is who you know (i.e. relationships, contacts, friends); and (d) psychological capital is who you are and what you can become (hope, efficacy/confidence, resilience, and optimism). PsyCap moves beyond one’s relatively stable individual resources to provide a framework for individual development from the actual self to the possible self (Avolio & Luthans, 2005). PsyCap provides the framework for not only understanding why a person might set challenging goals and believe he/she can achieve them (efficacy), expect he/she will achieve challenging goals (optimism), find the will and the way to achieve goals (hope), and overcome setbacks to achieve goals (resilience), but PsyCap also provides the framework for developing these psychological capital resources within individuals to create a competitive advantage for organizations.

Through empirical POB research, the four constructs of hope, efficacy/ confidence, resilience, and optimism – measured with empirically researched assessment tools that were modified for workplace settings (Luthans, Youssef, et al., 2007) – were reported to be empirically linked to one higher-order, core construct, PsyCap, (Luthans, Youssef, et al., 2007; Luthans, Avolio, et al., 2007). Luthans, Avolio, et al. (2007) reported that the combined success of the higher-order, core construct of PsyCap is greater than the success calculated by summing up the impact of the four constructs individually. The theoretical mechanism of this success is due to the core construct of PsyCap, which is “one’s positive appraisal of circumstances and probability for success based on motivated effort and perseverance” (Luthans, Avolio, et al., 2007, p. 550). Thus, PsyCap is a higher-order core construct that consists of four lower-order constructs – hope, efficacy,
resilience, and optimism – and to provide more depth to the discussion of PsyCap, a review of each of the four components is provided in the following section.

Self-Efficacy/Confidence

Self-efficacy/confidence is likely the most established construct within PsyCap, as this construct is deeply based on the work of Bandura (1986; 1997, 2001). The empirical link between self-efficacy and performance in a variety of contexts is well established through the use of meta-analyses (see Moritz, Feltz, Fahrbach, & Mack, 2000 for sports performance; Multon, Brown, & Lent, 1991 and Richardson, Abraham, & Bond, 2012 for academic performance; Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998 for workplace performance; and Stajkovic, Lee, & Nyberg, 2009 for group performance).

The measurement of PsyCap self-efficacy/confidence is based on the theoretical work of Bandura (1986, 1997, 2001), and the measurement of the PsyCap construct was based on Parker’s (1998) research focusing on work role self-efficacy. Parker’s (1998) measure, which focuses on the workplace self-efficacy related to proactivity, interpersonal skills, and operating across organizational boundaries is more state-like than the universal trait-like measures of generalized self-efficacy (Scholz, Doña, Sud, & Schwarzer, 2002). Parker’s (1998) measure of self-efficacy met the key POB inclusion criteria of being based on a positive state-like – developmental – construct, and the measurement tool had also been developed using rigorous psychometric methods.

Hope

The development of hope as a modern positive psychological construct developed from an initial, and long standing view that hope was “the perception that one can reach desired goals” (Snyder, Rand, & Sigmon, 2002, p. 257) to “a cognitive set that is based on a reciprocally derived sense of successful (a) agency (goal-directed determination) and (b) pathways (planning of ways to meet goals)” (Snyder, Irving, & Anderson, 1991, p. 571). Pathway thinking and agency thinking act iteratively and additively to increase the likelihood of goal achievement. In other words, those who have hope have the will (willpower) and the way (pathways or waypower) to achieve their goals (Luthans, Youssef, et al., 2007).

The relationship between hope and a number of significant outcomes is well established (for example, life satisfaction, Bailey, Eng, Frisch, & Snyder, 2007; college academic achievement, Snyder et al. 2002; sport achievement, Curry, Snyder, Cook, Ruby, & Rehm, 1997; workplace engagement, Ouweneel, Le Blanc, Schaufeli, & Wijhe, 2012), including, and perhaps most importantly for the study of POB, a recent meta-analysis reporting the positive link between hope and workplace performance (Reichard, Avey, Lopez, & Dollwet, 2013).

The consideration of measuring hope is important, in that hope is conceptualized and is measured as both a trait-like (Snyder et al., 1991) and state-like (Snyder et al., 1996) construct. Empirical evidence suggests that these two measures have sound psychometric properties (Snyder, 2002), but the state measure of hope fits the POB inclusion criteria. State hope is more malleable than trait hope because state hope is focused on more proximal events and time
The measure of state hope has demonstrated strong support for internal reliability and convergent and discriminate validity with several key variables (see Snyder et al., 2002 and Lopez, Ciarlelli, Coffman, Stone, & Wyatt, 2000 for a review), including trait hope (Snyder et al., 1996; Feldman, Rand, & Kahle-Wroblewski, 2009).

Optimism

The conceptual framework for optimism is based on explanatory or attributional style of the cause of events (Peterson & Steen, 2002). Pessimists would attribute the cause of negative events to internal factors that cannot be easily changed, whereas optimists would attribute the cause of negative events to external factors that are temporary. In terms of positive events, optimists would attribute the cause as internal, relatively permanent factors, whereas pessimists would attribute the cause of positive events to external, temporary factors (Seligman, 1998). Stated another way, optimists believe that they are the cause of positive events, and that negative events are caused by situation-specific factors; whereas, pessimists believe that they are the cause of negative events, and that positive events are caused by chance.

The relationship between optimism with physical health and subjective well-being is well-established (see Carver & Scheier, 2002 and Carver, Scheier, & Segerstrom, 2010 for a review), including a recent study demonstrating that relatively more optimistic women live longer (Engberg et al., 2013). Optimism has a demonstrated relationship to performance, both in academics (Peterson & Barrett, 1987) and in the workplace (Luthans, Lebsack, & Lebsack, 2008; Medlin & Green, 2009; Seligman, 1998). The measure of optimism included within PsyCap is based on Scheier and Carver’s (1985) measure and was adapted for a work setting (Luthans, Youssef, et al., 2007; Luthans, Avolio, et al., 2007).

Resilience

A considerable amount of work in clinical and developmental psychology has focused on the resilience of children and youth (see Masten, 2014 for a review), and in this work, resilience is defined as the capacity to adapt and rebound from adverse events (Masten & Reed, 2002). PsyCap resilience broadens this conceptualization in two ways (Luthans, Youssef, et al. 2007). First, PsyCap resilience includes not simply “bouncing back” from adversity, but also includes rebounding from positive change (for example, a new job; Luthans, 2002a). Second, PsyCap does not limit resilience to simply “bouncing back” to a level of normality because resilience can also have the impact of helping people rebound beyond “normality” to higher levels of performance because overcoming positive and negative challenges can build capacity (Sutcliffe & Vogus, 2003; Luthans, Vogelgesang, & Lester, 2006). The measurement of PsyCap resilience is based on the work of Wagnild and Young (1993), and like the PsyCap optimism scale, the resilience scale had to be adapted for a general workplace setting.

Broadly, research on individual resilience has focused on what causes some people to overcome adversity and challenges, and what prevents some people to fail to overcome adversity (Masten, 2014). At the time Luthans formulated PsyCap, research linking developmental resilience with workplace performance was rather limited (Sutcliffe & Vogus, 2003, Youssef & Luthans, 2007), however, since that time the study of resilience as a component of PsyCap (Newman, Ucbasaran,
Zhu, & Hirst, 2014) and within positive organizational scholarship (POS; Lengnick-Hall, Beck, & Lengnick-Hall, 2011; Richtnér & Löfsten, 2014) has flourished. In all three streams of research mentioned (POB, POS, and clinical and developmental psychology), resilience is considered state-like and has the potential to be developed within individuals (POB, Luthans, Avolio, et al., 2007; POS, Sutcliffe & Vogus, 2003; clinical and developmental psychology, Masten, 2014).

**PsyCap Outcomes**

Since the formulation of PsyCap, a tremendous amount of research has explored the construct, and in recent years researchers have begun to take a step back to review the work completed thus far, including a meta-analysis (Avey, Reichard, & Luthans, Mhatre, 2011), two reviews (a psychometric review Dawkins, Martin, Scott, & Sanderson, 2013 and a general review, Newman et al., 2014), and a special issue dedicated to the topic in the *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies* (Luthans & Avolio, 2014). The meta-analysis conducted by Avey and colleagues (2011) provide strong empirical evidence to support the significant relationship between PsyCap and a number of key workplace outcomes. The relationship between PsyCap and negative workplace attitudes including cynicism ($\rho = -.49$, 95% [-.55, -.42]), turnover intention ($\rho = -.32$, 95% [-.36, -.28]), and stress/anxiety ($\rho = -.29$, 95% [-.34, -.24]) were negative – the expected direction. PsyCap was also positively related to workplace relevant outcomes, including work satisfaction ($\rho = .54$, 95% [.50, .57]), commitment ($\rho = 0.48$, 95% [.44, .52]), and psychological well-being ($\rho = .57$, 95% [.51, .62]). The relationships between PsyCap and workplace behaviors were also significant and in the expected direction, including organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB; $\rho = .45$, 95% [.41, .50]), workplace performance ($\rho = .26$, 95% [.24, .29]), and deviance ($\rho = -.42$, 95% [-.47, -.38]).

**Measuring PsyCap**

The most recent review of PsyCap (Newman et al., 2014) stated that out of the 60 empirical PsyCap studies, 33 used the PsyCap Questionnaire (PCQ), a 24-item scale (Luthans, Youssef, et al., 2007). The PCQ uses six items based on previously created scales that had demonstrated strong reliability and validity to measure each of the four constructs: hope (Snyder et al., 1996), efficacy/confidence (Parker, 1998), resilience (Wagnild & Young, 1993), and optimism (Scheier & Carver, 1985). A 12-item shortened scale (PCQ-12) has also been used in research (Luthans, Avey, Clapp-Smith, & Li, 2008). However, as Newman et al. (2014) discuss, one major concern with the PCQ is the potential for social desirability to impact the results. People may be more apt to answer the items in a way that will help them “look good.” Harms and Luthans (2012b) reported on the use of an implicit measure of PsyCap (I-PCQ), was related to several workplace factors (e.g. job performance, job satisfaction), but it was less susceptible to response bias.

**Developing PsyCap**

The developmental nature of PsyCap is at the foundation of the theory, and although the hope, efficacy/confidence, resilience, and optimism may be conceived of as trait-like, there is growing evidence that the constructs, as conceived and measured within the PsyCap formulation, are indeed state-like – developmental (Demerouti, van Eewijk, Snelder, & Wild, 2011; Luthans,
Luthans, & Jensen, 2012; Luthans, 2012). The initial empirical evidence supporting the state-like nature of PsyCap compared the test-retest reliabilities of conscientiousness, core self-evaluations (both considered trait-like), PsyCap (state-like), and a positive emotions measure (considered more state-like than PsyCap), and the calculated reliabilities aligned with the expected order, where conscientiousness and core self-evaluations had the highest reliabilities (.76 and .81 respectively), followed by PsyCap (.52) and positive emotions (.46; Luthans, Avolio, et al., 2007).

Luthans, Avey, Avolio, and Peterson (2010) describe one example of a PsyCap intervention focused on goal-setting derived from hope theory (Snyder, 2000). Hope consists of both agency—a belief that one has control over achieving goals—and pathways thinking—identifying various avenues available to achieve goals (Snyder et al., 1991). The first step was for the participants to create a personal goal, followed by facilitators helping participants increase agentic capacity. To increase agentic capacity, the facilitators used several activities drawn from both hope theory (Snyder & Taylor, 2000) and self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 2008), for example, one activity helped participants divide large goals into smaller, manageable pieces. Next, facilitators led small group discussions focused on increasing pathway thinking. The small group discussions provided participants with additional pathways to accomplish their respective goals. Luthans et al. (2010) theorized that by using these goal-setting activities to increase agentic capacity and pathway thinking (hope), participants would have increased confidence in their abilities to achieve goals (efficacy), positive expectations of success (optimism), and increased ability to foresee and overcome obstacles (resilience), thus increasing overall PsyCap. As expected, the results from the study indicated that participants’ level of PsyCap increased after the two-hour intervention (Luthans et al., 2010).

**Theoretical Framework for Linking Service-Learning and PsyCap**

Using a service-learning course titled, “Interpersonal Skills for Leadership” as an example, the following section will provide a theoretical connection between activities in a leadership service-learning course with PsyCap developmental activities (Luthans, Avey, Avolio, Norman, & Combs, 2006; Luthans et al., 2010). Three specific elements of the course, goal-setting, written reflections, and presentations and updates are reviewed.

The service associated with the course provides the context for learning to occur. Some instructors explain that the service project is the “lab” for the class, where students get to practice the skills that are covered in the course content. The focus of this study is the integration of the service experience with goal-setting, reflections, and presentations and updates, providing an outline of how these specific elements in the service-learning course are related to developing hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism; Table 1 summarizes the following discussion.

**Goal-Setting**

In the service-learning course, students spend a significant amount of time focusing on goal-setting. The goal-setting method used in the service-learning course are STEAM goals, goals that are specific, time-oriented, ensure success, action-oriented, and measurable (Fritz, Brown, Povlacs Lunde, & Banset, 2005).
“Specific goals” are more precise than non-specific goals. For example, a goal that states “I will become better at communicating” is less specific than a goal that states “I will become better at actively listening when I’m engaging in my service learning project.” Communicating in this example is rather vague because of the many different aspects of communication. For example, the goal of becoming “better at communicating” could focus on a variety of activities, including giving presentations, talking one-on-one, and writing e-mails. The broadness of the goals would make it difficult for the person setting the goal to know whether or not their goal was achieved because of the many different possible interpretations. However, a focus on active-listening, a specific component of effective communication provides for adequate specificity. Students are encouraged to choose specific goals associated with interpersonal skills covered in the course content (e.g. active listening, nonverbal communication, time management, handling stress, building trust, resolving conflict, responding with empathy, and cross-cultural communication).

Table 1

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<th>PsyCap Development Based on Elements of Service-Learning Course</th>
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<td><strong>Goal-Setting</strong></td>
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“Time-oriented” goals have a specific time-limit. Using the example from above, “I will become better at actively listening when I’m engaging in my service learning project” does not explicitly
include time specificity. However, restating the goal as “I will become better at actively listening during my 20 hour service-learning project this semester” would be much more time-specific. In this example, it is clear that the service project is 20 hours long and that the goal needs to be achieved by the end of the semester.

“Ensuring success” refers to creating goals that are both realistic and desirable. Creating realistic goals ensures that a person can actually accomplish the goals. For example, setting a goal to “become the best active listener in the class” would be unrealistic for several reasons. First, it would be very difficult to determine who the best active listener in the class was. Second, there is no way for the person setting this goal to control how good everyone else in the class is at active listening.

The second aspect of “ensuring success” is that goals must be desirable. Desirable goals are something that a person wants to achieve. In the examples given, the person creating the goal would actually want to become a better active listener, and to help reinforce this goal, the person would articulate reasons to accomplish the goals, for example: “I want to be a better active listening because it will help me work with my clients better, it will help me better understand my clients, and it will help my clients feel valued because they will be listened to.”

“Action-oriented” goals have steps outlining how to achieve the goals. Building off of the active listening goal, a person could create steps to help them achieve their goal. For example, to become better at active listening, each time I am at my service project, I will engage in a conversation with at least one person. When I am engaged in conversation I will demonstrate active listening by paraphrasing what the other person says, by asking questions, and by demonstrating the proper body language, for example head nodding. All of these are steps outlining the pathway for becoming a better active listener.

“Measurable” goals must be met using quantifiable behaviors. For example, “I will become a better active listener” is not clearly measurable. However, using the action steps provided earlier, behavioral goals could be created. For example, “After each interaction I have with my first three clients, I will keep track of how many times I paraphrase, asked questions, and demonstrated proper body language. At the beginning and end of each week, I will re-record this information with the first three clients of the day. I will know that I’ve successfully accomplished my goal when, at the end of the semester, I have increased the number of times I paraphrased, asked questions, and demonstrated proper body language 20 percent more often than when I started.

The purpose of focusing on STEAM goals in the service-learning course are to ensure that students learn how to create effective goals. Creating goals that meet the STEAM standards are more motivating and increase the likelihood for success (Fritz et al., 2005). STEAM goals also meet the key components of effective goals as suggested by Locke and Latham (2006), in that the goals are specific and challenge the students to stretch themselves.

Developing hope, optimism, and self-efficacy are all theoretically linked through the focus on goal-related thinking (Snyder et al., 2002). Developing hope includes, at least in part, a clear conceptualization of goals, creating pathways to attain goals, and finding the motivation to focus on achieving the goal (Lopez, Floyd, Ulven, & Snyder, 2000). In relation to developing hope,
STEAM goals focus on all three components of hope development. Writing goals ensures students are conceptualizing their goals. Creating action steps helps students think through their goals from start to finish, ensuring that they outline the pathways to achievement. When students focus on “ensuring success,” specifically creating goals that are desirable, students provide the motivational foundation to sustain the required energy to follow through on their goals.

By focusing on the successful completion of goals, students are promoting the positive, optimistic expectancy. Creating action steps for goals helps students identify potential obstacles, building resilience. The action steps also help students create opportunities for incremental success, promoting efficacy. The goal-setting strategy in the service-learning course, creating STEAM goals, provides significant opportunities to promote each element of PsyCap.

**Reflections**

Using reflection activities within service-learning courses is a major factor in achieving learning outcomes (Conway et al., 2009; Knapp et al., 2010; Parker-Gwin & Marbry, 1998; Strage, 2000; Yorio & Ye, 2012), and these activities can also impact the development of PsyCap. The written reflection format used in the service-learning course consists of three parts – What, So What, and Now What. This reflection format is widely used in higher education to support service-learning outcomes (Connors & Seifer, 2005), and it is based on Kolb’s experiential learning cycle (2005):

Immediate or concrete experiences are the basis for observations and reflections. These reflections are assimilated and distilled into abstract concepts from which new implications for actions can be drawn. These implications can be actively tested and serve as guides in creating new experiences (p. 194).

The “What” section requires students to recount concrete events from their service experiences. The “So What” section requires students to reflect on how they responded to the events, both behaviorally and affectively. The “Now What” section requires students to reflect on how they can use the information they have just reflected on and apply it to future situations to help them achieve their goals. These activities enable students to impact PsyCap in several ways. First, as Seligman (1998) suggests, reflecting on a situation can lead to a more realistic view of the events. Second, ensuring that students write about the lessons they learned from each event and reflecting on how to apply those lessons to a future situation, students are developing optimistic expectancy. Third, focusing on what aspects of the situation were influenced by the students' actions and emotions (using the “So What” section), and developing a plan to use the lessons in the future (using the “Now What” section), students are developing agency. Fourth, students are expected to reflect on events where they successfully used their interpersonal skills. Reflecting on their success helps students build efficacy and confidence in using their skills. Also, by reflecting on the successes and failures of past events, students are building capacity to recognize and identify obstacles.

**Presentations and Updates**

Throughout the course, students must provide updates about their service projects. Some of these updates are only a few minutes long, while other presentations can be five to 10 minutes in
length. Many of the expected outcomes associated with reflections are also be expected by creating presentations. Thus, for sake of parsimony, this discussion focuses on the act of presenting or listening to presentations, and not necessarily the preparation of the presentation.

Participating in strategy discussions about completing tasks has been linked to higher levels of task completion by promoting new ideas – pathways – on how to complete the task (Latham, Winters, & Locke, 1994; Locke & Latham, 2002). Correspondingly, listening to other students present about how they achieved or did not achieve their goals provides students with the opportunity to recognize additional pathways. By listening to other students present, there is not only an opportunity to recognize obstacles, but there is also an opportunity to build a network of people with similar experiences to provide support. In general, sharing stories about goals also provides opportunities for vicarious learning.

Giving presentations can also promote development. Specifically, sharing success in a group setting helps promote confidence and positive expectancy. Also, receiving feedback and questions from peers who have gone through similar experiences, provides opportunities for more realistic appraisals of events.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to demonstrate the theoretical connection of the potential impact a leadership service-learning course could have on an important workplace relevant outcome, PsyCap. It is undeniable that many of activities in the course were chosen or “cherry-picked” to support the theoretical foundation that PsyCap is developed during the course, as there are learning outcomes and activities students engaged in that are not included in this review of the course. The goal was to provide a theoretical outline of how the course could develop PsyCap by drawing clear connections between course activities and the theories of hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism development. Although developing PsyCap has not been an explicit learning outcome, the examples of the course activities do demonstrate that, if PsyCap can be developed as theorized (Luthans et al., 2006; Luthans, Youssef, et al., 2007), this course should help students increase their PsyCap.

Finally, given that a theoretical foundation for developing PsyCap in a leadership service-learning course has been provided, several recommendations arise. First, testing the development of PsyCap, using of the well-tested measures of PsyCap, in a service-learning course that includes some of the activities listed using pre/post-test design could provide quantifiable evidence of the theoretical connection. Second, purposefully and explicitly incorporating activities used in PsyCap development in service-learning could help promote student career preparedness. Third, trait-like variables that are linked to career success, for example, Core Self-Evaluations (Judge & Bono, 2001; Judge, Erez, Bono, & Thoresen, 2003), should also be explored to determine the developmental impact service-learning can provide. There could be limits of the measurable impact of service-learning, such that, although PsyCap could be developed over the course of a semester, a more trait-like characteristic would not be developed.

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Developing Competencies for Educational Leadership: 
The Role of Graduate Programs

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American Institutes for Research

Abstract

This study aimed to identify characteristics of advanced degree programs that effectively prepare educational leaders to the demands of 21st century jobs. This study used a qualitative inquiry methodology to explore the experiences of master’s and doctoral students in three higher education institutions. From the interviews and the supporting literature, the evaluation team developed categories of leadership competencies as well as rubrics organized by five quality indicators of programs that support the development of these competencies: (1) offer students customized learning plans; (2) provide students with field-related work opportunities; (3) help students connect research to practice; (4) promote a caring and supportive learning environment; and, (5) connect students to organizations, associations, and networks in the field. These indicators can be used to assess program capacity.

Introduction

The roles of educational leaders are multiple and complex and require multiple skills. The research on educational leadership identifies several categories of leadership skills, each aligned with a different type of leadership style or leadership behavior. For example, researchers suggest that the skills needed for transformational leadership—a leadership style that includes establishing a long-term vision and motivating and inspiring others—include a deep understanding of the educational field and human development as well as communications skills (Lopez, 2014). Another category, communitarian leadership—a leadership style that focuses on building a community while acknowledging the rights and perspectives of individual members of the community—requires an understanding of the needs of diverse groups and the ability to analyze situations and navigate political situations (Baxter, Thessin, & Clayton, 2014). A third category, educational thought leadership, involves informing the educational community about the state of the field and designing innovative solutions to persisting educational gaps or problems. Relevant skills include content expertise and the ability to link theory and practice (Ravitch, 2010).

Advanced degree programs that aim to prepare educational leaders vary in their quality (Levine, 2005). The programs that have received the highest marks for preparing leaders who can meet the demands of 21st century jobs integrate the practical lessons of academic coursework and ground them in the day-to-day realities of schools. These programs link coursework and field-based learning experiences to help students become reflective practitioners who integrate theory with practice (Wrenn & Wrenn, 2009). These programs also provide ample mentoring and advisory programs to support personal and professional growth (Hale & Moorman, 2003).

In the study described in this paper, we aimed to develop a framework for assessing the capacity of advanced degree programs to promote educational leadership. This goal was identified as part of
the need to evaluate the quality of programs within the context of increasing philanthropic
investments in master’s and doctoral programs in Jewish education. The design of the programs
was based on several assumptions: (1) there is a fast-growing need in the field of Jewish education
for well-trained professional leaders with the highest level of academic achievement; (2) academic
and professional training in Jewish education should equip professionals to provide educational
programs for diverse student populations; and, (3) graduate students should be given access to the
faculty guidance aligned with their professional work and interests.

**Literature Review**

The effectiveness of advanced degree programs should be discussed in the context of the goals the
programs aim to accomplish (Buchanan, 2008; Levine, 2005). Typically, higher education
institutions focus on student retention, completion of degree requirements, and job placement as
metrics for measuring student success (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2015).

In this report, we discuss a different set of outcomes—the leadership competencies that master’s
and doctoral students can gain to advance in their careers as educational leaders in Jewish
education settings. The leadership competencies depicted in Exhibit 1 are organized by five types
of professional responsibilities or actions—each supported by a set of competencies that may be
developed as part of an advanced degree.

The first type of professional responsibilities, referred to as “Managing With Agility,” is defined as
being able to manage in environments characterized by uncertainty and ambiguity as well as
managing with openness and adaptability. It involves the ability to effectively fulfill one’s
professional responsibilities while attempting new ways of doing or viewing things or managing
unexpected events and new requirements. This leadership competency has an affective component
(e.g., emotion regulation) and a cognitive component (e.g., identifying and understanding
alternative models of program operation) (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002). Increasingly, this
competency is recognized as an important part of preparing effective educational leaders (Kivunja,
2015). The second type of professional responsibilities, referred to as “Problem Framing and
Problem Solving,” is defined as the ability to identify and analyze problems, weigh the relevance
and accuracy of information about the problem, and generate alternative solutions. Acquiring
problem-solving skills as part of a degree awarding program best occurs as part of fieldwork,
where students become acquainted with the problems that exist in the organization and have the
opportunity to define and analyze these problems (Knowlton, 2003).

The third type, “Informed Decision Making,” is defined as balancing diverse views and beliefs and
using data and other evidence to reach solutions. Informed decision makers should have strong
knowledge of the topic and the ability to build on the shared expertise of colleagues and experts
within or outside the organization. Students need to develop the capacity to translate theory into
practice to apply relevant knowledge to the decision-making process (Burrell, Rahim, Hussain,
Dawson, & Finch, 2011). The translation of theory into practice includes being able to differentiate
between applicable and nonapplicable models and review the merits of each alternative solution
with regard to feasibility, implications, and impact (Burrell et al., 2011). The application of theory
into practice also involves ethical and moral considerations as well as self-reflection about one’s
behavior and its implications on the interpersonal dynamics in the school or organization.
Therefore, it is crucial that students’ acquire this competency as part of their fieldwork and that it is supported by mentoring and academic learning (Garcia, 2009).

Exhibit 1. A Framework of Leadership Competencies

The fourth type of professional responsibilities, “Program Design or Redesign,” is defined as selecting, revising, or developing educational programs to meet the mission of the school, organization, or larger community. The academic education that graduate programs provide can equip students to serve the research and practitioner communities vis-à-vis knowledge construction. For example, students can consider the linkage between conceptual developments across social sciences and humanities and how these emerging approaches can inform the construction of community engagement programs (Gilvin, Roberts, & Martin, 2012). The fifth type of professional responsibilities of educational leaders, “Strategic Planning,” is defined as identifying and anticipating market needs and setting a long-term strategic vision for systemic improvement. Strategic planning may have an entrepreneurial component—accomplishing the mission of the organization through creative and innovative ideas (Kezar, Carducci, & Contreras-McGavin, 2006). Academically prepared and research trained professionals can build on existing knowledge to solve or at least to contribute significantly to the solution of the major problems at
the organizational level (Anderson, 2013; Enders, 2005). Faculty members noted several important abilities that they are seeking to develop through the programs. These abilities include becoming a critical and discerning consumer of educational research and educational programs and using such critical thinking skills to generalize from one field to another or combine old and new ideas as part of a new model. For example, leaders of organizations can build professional development programs for their staff that are powerful learning journeys over time, rather than traditional training events (Lurie, 2015). The competencies that support strategic planning can include understanding the diverse perspectives of stakeholders representing the community and other organizations (Kruss, Visser, & Aphane, 2012). For students who pursue academic careers, this category can be rephrased to focus on identifying real-world research agendas that have an impact on the research and practitioner communities (Gilvin et al., 2012).

**Conceptual Framework**

A framework for programs in higher education is the backbone of any evaluation and capacity building system because it clarifies what programs provide to students and how well they perform in observable and measurable terms. For this study, we developed the Educational Leadership Professional Growth Model to organize and analyze the data collected (Exhibit 2).

**Exhibit 2. Educational Leadership Professional Growth Model**
Professional Experience and Commitment

The top arrow in Exhibit 2, depicting the professional experience and commitment of students, precedes the other two elements of the model because it includes the students’ knowledge and experience prior to program enrollment. Our model assumes that graduate programs targeting experienced professionals should have a different design than programs that target individuals with little or no prior relevant knowledge or experience. Programs that aim to prepare thought leaders will be successful to the extent to which they serve individuals who are already on such a professional path.

Higher education institutions typically screen applicants to distinguish those who are likely to succeed in the program and those who are not. A common predictor of success is the prior academic coursework of applicants as part of undergraduate programs, certificate programs, or other training opportunities (Huss, Randall, Patry, Davis, & Hansen, 2002; Luce, 2011). Relevant professional experience, especially in leadership positions, also is a predictor of success in graduate school (Micek, Kim, & Weinstein, 2011; Nelson, Canada, & Lancaster, 2003).

Finally, a common practice in recruitment of prospective students is to request a goals statement as part of the admissions process. Higher education institutions may seek assurance that the applicants have a clear understanding of the field and the roles that they can play in it. Prospective students may express a passion for taking part in reform and innovation, a vision for addressing current challenges in the field, and a belief in the importance of intellectual rigor as part of field development.

Quality Graduate Program

The second arrow in Exhibit 2, depicting the quality graduate program, is at the center of the model and the main focus of this study. It addresses five quality indicators listed below:

1. The program offers students customized learning plans aligned with their skills and career goals. Academic advisors help students identify relevant courses from different departments and schools at the university. Advisors guide an informed course selection to ensure that the academic learning provides the knowledge and skills that students need for their desired careers.

2. The program provides students with opportunities to develop professional competencies in field related work. Academic advisors help students find internships, assistantships, and salaried jobs based on students’ professional goals. Students have access to mentors in the field.

3. The program support the development of leadership competencies. Students receive multiple opportunities to develop and practice leadership competencies, including workshops and seminars, ongoing consultation by academic advisors, and access to relevant courses, conferences, and field experience.
4. The program promote a caring and supportive learning environment. Students have multiple opportunities to connect with faculty and peers. Faculty members develop personal, caring relationships with students.

5. The program connect students to organizations, associations, and networks in the field. Academic advisors and other faculty members introduce students to organizations and networks in relevant to their professional interests. Students receive support for presentations, publications, and participation in professional meetings in the field.

Other Supports

The third arrow in Exhibit 2, depicting other supports, includes the concurrent influences of fellowships and grants that students receive and the professional networks they develop during their time of enrollment at the higher education institution. Academic advisors may encourage students to pursue fellowships that can further their specialization, professional connections, and leadership competencies.

Methods

Sample

The study sample included 31 individuals enrolled in master’s and doctoral programs in New York University (NYU), Stanford University, and George Washington University (GWU), 18 employers who supervised 18 of the students in the sample in their workplace, and 7 professors who led the graduate programs or served as academic advisors of the students in the sample. All students were enrolled in programs that aimed to prepare leaders in Jewish education. These programs were supported by grants from the Jim Joseph Foundation, which enabled full tuition scholarships to the students interviewed. The respondents varied in their professional background and interests. The professional interests and job titles at graduation varied greatly and included school teachers, school principals, professors in the academia, executive directors, and directors of informal education programs in community centers, nonprofit organizations, and congregations.

Interviews

*Interviews with students:* Each student was interviewed twice. The interviews were 7-months spaced apart. Each interview was 30-minutes long. The interviews were semi-structured and customized based on the background of each respondent. The first interview aimed to gauge (a) reasons for enrolling in the program; (b) career interests and aspirations; and (c) the array of learning, networking, and professional practice opportunities offered by the programs. The second interview followed up on the same topics discussed in the first interview and sought to identify any changes in career aspirations and employment experiences and the factors that led to these changes. The interviewed took place at different points in time relative to students’ progression in their programs – while some students were interviewed during their first or second year, other students were interviewed towards the end of their program participation.
Interviews with supervisors and advisors: The students were asked to identify a supervisor who can speak to their current professional practice. Students, who were not employed at the time of the interview, identified an academic advisor who had closely worked with them. The interviews with supervisors were about competencies that employers looked for in educational leaders. The interviews with academic advisors were about how the master’s and doctoral programs were designed to prepare students for various educational leadership positions.

Analytic Technique

The thematic analysis of the qualitative data gathered through interviews was guided by the conceptual framework of this study. Converging themes yielded five quality indicators, each rated on a four-point scale ranging from Emerging Capacity to Very Strong Capacity. The rubrics created for this study are listed below.

Quality Indicator 1. Offer students customized learning plans aligned with their skills and career goals.

Emerging Capacity: Students have access to a large selection of courses (across the institution and through collaborative agreements with other institutions).

Moderate Capacity: Same as Emerging Capacity, plus: academic advisors help students to match courses with students’ interests and professional goals.

Strong Capacity: Same as Moderate Capacity, plus: courses and advisors enable students to connect theory and research-based practice to application in the field.

Very Strong Capacity: Same as Strong Capacity, plus: Academic advisors regularly guide students through a reflection process on the extent to which courses have helped them advance toward their professional goals.

Quality Indicator 2: Provide students with opportunities to develop professional competencies in field-related work.

Emerging Capacity: Program directors help students find job placement for capstone projects, internships, and assistantships.

Moderate Capacity: Same as Emerging Capacity, plus: Program directors match job placements with students’ professional interests and goals.

Strong Capacity: Same as Moderate Capacity, plus: Students have opportunities to engage in more than one type of field-related work.

Very Strong Capacity: Same as Strong Capacity, plus: Students are assigned mentors who provide guidance and feedback on their work.

Quality Indicator 3: Support the development of leadership competencies.

Emerging Capacity: Students receive regular announcements about workshops and seminars on management and leadership skills.

Moderate Capacity: Same as Emerging Capacity, plus: Academic advisors engage students in discussions about applying knowledge and skills when engaging in leadership
roles.

**Strong Capacity:** Same as Moderate Capacity, plus: Academic advisors help students find opportunities to practice leadership skills, including presentations, publications, planning, and consulting.

**Very Strong Capacity:** Same as Strong Capacity, plus: Faculty members guide students through academic inquiry and applied or theoretical research on educational leadership.

**Quality Indicator 4: Promote a caring and supportive learning environment.**

**Emerging Capacity:** Academic advisors and other faculty members are accessible and responsive to students’ questions and feedback requests.

**Moderate Capacity:** Same as Emerging Capacity, plus: Academic advisors use a holistic approach of student development by supporting students’ professional growth and well-being. **Strong Capacity:** Same as Moderate Capacity, plus: Students have access to structured opportunities (e.g., seminars, peer mentoring) that promote socialization with peers as part of a safe, caring, and supportive climate.

**Very Strong Capacity:** Same as Strong Capacity, plus: Programs offer events that promote faculty and students interaction. The event can be academic in nature (e.g., brown bags, colloquia, and workshops), or socially oriented (e.g., potlucks, movie nights, and picnics).

**Quality Indicator 5: Connect students to organizations, associations, and networks in the field.**

**Emerging Capacity:** Programs send regular announcements of upcoming conferences and other networking and professional opportunities in the field of Jewish education.

**Moderate Capacity:** Same as Emerging Capacity, plus: Programs provide seminars and individualized support to help students write or prepare for presentations, publications, grant applications, or participation in initiatives in Jewish education.

**Strong Capacity:** Same as Moderate Capacity, plus: Academic advisors and other faculty members introduce students to key people in organizations, associations, and networks in the field.

**Very Strong Capacity:** Same as Strong Capacity, plus: Academic advisors continually encourage professional socialization of students and identify networking opportunities that match individual students’ strengths and professional goals.

**Results**

This section describes the application of the quality Indicators rubrics for one doctoral program. The combined information from students, employers, and faculty members, as well as a review of program documents (e.g., course selection guidelines) were used to rate the program on each of the five quality indicators.

**Quality Indicator 1: Customized Learning Plan**

The doctoral program received a rating of "Strong Capacity" on Quality Indicator 1. In the course of their interviews, all students described the large selection of courses available to them from
different departments and schools at their institution. Taking courses from other departments enabled students to deepen their learning in specialized fields such as nonprofit management. The doctoral students also had access to courses offered under the Inter-University Doctoral Consortium or could choose to sign up for an independent study on a specialized topic in their institution. Doctoral students had assigned advisors at the beginning of their programs, whose place was taken by the doctoral committee and the head of the doctoral committee.

Advisors held multiple meetings with students to reflect on professional interests and the job opportunities and discuss course selection. Students reported feeling comfortable to openly discuss career aspirations with their advisors and solicit advice on course selection. Advisors recommended courses based on students’ interests. Advisors’ course recommendations took into account students’ career aspirations as well as their prior experience with rigorous coursework. In addition to the knowledge that students garnered through academic courses, advisors recommended books and articles to support further learning. Students reported that their advisors were highly accessible and willing to discuss books and other resources and help students think about new ideas for scholarly study and educational practice.

Interviews with faculty and employers indicated that students were encouraged to look beyond what is currently known about the needs of the field and were challenged to identify new directions for innovation. The combination of coursework and advisory were meant to equip them with the knowledge and critical thinking skills that enable students to “think outside the box” and examine educational concepts from an informed, yet fresh, perspective. Advisors encouraged students to develop a strong understanding of the history of the field they were interested in to be able to develop a long-term perspective, including ideas for innovation and transformation. Advisors also encouraged students to select courses that would later enable flexibility in career choices. The doctoral students saw their core doctoral seminar as an important course that enabled them to grapple with contemporary issues in education as well as meet with guest speakers representing funders and different educational settings providing formal and informal educational programs. At the same time, the extent of individualized support varied among students. There was no evidence that academic advisors had an explicit and deliberate strategy to guide students through an ongoing process of reflection on professional growth, the courses taken to date, gaps in learning, and learning opportunities to address these gaps.

*Quality Indicator 2: Field-Related Work*

The program received a rating of “Very Strong Capacity” on Quality Indicator 2. Doctoral students reported that their professors helped them find employment during their program enrollment (through institutional connections and their own independent job searches) or receive greater leadership opportunities at their existing workplace. In addition, doctoral students noted that the structure and content of their program enabled cross-fertilization between their studies and field work. They brought ideas from the field work into their dissertation research. They also brought subject matter expertise and organizational practices from their studies into their field work. Most students worked in more than one place or more than one professional role during their enrollment in the doctoral program. Students found internships and jobs in organizations with strong reputations that offered models of effective professional practice. The program directors built on their own experiences and alumni connections to match students with work opportunities.
Quality Indicator 3: Leadership Competencies

The program received a rating of "Strong Capacity" on Quality Indicator 3. The program directors conceptualized a structure that can help students prepare for a broad range of professional roles. The program directors considered the kind of professional knowledge and skills that inform the work of both "traditional" and innovative educational programs and settings.

Students received the intellectual guidance and support to explore creative directions of careers as educational leaders without being guided to consider any particular setting or path. As a result, all doctoral students produced innovative work that reflected their unique interests and skills. The topics explored by students in their dissertation research included the use of games for learning, homeschooling, and the development of religious emotion. Most of the students engaged in professional activities that demonstrate subject matter expertise, such as publishing, presenting papers in conferences, developing teaching materials, and serving as content experts for their communities. Some of the students also reported transitioning to management positions and engaging in innovation in their workplace. There was no evidence that the academic advisors explicitly identified leadership competencies and worked with students to find professional development opportunities aligned with these competencies.

Quality Indicator 4: Learning Environment

The program received a rating of “Strong Capacity” on Quality Indicator 4. Students described nurturing relationships with the program directors, with many opportunities to be mentored by advisors and professors. In fact, one of the greatest program strengths reported by students was the positive and supportive faculty-student interactions. Students lauded the relationships they have built with other students within their programs. Many students have remained in touch with their peers after completing their program. Most students cited their peer relationships as being instrumental to their intellectual growth and the expansion of their professional network. Doctoral students noted the program’s size as contributing to a tightly knit community of like-minded scholars. In addition to promoting close relationships with faculty and students, the university promoted the visibility of students on its website by posting biographical sketches of current students and alumni and sharing news on students’ recent accomplishments. The relationships established were a result of faculty members who were passionate about the mission of the program. Institutionally, there were no structures (e.g., seminars, events) aimed at building relationships.

Quality Indicator 5: Professional Networking

The program received a rating of “Very Strong Capacity” on Quality Indicator 5. Several factors contributed to the enhanced professional networking of students, including the reputation of faculty and their connections with schools, nonprofit organizations, foundations, and associations; professional connections of alumni; and professional connections of the students themselves, who supported members of their cohorts. Networking offered an important venue to connect with professionals who specialize in the same educational practice. Students received assistance with their applications to fellowships and conferences that provided additional connections with the
research and practitioner community.

Students were responsible for requesting help from academic advisors and faculty members to identify networking opportunities, to prioritize those opportunities, and to gain access to key events and professional meetings. Some students reported that they had strong networks that they have developed in parallel to their program enrollment independently of their program support. They saw the primary contribution of their program as providing connections to types of communities that they did not have access to in the past (prior to enrollment).

To assess changes in professional networking, this study used a social network analysis technique that depicts graphically the connections of students with organizations and associations in the field. This analysis revealed that, prior to enrollment in the doctoral program, students had more localized professional connections, which were tied to a synagogue, school, or a branch of a camp. The number of connections between students and organizations more than doubled after program enrollment.

**Discussion**

The Educational Leadership Professional Growth Model situates quality indicators of graduate programs in the context of prior academic learning and professional experience and concurrent supports. It aims to outline the key aspects of a program’s capacity to offer comprehensive educational experience that matches individuals’ professional aspirations. The individualized and rigorous nature of the programs is assumed to enhance professionals growth as educational leaders. The leadership competencies identified through this model are also relevant to the development of thought leadership, defined as the championing of new directions through writing, speaking, and teaching, advocating, and planning (McCrirmon, 2005). Thought leadership can be exercised through multiple professional roles including business entrepreneurship, new program development, and academic research. Unlike traditional leadership models, thought leadership does not require the management of others rather it is centered on “individuals’ ability to illuminate paths to the future that others can follow” (Butler, 2012, p. 1). Two common abilities of thought leaders are engagement of others within the same or different organizations and having relevant expertise (Gibbins-Klein, 2011). The framework developed through this study can support important conversations about the role of advanced degree programs in educational leadership development In general and thought leadership specifically. It also can serve as a tool for assessments of program capacity development in higher education. Further elaboration on this model is needed to test and clarify its applicability to varying models of advanced degree programs that aim to prepare individuals for leadership roles.

**References**


The Experiences of Engineers as Undergraduate Teaching Assistants for an Introductory Leadership Course

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Abstract

This study explored the experiences of engineering undergraduate teaching assistants who teach a lab section for an introductory leadership course. Results produced five themes: (1) Interpersonal Skill Development, (2) Self-Awareness and Personal Development, (3) Applied Learning of Leadership Concepts, (4) Accountability, and (5) Perspective on Teaching. Their experience offers insights that inform leadership development in higher education and hold significant meaning for the leadership development of engineers.

Introduction

According to the National Academy of Engineers (2004) although engineering students must understand the principles of leadership they are generally not exposed to formal studies of leadership and leadership development. Arguably, this has resulted in a deficiency of basic leadership and communication skills required of engineering students upon graduation (McCloskey, Reel, & Gabriel, 1996; Riley, Horman, & Messner, 2008). Responding to this concern, the College of Engineering (COE) at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln implemented the course, ENGR 100: Interpersonal Skills for Engineering Leaders. The purpose of the course is to develop engineering leaders through the introduction of: (a) the principles and practices of positive interpersonal relationships for leadership development; (b) effective interpersonal communication; (c) self-awareness and awareness of others; and (d) the building of trusting relationships.

Students enrolled in the course register for a lecture and a lab section. The lab sections serve as a way to facilitate smaller discussion groups on topics covered in the 100+ person lecture classes. The intent is to increase dialogue and active student participation. Undergraduate teaching assistants (UTAs) support the student-centered teaching methods. They prepare and lead learning activities and discussions based on the lecture material. Additionally, UTAs are used so that engineering programs continually develop student leaders within the COE.

ENGR 100 and its use of UTAs are in alignment with the position of Dugan and Komives (2007) who urge the development of UTAs as leaders. Previous research concluded that the experience is a significant predictor of socially responsible leadership capacity (Campbell, Smith, Dugan, & Komives, 2012; Schalk, McGinnis, Harring, Hendrickson, & Smith, 2009). To explore pathways for leadership development in engineering, the primary focus of the study is to observe the leadership development experienced by these teaching assistants, and identify how the role can prepare engineering students as leaders in the college and as engineering professionals.

The central design of ENGR 100 focuses on determining the leadership competency development of engineering students. However, addressing the leadership competencies of the
UTAs was neglected. Therefore, in order to establish assessment benchmarks and to develop core leadership competencies, an understanding of the UTAs experience was needed. Understanding their experience will enable identification of which leadership competencies are being reinforced as part of their development. Furthermore, understanding their experience will determine how effective the UTAs are in developing engineering students as leaders.

This qualitative phenomenological study explored the experiences of engineering undergraduate teaching assistants who teach a lab section for ENGR 100: Interpersonal Skills for Engineering Leaders. The study addressed the following questions:

1. What are the experiences of undergraduate teaching assistants who teach an undergraduate leadership lab section for engineering majors?
2. What leadership competencies do undergraduate teaching assistants exhibit as a result of teaching an undergraduate leadership lab?

**Literature Review**

The literature on the use of UTAs is broad and diverse—covering exclusive teaching assistant programs in multiple disciplines and departments across institutions of higher education. When looking at the experiential benefits to the UTAs themselves, research shows the benefits from the perspective of the teaching assistants as well as faculty and students. Research showing value from the viewpoint of the professors and students provides data regarding personal growth, growth from teaching, and leadership development through position and process. Public speaking, patience, problem solving, leading students to expert thinking, pedagogical content knowledge, and a strong perspective on education are among the areas where the most personal and instructional growth transpired in science departments at both medium and large sized universities (Harper, May, & Oliver, 2002; Tien, Roth, & Kampmeier, 2002; Tien, Roth, & Kampmeier, 2004). In regards to leadership development, researchers found escalation in understanding and appreciating other ways of thinking, building confidence, and perspectives and learning conditions that aid genuine motivation (Harper et al., 2002, Tien et al., 2004).

To understand the experiences from the viewpoint of the UTAs, evidence supporting a gain in personal growth, knowledge from teaching, and leadership development exists. Fingerson and Culley (2001) found that the role offers students a rare one-on-one mentoring relationship with the professor and exposure to real work experience. Newcomb and Bagwell (1997) indicated that the experience allows assistants to acquire collaborative relationships. Other personal perceived benefits seen in the literature include, time management, competence, self-expression, and communication (Harper et al., 2002, Micari, Streitwieser, & Light, 2006; Newcomb & Bagwell, 1997; Schalk, McGinnis, Harring, Hendrickson, & Smith, 2009).

Additional findings related leadership development to experiences by the UTAs as they progressed in their role (Fingerson & Culley, 2001; Micari et al., 2006; Schalk et al., 2009). The UTAs expressed a variety of leadership proficiencies, with confidence being most extensively voiced across the research (Harper et al., 2002; Micari et al., 2006; Newcomb & Bagwell, 1997; Schalk et al., 2009; Weidert, Wendorf, Gurung, & Filz, 2012). Other leadership attributes include becoming effectively assertive in interpersonal relations; interpersonal and intrapersonal growth;
understanding audience; gaining responsibility; being an authority figure; recognizing strengths and weaknesses; and being a role model (Fingerson & Culley, 2001; Micari et al., 2006; Newcomb & Bagwell, 1997).

Closely related to our study, Odom, Ho, and Moore (2015) examined the experiences of undergraduate leadership teaching assistants as a high-impact practice for leader development. Their findings yielded support for the 3 employer-identified essential learning outcomes needed by graduates: (a) intellectual and practical skills (e.g., written and oral communication, teamwork), (b) personal and social responsibility (e.g., civic engagement), and (c) integrative and applied learning (e.g., application of knowledge and skills).

Despite the ample variety of research conducted about the undergraduate teaching programs and the beneficial aspect of using students in the learning process, little is known about how leadership competencies are developed for engineering students who serve as UTAs (Harper et al., 2002). Understanding the experience of this population is significant because it will allow us to identify which leadership competencies UTAs are currently using, and which competencies need to be developed. Including leadership competencies as learning outcomes for the UTAs will ensure: (a) program transparency; (b) a standardized process for assessing student learning in leadership courses, (c) an intentional and outcome driven experience (Seemiller & Murray, 2013), and (d) an improvement process for training and developing UTAs.

**Conceptual Framework**

The intent of phenomenological research is to understand and apply meaning to how individuals perceive and understand their world without the researchers applying their own judgments and biases (Creswell, 2007; Moustakas, 1994). The process is inductive and emergent therefore, applying a theoretical framework is not common practice because it would mean applying a predetermined set of fixed concepts that would control the study (van Manen, 1990). While the limitation does present a problem when conducting traditional forms of research, the decision to use the ABET learning outcomes and Seemiller’s (“Leadership Competencies Database,” n.d.) student leadership competencies as the conceptual framework to guide this study provides essential context.

Using leadership literature and learning outcomes set by experts in higher education, Seemiller and Murray (2013) completed a list of 244 leadership competencies essential for professional preparation based on the four dimensions of knowledge, value, ability, and behavior. This list affords higher education the opportunity to tailor leadership programs to meet the needs of specific audiences of students. Engineering, compared to the other eighteen fields of study had considerably lower amounts of student leadership competencies per academic program. This finding supports the need for reform in the engineering curriculum; reform that includes the call for presenting engineering students with the opportunity to widen the specific skill set associated with leadership. According to Seemiller and Murray (2013), leadership competencies for engineering majors include: (a) others’ circumstances, (b) verbal communication, (c) writing, (d) collaboration, (e) analysis, (f) evaluation, (g) idea generation, (h) ethics, and (i) self-development (website reference here). Its important to note that these standards were developed using the student outcomes set by ABET. ABET requires academic institutions to design engineering
programs that will demonstrate a students’ ability to: (a) function on multidisciplinary teams; (b) understand professional and ethical responsibility; (c) communicate effectively; (d) acquire the broad education necessary to understand the impact of engineering solutions in a global, economic, environmental, and societal context; and (e) develop a knowledge of contemporary issues. These concepts and skills necessitates that engineering students are exposed to and understand the leadership and communication skills needed to enhance their already strong technical abilities in order to have a significant societal impact.

Methods

The aim of this study is to explore the leadership experiences of engineering UTAs who teach an introductory leadership lab section, by collecting data and developing a description of the essence of what they experienced. The decision to use a qualitative phenomenological design was made because few empirical studies of the phenomena exist. Furthermore, because qualitative methods play a significant role in the exploratory stages of researching a topic (Conger, 1998) this study fits well within a qualitative design.

The target population are UTAs who are engineering majors and lead lab sections of an introductory leadership course for engineering students. We used purposeful sampling to identify participants who served as UTAs during the fall 2014, spring 2015 and fall 2015 semesters. Participants were asked to participate in a semi-structured focus group. The intent of the focus group was to gather narrative data that will develop a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. Two of the participants were unable to attend the focus groups. Instead, they participated in semi-structured interviews.

Data Analysis

The data analysis was a seven-step process adapted from Creswell (2007) that included: (a) bracketing, (b) horizontalization, (c) develop clusters of meaning, (d) textural description, (e) structural description, (f) essence, and (g) reflexivity. To set aside personal biases and experiences we bracketed our own experience with the phenomenon through the process of reflective journaling.

To ensure validity of the findings rich description and triangulation were used. Rich description refers to applying detailed examples to the themes. The process involves more than describing the data. It allows for the researchers to put themselves “in the shoes” of the participants. Triangulation corroborates multiple data sources. In this study, reflective journals were collected. However, for the purposes of this paper, only the results from the focus groups and interviews are reported. The participants’ responses were also verified with previous theoretical knowledge provided by Seemiller and Murray’s student leadership competencies and the ABET student learning outcomes. To determine the reliability of the participants’ responses, an inter-coder process was implemented. Multiple coders reviewed the data sets by coding a sample of the transcripts. As a group, we examined the text segments and codes and come to an agreement. Inter-coder agreement means that we agreed that when we individually assigned a code to a text, we would assign the same code to the same text (Creswell, 2007). As a result of this process we established an 80% agreement of coded segments.
Results

There were 18 UTAs who agreed to participate in the study. Of the 18 participants, 6 served as a UTA for at least two semesters, while the remaining participants served only one semester. There was an equal representation of females (50%) and males (50%). The majority (88%) of the participants were Caucasian and 11% comprised of participants who identified as Hispanic and Asian. Sixty-six percent (66%) of the participants were sophomores, with 27% representing juniors, and 0.5% representing seniors. Results of the focus groups and individual interviews produced 5 overarching themes of the experiences of UTAs of an undergraduate leadership lab section for engineering majors: (1) Interpersonal Skill Development, (2) Self-Awareness and Personal Development, (3) Applied Learning of Leadership Concepts, (4) Accountability, and (5) Perspective on Teaching. For the purpose of this article three of these themes will be addressed as these findings specifically relate to the leadership needs and development of college students. What follows is a brief description of the 3 themes, and corresponding subthemes.

Interpersonal Skill Development

The most significant experience was interpersonal skill development. The analysis of the interview and focus group transcripts yielded 63 statements supporting this theme. Their reports of interpersonal skill development were organized around 3 subthemes: (a) developing effective communication skills, (b) building relationships, and (c) empathy. These skills are inline with the overarching goal of the course, which is to introduce students to the principles and practices of positive interpersonal relationships for leadership development.

Developing Effective Communication Skills. Congruent with research findings in the development of communication skills among teaching assistants (Micari, 2006; Schalk et al., 2009), the participants consistently described the experience of developing their skills in two specific ways: public speaking and social and professional interactions. In regard to social and professional interactions, one participant reflected on recognizing the value of communication as a result of their teaching experience. “I know one specific thing [I found most valuable] is communication. I always just think back to this class because I’m like, Holy Cow, people don’t know how to communicate [at my internship].” A participant also observed how communication improved with the help of their teaching partner.

I think just being able to have those sort of crucial conversations with your teaching partner and be like, hey, ‘I don’t think that we’re doing this as well as we can, like how can we correct this, how can we be as, you know the best team that we can be.’ Those are conversations that I found people tend to shy away from, just in other experiences in my life.

In terms of strengthening their oral presentation skills within the context of public speaking, participants described bringing feelings of discomfort but then gaining confidence throughout the experience.

I never was a fan of going up there and talking around people. I honestly hated it in high
school. I took an oral communications class and I remember doing my final speech for that class. I was sweating so hard. … I was just hating my life, and now [as a UTA] it’s just like, oh, cool, they’re my kids, listening to me.

Another comment emphasized the benefit of improving communication skills along with the students. “[The TA experience] helped me with my presentation skills also, which it’s supposed to help the students with theirs too but I felt like I improved with mine too and I don’t feel as uncomfortable talking in front of people anymore.”

**Empathy.** Instrumental in the experiences of the participants was the development of empathy for their students. The participants spoke of having high consideration for their students. They addressed the difficulty in seeing a student fail, the joy in connecting to their students’ life stories, and how being empathetic makes one become an effective leader. One participant shared that their favorite course topic was empathy, “because I think one of the most effective ways to be a leader is to be able to relate to those whom you are leading.” One participant pointed to the fact that the UTA position places them in a position to empathize with their students.

We’re in a really unique position to be able to empathize with our students and that’s one of the big things we talk about is being able to empathize with different people and how to use that in an effective communication setting.

Another participant noted that their ability to relate to their students is an advantage that most faculty do not have and as a result allows them to develop engaging curriculum.

… since we’re also students and we’re teaching our fellow students as undergraduates, we can develop that relationship far more than any graduate teaching assistant or professor because it’s been so long since they’ve been an undergraduate. They have trouble connecting to the students and so we can really understand where our students are coming from; and what they expect and then in turn, develop material better for them.

**Building Relationships.** As a result of the participants developing their effective communication, relationships were built with their students, fellow UTAs, and the advising faculty member. Participants experienced the value of being a part of a “good team”, the significance of mentoring, and the challenge of managing the student/UTA relationship. The participants consistently shared that their view of teamwork changed because of this experience. For example, one participant shared that prior to this experience they had difficulty trusting others.

I’ve always worked by myself. I’ve hated working in groups. I never trust the other person to do what [they] gotta do because most of the time they don’t do it. But it’s kind of nice cause I trust [my partner] to do what he needs to do. It’s nice to have somebody to fall back on and that’s not something I’ve always been able to do. And so that’s helped me grow as a leader cause I have more trust for other people now.

Participants spoke of how effective the team worked as a result of being paired with someone
who complimented their skills.

I used to have to be in groups in high school where we have this lab project due together - you do this. I do this. [This experience is different] because on a week-to-week basis you have to work with someone and it’s like - [our faculty mentor has] done such a good job matching us with personalities that will complement us so - it’s just seeing where my lab partner picks up or where I lack. …my strengths are going to be his weaknesses.

A UTA explained the importance of mentoring students because of their shared major. “Engineering is not easy so I keep telling them, all of them, you can do it. If we got through this, you guys can get through this.” Many of the participants discovered that a significant part of their development came from being mentored by their fellow UTAs. For example, a participant shared about the amount of academic advice she received from her teaching partner.

She has lots of advice for me. She knows the route more; the classes I need to take. So I really care a lot [about the] advice [I get] from her. I would say she’s probably one of best friendships I’ve made so far.

The participants also shared that the mentoring relationship was not limited to their students or with their fellow teaching assistants. The faculty adviser played a significant role in guiding the UTAs beyond training and administrative assistance.

Our meetings, one on one with [our faculty adviser] are almost always strict mentoring sessions as opposed to just talking about our lab sections and stuff. [They are] like general mentoring sessions and allow us to grow, and ask us where we are growing, and where we can do better and things like that.

Self-Awareness and Personal Development

In one participant’s description they highlighted the developmental value gained in teaching others. “I think [teaching] definitely highlights what you’re good at and what you need to work on… It gives you things to work on just personally that really help your development as a leader.” Another participant expressed a similar observation.

It shows where you need to work on different things, but it also gives you the opportunity to work on those things, which I really appreciate. From week to week you can see what you need to work on, and on the next week you can work to change that.

The participants also emphasized the process of personal development as a result of teaching the material.

I feel like the more that I teach these concepts, the more I see myself actually learning and utilizing them and it’s just like a really interesting platform to be able to grow. I feel like when you’re teaching people about something that you’re actually testing yourself on it at the same time in a way.
Another UTA explained how the experience caused them to evaluate their own personal relationships.

I will read up about [the course content] make a lesson plan with my teaching partner, and then I’ll try to reflect on how I want to portray this to my students during class. And then I also end up thinking about it more in my life as well. And so that’s been pretty helpful I think in my relationships.

**Applied Learning of Leadership Concepts**

This position allows the UTAs to experience real scenarios and engage with students as a peer leader. As a result, they adopted leadership styles and concepts that met the needs of their students. The three leadership models experienced by the UTAs more conclusively were servant leadership, situational leadership, and followership. The experiences of the participants demonstrated that different circumstances necessitate different leadership responses. Participants expressed the importance of their ability to develop and learn new leadership styles in order to successfully lead their students. One participant concluded:

The [teaching experience] puts you in positions to learn other types of leadership styles. I was uncomfortable with a large group but this really makes you go out of your comfort style and be able to teach to a large group and get the message across to a large group of people.

This approach to leadership is identified as situational leadership. Situational leadership requires that a leader should accommodate their leadership style depending on the situation and followers (Northouse, 2016). Because the needs, skills, and motivations of followers continuously differ, a leader is expected to evaluate and assess their followers’ attributes, and the conditions of the situation in order to be effective and meet the needs of the followers (Northouse, 2016). For example, dealing with a diverse population of students, one participant explained that the teaching experience allowed her to cater to students from different cultural backgrounds. “It has allowed me to practice a leadership style that is a little bit more in tune with the different cultures and different expectations for students that will come into class.”

Fostering servant leadership was among one of the leadership models addressed by the UTAs. Servant leadership theory positions the leader as servant first – one who is motivated to serve others (Komives, Lucas, and McMahon, 2013). The following UTA states that as a result of teaching this course and learning how to enact servant leadership, she incorporates this leadership practice into her undergraduate research project.

I think that I definitely learned to appreciate the roll of servant leadership and I try and include it more or at least make a mental note like, ‘Hey, I’m washing this beaker, but like this beaker’s going to lead to ground breaking research.’

Lastly, consistent with the findings from Odom, Ho, and Moore (2015), we found that the assistants focused on learning the importance of followership and understanding when to play the supporting role in co-teaching the weekly lab.
It teaches you not just how to be a leader, but also, how to be a follower. Because everyone can be a leader, but not everyone should be a leader at the same time. You are going to need followers and it’s important to take the side step one week.

Another participant expressed the same goal:

I’m going to be a follower this week—that is my main goal as a leader is to be a follower this week. Because I can’t take the leadership stand if [their teaching partner] is going to be leading, because that is going to be confusing to the students.

**Discussion**

The development of interpersonal skills, self-awareness, personal development, and the application of leadership concepts represent the experiences of engineering students serving as UTAs for an introductory leadership course. Their experience offers insights that inform leadership development in higher education and hold significant meaning for the leadership development of engineers. Their experiences demonstrated an approach to leadership development where leadership is not just a position but also a process. The participants experienced how to become better communicators and how to build meaningful personal and professional relationships. They became more self-aware and empathetic and, applied their learning of leadership concepts to their teaching. Overall, the participants developed an increased sense of self and confidence in one’s skills and abilities, in an environment where growth and development was encouraged through developmental relationships.

Of the nine leadership competencies for engineering majors as identified by Seemiller (“Leadership Competencies Database,” n.d.), four were observed in this study. The competencies include: (a) others’ circumstances, which consists of displaying empathy; (b) verbal communication; (c) collaboration, which includes building teams; and (d) self-development, which includes intrapersonal development and consciousness of self. The development of interpersonal skills in this study consists of developing effective communication skills, building relationships, and empathy. Developing effective communication skills involves public speaking and social interactions. Improving their communication skills was not a transactional interaction. The UTAs understood that these skills were not developed in isolation, but in connection with their students. As UTAs they readily adopted these skills in order to help them to become effective leaders in the classroom. This supports previous research where the teaching assistant experience was found to produce growth in communication – both public and social (Micari, 2006; Schalk, 2009).

Experiencing improved communication led the participants to better understand others – thus impacting their ability to build meaningful relationships. The participants experienced these relationships with their fellow TAs, students, and the faculty mentor in the form of teams and mentoring relationships. These relationships increased self-confidence and a sense of community in their classroom and amongst their fellow UTAs. Research has proven that an outcome of being a teaching assistant is the development of collaborative and supportive relationships (Dungan & Komives, 2007; Chandler, 2005; Newcomb & Bagwell, 1997) and that these
relationships are critical in increasing leadership capacity (Campbell, et al., 2012; Dungan & Komives, 2007). Campbell, Smith, Dugan, and Komives (2012) define mentoring as “a developmental relationship characterized by reciprocal learning and focused on goal attainment and personal growth” (p. 597). Traditionally, a clear distinction in age characterizes the mentor and protégé relationship (Campbell et al., 2012). However, because the focus of the mentor relationship is developmental in nature, distinctive age distinctions are of less concern. This notion supports the mentoring role that many of the participants experienced and came to value.

According to Goleman (2004) “empathy is the ability to understand the emotional makeup of other people and treating people according to their emotional reactions” (p. 88). Komives, Lucas, and McMahon (2013) support Goleman’s position that empathy, a competency associated with emotional intelligence, can be learned through feedback from others and greater self-awareness. While previous research did not generate explicit support for empathy, Seemiller (“Leadership Competencies Database,” n.d.) identified it as a function of focusing on others’ circumstances. This competency encompasses enabling others to act in ways that encourages civic engagement and inclusivity. In this study the participants understood that by building relationships with their peers, students, and faculty mentor they significantly improved their empathetic response skills.

In Schyns, Kiefer, Kerschreiter & Tymon’s (2011) paper on teaching implicit leadership theories to developing leaders; they support the development of self-awareness amongst emerging leaders in order to “help leaders understand why they behave in a certain way to achieve goals” (p. 404). Self-awareness is the ability to identify one’s abilities, strengths, and weaknesses in order to be effective (Komives et al., 2013). In order to recognize and cultivate personal strengths and weaknesses, participants in this study consistently spoke of the process of reflection for growth and change. Previous research strongly supports the need for self-awareness and personal development as a function of leadership development (Newcomb & Bagwell, 1997; Chandler, 2005; Krauss, Hamid, & Ismail, 2010; Campbell et al., 2012; Schyns et al., 2011). We found this to be true for the participants of this study. Through the weekly journals, weekly UTA meetings, mentoring relationships, and constructive feedback, it was difficult for the participants to not have first-hand knowledge of their own motives, behaviors, and attitudes. The participants understood that these competencies were not necessarily taught via a traditional academic structure. But were instead taught through their UTA experience within an environment that supported and valued these competencies.

The applied learning of leadership concepts was not a competency that was explicitly addressed by previous research or in Seemiller’s list of leadership competencies for engineering students. However, the results of this study specifically pointed to the practical application of these skills and its importance in their development as leaders. Throughout the experience the participants spoke to the “trial and error” process of teaching leadership and how they learned what it means to develop as a leader and what works for them and their followers while teaching the concepts. As a result, we propose that this UTA program provides participants the opportunity to directly apply leadership, which allows them to practice their skills with a community of learners. Through practice they could reform and make changes to their leadership style and as a result are prepared for the “real world” challenges they will experience beyond their college education. Dugan and Komives (2007) discuss leadership models as one of the many approaches leading to the formulization of leadership programs in higher education; claiming positional leadership
roles and formal leadership programs among the most influential college experiences in developing leadership capacity in students. This study provided data regarding the UTAs’ ability to apply their knowledge of leadership concepts and adapting their leadership style to specific student audiences and teaching partner styles.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The findings of the study serve as a foundation for further research and practice. In terms of research we recommend three ways to further knowledge about the experiences and development of UTAs teaching engineering leadership courses. First, as part of the triangulation process of this study, reflective journals were written by the participants. The next part of this study will include these reflections, which will allow us a deeper understanding of the UTAs experiences, thus creating a more accurate representation of their leadership experiences. Furthermore, in agreement with Odem et al. (2015), surveying the perspectives of the students the UTAs are teaching would be valuable in our understanding of the UTA experience. The UTAs expressed a multitude of leadership proficiencies, with relationship building and developing communication skills being most extensively voiced across the research. Because of this, we recommend evaluating UTAs using the Komives, Lucas, and McMahon’s (2013) Relational Leadership Model as a conceptual framework for how to train and develop current and future UTAs. This model is fitting as relationships are the focus of the leadership process, and this conceptual framework will enable us to fully understand how the UTAs can become more: (a) inclusive, (b) empowering, (c) purposeful, (d) ethical, and (e) process oriented (Komives et al., 2013, p. 96). Lastly, a longitudinal study could examine the impact that this UTA experience had on the participants’ experience as engineering professionals.

As the overwhelming body of research concerning the learning paradigm of higher education calls for more and more reform, the UTA program has promise to be a successful solution in mitigating the gap between learning and teacher, advocating student centered learning, and incorporating leadership development into undergraduate engineering education. The current research provides us with the means of what needs to be changed and furthermore presents concrete data supporting the UTA programs as a positive solution.

References


Exploring the Effects Associated with LeaderShape Participation in International Students as Compared to Domestic Students

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**Abstract**

As U.S. institutions aim to recruit more international students, many campuses are struggling in developing inclusive communities. We submit that many campuses may already have the necessary tools to help with these processes, in the form of leadership education. Using data nationally collected data from LeaderShape, this study explores and compares international and domestic students’ pre and post-experience self-reported scores in several known leadership constructs. Additionally, the study weights and balances the sample to explore differences in gains from pre-to-post experience scores. Findings suggest that international students’ pre and post-experience scores are equal to domestic students and when the sample is weighted differences in gains from pre-to-post experience occur in three constructs. Discussion focuses on connecting leadership programs towards attempts to create more inclusive campuses.

**Introduction**

The inclusion of international students within U.S. post-secondary institutions has long been a priority of U.S. post-secondary education. While the U.S. has traditionally been welcoming to international students, the motive for enrolling international students may have recently changed. Previous to the 2008 recession, researchers believe that international students were recruited more so to build socio-political ties; however, since the recession international student enrollment has exploded (Institute of International Education [IIE], 2015), and researchers now believe the increased enrollment is designed to supplement tuition revenue (Hu, 2011; Slaughter & Cantwell, 2012). Enrollment of international students has become big business for both institutions and the economies they support. The Association of International Educators [NAFSA] (2013) reported that between 2012-2013 international students supplied $24 billion to the overall economy and are responsible for supporting over 300,000 jobs. Because international students paying considerably more in tuition and fees than in-state students generally do (Redden, 2015; The College Board, 2015), attracting increasing enrollments of these students has become an obvious priority.

While institutions have modified business practices to obtain a larger piece of this economic pie, research suggests that these campuses may have not developed or promoted adequate socio-cultural accommodations (Collier & Hernandez, 2015; Greenblatt, 2005; Hu & Kuh, 2003; Trice, 2004; Ward, 2015). Although campuses may be lagging in developing international student specific programs and interventions, emerging evidence has suggested that leadership education programs may be a suitable pathway to assisting international students in interactions with domestic students and in becoming more confident, comfortable, and engaged on campus.
This study expands on the work by Collier & Rosch (In Review) by utilizing a national-level data set to explore the differences between international and domestic students regarding leadership-focused skills, motivation to lead, self-efficacy, and the differential effects of leadership education programs. Data is collected from LeaderShape, a week long leadership development program.

**International Student Development and Engagement on U.S. Campuses**

With recent unprecedented growth of international students on U.S. campuses (IIE, 2015), institutions have struggled to provide space and opportunities to help international students adjust to their new settings (Cho, 2009). Previous research has found that international students have reported a variety of integration issues stemming from stereotyping and racism (Chapdelaine & Alexitch, 2004; Greenblatt, 2005; Poyrazli & Grahame, 2007), mockery of English proficiency (Cho, 2009), negative interactions with both domestic students and staff (Rose-Redwood & Rose Redwood, 2013), and more. Because of these experiences and the discomfort of immersion in a foreign culture, international students have been previously found to possess lower levels of confidence as compared to domestic students, which helps preclude international students from engaging in class, campus, or community activities (Lee & Rice, 2007). Because of these experiences, and likely, the inability for campuses to effectively help international students integrate with domestic populations, research has found that many international students engage in self-segregation with either co-nationals or other international students (Rose-Redwood & Rose-Redwood, 2013). These issues may lead international students to develop beliefs that campuses do not provide institutional support (Cho, 2009) as they shy away from the developmental and cultural programming that is offered by campuses (Trice, 2004).

With recognition of international students’ needs, U.S. institutions have developed units aimed to serve this population. These units are generally labeled International Student Services [ISS] offices. Often, these departments serve dual purposes (Ward, 2015). The first purpose is designed to support students through federal processes (i.e. visas) and business procedures of the university (i.e. tuition). The second purpose is to develop and promote cultural and social interaction (i.e. campus involvement activities). Emerging research has found that ISS units appear to value the first purpose over the second, as social support seemingly takes a backseat to regulation and business functions (Ward, 2015). ISS units’ struggles to develop and promote interactive social and cultural programming is still evident on campuses who support the most international students (Collier & Hernandez, 2015); and on campuses who have long supported elevated international student populations, like Purdue University, where polling has suggested that 29% of international students believe there is a lack of co-curricular involvement opportunities for international students. Additionally, only 15% of international students reported holding a friendship with a domestic student (Zehner, 2012). Given Rose-Redwood & Rose-Redwood’s (2013) finding that 65% of international students are either self-segregators (27%) or exclusive global mixers (38%) – being students who interact only with conationals and international students – the lack of sustained relationships with domestic students is unsurprising. Because segregation does not encourage widening of multicultural perspectives (Watt, et al., 2013), and increased interactions with domestic students has been shown to result in better academic performance and increased satisfaction of the collegiate experience (Webber, Krylow,
& Zhang, 2013), researchers have long been calling on institutions to encourage intentional interactions between international and domestic students (Hu & Kuh, 2003; Greenblatt, 2005).

Undoubtedly, U.S. institutions are trying to be more integrative. One concept gaining increased attention, within the U.S. and beyond, in transforming campuses to becoming more welcoming to international students is Internalization at Home [IaH]. IaH conceptualizes how post-secondary institutions can more fully embrace internationalization informal curricula, in informal curricula, and within the communities that campuses are situated in (Nilsson, 2003). Generally, IaH removes the dichotomous “us” and “them” labels and encourages campus to accept everyone as “us,” and promotes a constructivist perspective where knowledge is developed in relation to personal perspectives and transfer of knowledge occurs from and between everyone in the experience (Mestenhauser, 2003). IaH requires that faculty, staff, and administration collaboratively design “international, intercultural, and global learning experiences for all students” (Agnew & Kahn, 2015, p. 31). Fortunately, many campuses may have already carved out the spaces that IaH calls for via leadership education and development programs. And while these spaces may not have been intentionally designed specifically with the conceptualizations of IaH concepts in mind, they were created with similarly oriented notions. For example, these programs were intentionally devised to: (1) promote multicultural interaction and collaboration (Komives et al., 2006), (2) develop authentic relationships (Astin & Astin, 2000), and (3) encourage students to more deeply engage on campuses and within communities (Cress, Astin, Zimmerman-Oster, & Burkhardt, 2001).

Current State of Leadership Education in Higher Education and the Ready, Willing, and Able Model of Leadership

In the beginning of the new millennium, Astin & Astin (2000) challenged higher education to develop better, more ethical and inclusive leaders. In response, higher education widely adopted this charge (Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education [CAS], 2011) and by 2003 over one-thousand leadership development programs had been created for college students (Riggio, Ciulla, & Sorensen, 2003). Since 2003, formal leadership development programs on campuses have profoundly expanded (Dugan, 2011; Sessa, Matos, & Hopkins, 2009). Now, many campuses offer leadership certificates and majors and promote opportunities to send students to off-campus specialized leadership development seminars. Of which, the majority of leadership programs found within higher education use community-oriented and relationship-based leadership models (Owen, 2012). Generally, these post-industrial models (Rost, 1993) focus on understanding the benefits of collaboration, improvement of social and cultural awareness, development of self-confidence as well as instilling confidence in others, and finally an exploration of personal motivations to engage in leadership processes.

Therefore, the conceptual framework that guides this research is the Ready, Willing, and Able [RWA] to lead model (Keating, Rosch, & Burgoon, 2014). RWA suggests that for leaders to be effective they must be competent in leadership skills, hold enough self-efficacy, and possess the motivation to put forth efforts to lead. RWA has previously been described as the three-legged stool approach—a deficiency in any of the three legs would result in a wobbly stool, thus resulting in an ineffective post-industrial leader.
Leadership Skill. One framework that often guides leadership education programs is the Transformational Leadership Model [TLM]; the RWA model borrows concepts from TLM to measure leadership skill. TLM is a relationship-focused model that explored two patterns of leadership skills – transformational and transactional (Bass, 1998). Transformational leadership skills encourage leaders to develop more equalized environments where people own a shared sense of responsibility (Groves & LaRocca, 2011; Rost, 1993) and collaboration is based upon developing authentic relationships and collective movement towards goals (Antonakis, Avolio, & Sivasubramaniam, 2003). Previous research has found that transformational leaders promote increased team performance (Wang, Oh, Courtright, & Colbert, 2011). On the other hand of the spectrum, transactional leaders more heavily rely on contract-like relationships where followers work towards completing tasks in exchange for various compensations (Bass & Avolio, 1993; Jung & Avolio, 2000). Transactional leadership is not a negative style of leadership as it still focuses on relationships and utilizing relationships to achieve goals, however, it may not be as effective as transformational leadership (Wang, et al., 2011). Previous research examining transformational leadership skills have suggested that various motivations to lead (Rosch & Collier, In Review; Rosch, Collier, & Zehr, 2014) and leadership self-efficacy (Rosch & Collier, 2013) were influential factors in determining college students’ skill gains.

Leadership Self-Efficacy. Another leg of RWA is leadership self-efficacy [LSE]. LSE is widely studied and has emerged as a valid measure of leadership capacity (Dugan & Komives, 2010; Dugan, 2011). LSE is the measure of a leader’s self-confidence in engaging with and performing within leadership activities (Murphy, 2002). Previously, LSE has been widely connected to
leader success within group contexts (Avolio, Reichard, Hannah, Walumbwa, & Chan, 2009; Machida & Schaubroeck, 2011) and linked towards the level of interest in finding leadership positions (Hannah, Avolio, Luthans, & Harms, 2008). For college students, increased confidence has been linked with students desire to lead organizations, whereas students possessing lowered confidence seem to adopt self-imposed limitations and may not seek leadership positions (Shertzer & Schuh, 2004). Clearly, LSE is important to measure and track because failing to cultivate LSE may result in the loss of interest in leading or even participating in group settings.

**Motivation-to-Lead.** The third leg of RWA measures motivation-to-lead [MTL]. As theorized by Chan and Drasgow (2001), MTL measures the motivation that individuals hold to engage in leadership. MTL measures three connected but unique sub-groups of motivation: (1) Affective Identity [AI], Social Normative [SN], and Non-Calculative [NC]. AI MTL is the self-belief that an individual can lead and, therefore, should be a leader. Those with increased AI MTL will often volunteer to be leaders. SN is a motivation to lead based on a sense of duty in assisting the group achieves goals. Finally, NC measures the level to which an individual will avoid a cost-benefit analysis of overtaking leadership responsibilities. Individuals who ignore this analysis will assume leadership positions and responsibilities regardless of stress, workload, or praise. Previous research has found that MTL is a predictor in increased engagement in leadership of college students (Rosch, Collier, & Thompson, 2015; Rosch, 2014) and has been correlated with organizational effectiveness (Van Iddekinge, Ferris, & Heffner, 2009).

**Purpose of Study**

The purpose of this study is to explore how international students and domestic students may be similar or different in self-reported pre-experience and post-experience scores of the leadership constructs found in RWA. Additionally, we aim to explore the differences in growth from pre-to-post experience scores as well as to explore how growth in constructs affect finalized transformational leadership scores. Through this exploration, we expect to help leadership education researchers and practitioners more fully understand the effects that leadership development programs have on international students and make a case for administrators and policymakers to explore amalgamating leadership development experiences within the protocols to make their campuses more welcoming and integrative for international students.

**Research Questions**

1. Are there differences between international and domestic students in the average pre- and post-experience self-reported measures of leadership self-efficacy, motivation to lead, and leadership skills?

2. How do international students’ pre-experience self-reported measures of leadership self-efficacy, motivation to lead, and leadership skills change as a result of participation in a co-curricular leadership program?

3. To what extent do international students’ gains after participating in leadership programs differ from to domestic peers?
Method

Sample

Data was collected from 2013-2014 at 21 post-secondary campuses who hosted the LeadersShape Institute. LeaderShape, Inc., is a non-profit leadership education organization that partners with post-secondary institutions to deliver an intensive and comprehensive leadership development seminar. The LeaderShape program is a six-day seminar and often occurs during the summer months or during the break between fall and spring semester. LeaderShape is widely planned to encourage students to: (1) build inclusive communities, (2) develop collaborative relationships, (3) create long-term leadership goals, and (4) recognize how they can positively impact the campuses, communities, and societies which they reside in. Since the 1980’s, LeaderShape has served over 30,000 participants and in 2014, 85 colleges and universities hosted the program (www.leadershape.org).

For this study, the total sample consisted of 1,168 participants. Due to missing and incomplete data, the final sample was reduced to 717 participants or 61% of the initial sample. The final sample is statistically similar to the full sample based on five self-identified demographic variables: international student status, sexual identity gender, race, and class year. Of the 717 students, 96% (n = 688) identified as a domestic student, and 67% (n = 480) identified as female. Regarding racial identity, 58% (n = 415) identified as white/Caucasian, 15% identified as African-American/Black, 12% identified as Asian/Asian American, 7% identified as Hispanic/Latina/o, and 6% identified as multi-racial. Regarding class year, 30% identified as freshman, 31% as sophomore, 29% as junior, 9% as senior, and 2% as graduate.

Instrumentation

Leadership Skill. Aligning with the RWA model, the instrument was designed to capture and measure leadership skill, motivation, and leadership-self efficacy. First, to capture leadership skill the Leader Behavior Scale [LBS] (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990) was utilized. The LBS is a widely used 28-item instrument that measures both transformational and transactional leadership skill. Within the subscale that measures transformational leadership skill, a sample item was, “When I lead a group, I show what is expected to group members.” A sample item that gauged transactional leadership skill was, “I commend other group members for doing a better than average job.” LBS has been utilized in business and educational settings for several decades with high internal consistencies as Cronbach Alphas ranging from .71 to .89 (Yukl, 2010). Also used to measure leadership skill was the Ethical Leadership Scale [ELS], a 10-item, Likert scale instrument designed to gauge the degree to which leaders engage in ethical means to motivate people and achieve goals (Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, 2005). An example question within this scale was, “When I make decisions in groups to which I belong, I keep other members’ best interests in mind.”

Leadership Self-Efficacy. To measure LSE, we used the 8-item, Likert, Self-Efficacy for Leadership [SEL] scale. SEL measures a person’s sense of self-confidence and assuredness when engaged in leadership behaviors (Murphy & Fiedler, 1992). A sample item from the SEL scale was, “In general, I’m not very good at leading a group of my peers.” SEL has been in utilized in
business and higher education for multiple decades (Hoyt, 2005), and has shown acceptable internal reliability (Murphy & Ensher, 1999).

**Leadership Motivation.** To measure students’ MTL, we utilized the Motivation-to-Lead [MTL] scale (Chan & Drasgow, 2001) and a variant of the Social Issues Advocacy Scale [SIAS] (Nilsson, Marszalek, Linnemeyer, Bahner, & Misialek, 2011). MTL is a 27-item, Likert-scale instrument. The MTL measures three subscale motivations – Affective Identity [AI], Social Normative [SN], and Non-Calculative [NC]. Each of these subscales consists of 9 questions. A questions include: (1) for AI, “I am the type of person who likes to be in charge of others,” (2) for SN, “I was taught to believe in the value of leading others,” and (3) for NC, “I never expect to get more privileges if I agree to lead a group.” Recently, MTL has been introduced into higher education as a mechanism for student leadership assessment (Rosch, Collier, Thompson, 2015; Rosch, Collier, & Zehr, 2014).

Because LeaderShape’s curricula spotlight the responsibility to build inclusive organizations and communities – largely based on tenants of social justice – a modified version of SIAS was integrated into the instrument. SIAS measures a person’s motivations in and behaviors of advocating for social issues (Nilsson, et al., 2011). Initially, SIAS included items connected to political advocacy (i.e. lobbying and voting), for this research we eliminated these items. The modified SIAS was a 12-item, Likert-scaled measure, one example of an SIAS question was, “I am personally responsible to confront friends and colleagues who display signs of discrimination.” Previous research suggested that SIAS had appropriate reliability and validity within self-esteem and life satisfaction (Nisson, et al., 2011).

**Analysis**

**T-test.** Addressing the first and second research question, a two-sample t-test was employed to compare the average pre- and post-experience scores of international and non-international students. The two-sample t-test assessed the significance of the difference between two means, testing the null hypothesis that the difference between the two means is negligible. If the null hypothesis is rejected, the differences in the means between international and non-international students on each leadership measure would be considered statistically significant.

**Propensity score matching using IPTW.** In order to better assess the relative effect of a treatment, such as participation in the Leadershape training, using non-experimental data, one must try to address possible sampling bias found in the data. Use of data-balancing techniques, propensity score matching being one, is one way to help reduce the bias within data. The use of propensity score matching addresses the bias issue by statistically re-weighting the two participant groups (international and domestic students), creating a relatively and statistically balanced sample of international students and domestic students.

Due to the large sample of domestic students relative to the sample of international students, regression analyses may be biased towards the responses of the domestic students. Thus, for efficient and more accurate descriptive and correlational inference, it is best to compare groups that are as statistically similar as possible (Stuart, 2010). For this study, inverse-probability-of-treatment-weighting (IPTW) was used to obtain more statistically balanced data. IPTW
techniques are used to separately re-weight the population of domestic and international students based on each student’s predicted probability of being an international student. The probability is calculated using logistic regression with the likelihood of being an international student as the dependent variable and a vector of demographic and pre-test variables as the independent variables. Upon re-weighting the samples, ordinary least-squares (OLS) regression is used to assess the relationship between the dependent variables (facets of leadership growth) and international student status.

**Results**

**T-tests**

**Pre-Experience and Post-Experience Reported Scores.** Across all leadership constructs, no differences were found between international and domestic students in pre-experience scores. See Table 1 – Pre-Experience LeaderShape Scores.

### Table 1

*Pre-Experience LeaderShape Scores*

| Variable | Domestic Students | | | International Students | | | Independent T-Test | | | | | |
|----------|-------------------|---|---|------------------------|---|---|-------------------|---|---|
| ELS      | 807               | 4.14 | 0.39 | 47          | 4.14 | 0.34 | -0.14 | 852 | .887 |
| AI MTL   | 816               | 3.50 | 0.68 | 50          | 3.38 | 0.64 | 1.20  | 864 | .229 |
| NC MTL   | 824               | 3.95 | 0.67 | 52          | 3.85 | 0.73 | 1.01  | 874 | .311 |
| SN MTL   | 809               | 3.92 | 0.40 | 50          | 3.88 | 0.39 | 0.71  | 857 | .480 |
| SEL      | 812               | 3.82 | 0.49 | 50          | 3.78 | 0.46 | 0.57  | 860 | .571 |
| SIAS     | 796               | 3.79 | 0.51 | 44          | 3.90 | 0.41 | -1.35 | 8.8 | .177 |
| T-Act    | 820               | 4.25 | 0.52 | 49          | 4.13 | 0.50 | 1.54  | 867 | .125 |
| T-Form   | 783               | 3.96 | 0.37 | 45          | 3.86 | 0.34 | 1.78  | 826 | .076 |

* *p < .05, **p < .01

Post-experience scores yielded similar results, except for in Transformational Leadership skill where domestic students ($M = 4.30, SD = .36$) were found to be statistically higher than international students ($M = 4.16, SD = .51$), $t(827) = 2.72, p = .007$. See Table 2 – Post-Experience LeaderShape Scores.

### Table 2

*Post-Experience LeaderShape Scores*

| Variable | Domestic Students | | | International Students | | | Independent T-Test | | | | | |
|----------|-------------------|---|---|------------------------|---|---|-------------------|---|---|
| ELS      | 801               | 4.37 | 0.39 | 52          | 4.36 | 0.41 | 0.22  | 851 | .825 |
| AI MTL   | 811               | 3.51 | 0.72 | 50          | 3.34 | 0.73 | 1.59  | 859 | .113 |
| NC MTL   | 824               | 4.20 | 0.72 | 51          | 4.15 | 0.67 | 0.44  | 873 | .657 |
| SN MTL   | 801               | 3.99 | 0.42 | 51          | 4.05 | 0.36 | -1.03 | 850 | .304 |
| SEL      | 796               | 4.20 | 0.45 | 51          | 4.08 | 0.59 | 1.83  | 845 | .068 |

The predicted probabilities of the logistic regression are considered the propensity scores for each student.
Unmatched, Un-weighted Growth from Pre-to-Post Reported Scores and Differences. Two-sample t-tests were to test the null hypotheses that the average growth\(^5\) across multiple leadership measures is different between domestic and international students. Of the eight leadership constructs, the difference in average growth between domestic and international students was significant on one construct, SN MTL. SN MTL growth for domestic students (\(M = .08, SD = .41\)) was statistically lower than for international students (\(M = .21, SD = .40\)), \(t(826) = -2.04, p = .041\). See Table 3 – Gains from Pre-to-Post LeaderShape Scores.

**Table 3**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>International Students</th>
<th>Independent T-Test</th>
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*\(p < .05, **p < .01\)

Matched, Weighted Sample OLS Regressions. Reweighting the sample, in most cases, reduced the standard errors of the independent variable (international status) and increased the proportion of the variance explained by the model. This suggests that the IPTW models fit the data better than the non-weighted models. Across seven of the eight leadership constructs, there was a statistically significant increase in the average growth for all students. On average, all students, regardless of international status, reported some growth in ELS, NC MTL, SN MTL, SIAS, Transactional Leadership, and Transformational Leadership. The highest average growth of was found in SIAS (.39), LSE (.39), and Transformational Leadership (.35).

The growth of international students was significantly different from domestic students in three of the eight leadership constructs. On average, growth in ELS and AI MTL for international students was .104 and .126 less, than domestic students. However, for international students, growth in LSE was .142 higher compared to domestic students. The OLS statistics can be found in Table 4 – IPTW Regression Predicting LeaderShape Gains by International Status.

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\(^5\) Growth is measured by taking the difference of the composite measures from the pre- and post-assessment.
Table 4

*IPTW Regression Predicting Leadershape Gains by International Status*

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*p < .05, ** p < .01, ***p < .001

Discussion

Overall the findings of this research can help leadership educators and campus administrators make decisions on how to intentionally make campuses more inclusive. We have found that as compared to domestic students, international students enter into the LeaderShape program with statistically similar self-reported leadership skill, efficacy, social justice awareness, and motivation to lead. Additionally, as compared to domestic students, international students’ post-experience scores are statistically similar in all constructs, except for transformational leadership skill, where domestic students’ scores were noticeably higher. Such findings are unique, as previous research, utilizing the same statistical techniques, has suggested that international students enter campus leadership development with significantly lowered scores in several of the scales (i.e. AI MTL) (Collier & Rosch, In Review). The differences in results may stem from who is able to participate in on-campus programs compared to who is able to participate in
LeaderShape. The program explored in Collier & Rosch was open access, meaning students were able to sign up and attend the program. However, LeaderShape is not open access, and campuses and programs are charged to allow students to participate. Several campuses have application processes, and because of cost and capacity limitations, access is restricted as compared to many on-campus programs. Possibly the selection of which international students get to participate in LeaderShape may explain the similarities.

Nevertheless, as international students statistically matched domestic students across all leadership construct in pre-experience scores, we can conclude that previous to LeaderShape international students and domestic students equally: (1) engage in ethical behaviors while leading, (2) see themselves in leadership positions, (3) ignore the cost-benefit ratio of leading, (4) lead due to a sense of duty towards groups, (5) internalize levels of self-confidence, (6) advocate for and hold a sense of social justice, and (7) are similarly skilled in transformational and transactional leadership skill. And because post-experience scores in all but one construct remain statistically similar between international and domestic students, our conclusions also endure post-LeaderShape – except for in transformational leadership skill where domestic students are seemingly more skillful.

While unmatched and un-weighted t-tests suggest equal growth from pre-to-post experience scores in all constructs except SN MTL, our matched and weighted OLS regressions suggest this may not be the case when balancing international students in the sample. With international students balanced, our models suggest that international students lag behind domestic students in ELS and AI MTL but outpace domestic students in LSE. These findings run counter to the unbalanced t-tests where each of these constructs was found to experience equal growth when comparing the two groups of students.

Not only did international students’ experience lagged AI MTL when compared to domestic students, the growth was actually slightly negative. However, even with the regressed AI MTL, the unmatched, un-weighted post-experience score result was statistically similar to domestic students, as domestic students did not experience large growth. Previously, Collier & Rosch (In Review) found that on-campus programs had no effect on international students’ AI MTL scores. Although lagged gains in AI MTL or actually slight declines in the construct may be problematic, LeaderShape has facilitated gains of international students’ LSE beyond that of domestic students. Encouragingly, previous research suggested that students with increased LSE are more likely to be engaged on campus and seek leadership opportunities (Shertzer & Schuh, 2004) and since previous research has suggested that international students may possess lowered levels of confidence which may preclude them from engaging on campus (Cho, 2009; Lee & Rice, 2007), outpacing domestic students LSE growth may be extraordinarily important for international students’ campus and community involvement as well as personal development. Potentially increases in this construct may encourage international students to be more engaged with campus programs, with domestic students, and thus become less involved with self-segregation Rose-Redwood & Rose-Redwood (2013) uncovered. Because of the benefits of increased LSE, international students may explore more options and become more engaged – which eventually may positively impact their AI MTL as they have developed the confidence to see themselves as leaders. Maybe our studies cannot capture the development of AI MTL because they do not allow for international students to fully internalize and act upon their newly
developed LSE. Potentially, a lagged follow-up may capture such effects.

Benefits of increased LSE should not only flow to international students as domestic students may be singling to be more comfortable in their abilities to interact with and accept cultural differences of international students. Within LeaderShape, both groups’ LSE are being developed in a highly diverse, multicultural experience; therefore, both are developing confidence in their abilities to lead within non-homogenous environments. This is a highly important point as confidence in learning within these types of environments may indicate a level of comfort that did not previously exist and a level of managing various cultural differences while leading. Potentially, LeaderShape’s influence on LSE in both international and domestic students could be the first steps of breaking down the “us” and “them” mentalities while transitioning towards the “we” approach that IaH calls for.

Whereas some differences emerged by matching and balancing international students in the sample, growth within the following scales remained statistically similar: NC MTL, SN MLT, SIAS, Transactional Leadership skill, and Transformational Leadership skill. Importantly, together domestic and international students are showing equalized commitment to: (1) social justice processes – like protecting each other from discrimination, (2) buying into group processes and sharing responsibilities with each other, and (3) developing enhanced skills within a leadership paradigm that generally encourages the cultivation of authentic, trusting relationships amongst team members. Overall, similar growth across these subscales are promising as the growth occurred in non-rigid, often fluid learning experiences. LeaderShape’s curriculum was intentionally designed with constructivist elements integrated into the experience. Often students and encouraged to share their personal experiences and points of view, especially in the small group breakout sessions where students are expected share stories and knowledge in relation to their culture, lives, and leadership experience. With every experience being unique, students are forced to construct commonly agreed principles and sometimes, through conflict, are forced beyond their personal belief systems – just as IaH calls for (Mestenhauser, 2003). Across the sessions of LeaderShape, our data suggests that international and domestic shared similar growth. This overall trend suggests that together have become more aware of each other's experiences – positive and negative, have likely learned how to forge deeper relationships with each other, and are possibly more confident and open towards interacting with each other moving forward. Such outcomes may have rippling effects beyond the LeaderShape cohort and could make campuses more inclusive moving forward.

Clearly, we understand not every campus or student will be able to engage in LeaderShape, but many campuses already have analogously designed leadership development programs already in place. Because LeaderShape’s curricula and desired developmental outcomes are not too dissimilar to on-campus programs usually offered, we suggest that for campuses trying to become more welcoming of international students and interested in creating the “we” that IaH calls for an intentional effort to promote leadership development programs to international students may assist in these goals. Recently, due to many issues, emerging research has suggested that units developed to assist international students in integrating within U.S. campuses and in developing relationships with domestic students may not be adequately performing in this function (Collier & Hernandez, 2015; Ward, 2015; Zehner, 2012).
For this reason, we believe that these units would benefit from partnerships and pathways into leadership education and development programs already found on most campuses. This is the second study that suggests that after engaging with a leadership development program, international students generally make gains across most scales and that these gains are similar to domestic peers (Collier & Rosch, In Review). And now, with this research a noticeable trend that leadership education may be highly beneficial to international students is beginning to emerge. Leadership education programs have long demonstrated various positive effects on domestic students (Dugan & Komives, 2010; Dugan, 2011; Rosch, Stephens, & Collins, 2016) and now we are beginning to uncover similar trends in international students. Such findings are highly encouraging especially when considering that contemporary leadership education already promotes concepts that closely link with IaH and with the development an inclusive, accepting community.

Future Research and Limitations

Future research could travel several pathways. First, we believe that more data is needed, as mentioned this is the second study and while a trend is beginning to emerge, more research on other campuses and in other leadership development programs would possibly solidify this trend and larger samples would allow us to speak more confidently about the effects of leadership education programs on international students. Next, as we have gained traction in exploring the pre-to-post leadership program experiences, one limitation this research has is that we have not yet branched out to exploring a lagged measurement nor have we followed up with students to explore how they have become more involved or if they have developed tighter relationships with between domestic and international student groups. Do international students still prefer to self-segregate or co-mingle with only other nationals or have they become more comfortable in engaging with domestic students? Are domestic students more comfortable in collaboration and in building relationships with international students? There is much follow-up research to be conducted on how leadership development programs such as those on campus or those like LeaderShape affect international student and domestic student behaviors with each other and on campuses.

Conclusion

Overall, this study provides more evidence that leadership development programs may become a catalyst in helping U.S. campuses develop more inclusive communities. Our data indicates that leadership programs like LeaderShape generate comfortable and inclusive environments that allow international students to engage within and report generally similar developmental outcomes as domestic students. In essence, because of the general lack of differences in growth international students are signaling that leadership development programs are establishing environments where they usually feel comfortable, safe, and supported in their interactions with domestic students. These signals suggest to us that leadership development could be a useful tool for campuses in supporting their growing international student populations’ integration and in building more inclusive communities. We implore the researchers to broaden our findings and practitioners to explore potential pathways between leadership development programs and units that serve international students.
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Development, 42(1), 15-27.


Developing the Leadership Skill of Critical Thinking: A Case Study

Dr. Laura Lemons, Carley Calico, and Alayna Naro
Mississippi State University

Developing students’ critical thinking skills is a shared goal of higher education institutions. In addition to developing the ability to think critically, higher education can influence students’ critical thinking disposition, or inclination to employ their critical thinking skills. This concurrent triangulation mixed-methods research sought to understand students’ critical thinking disposition before and after a Contemporary Issues in Agriculture course. Quantitative data collected with the EMI assessment indicated significant increases in critical thinking disposition overall, as well as on each individual construct. Qualitative analysis of structured reflective writings revealed six themes, each of which supported one of the three critical thinking constructs as well. These results indicate that critical thinking skills and disposition can be positively influenced. Recommendations including overtly teaching critical thinking and providing experiences where students are challenged and allowed to think critically.

Introduction

The ability to think critically is often cited as the central reason for formal education (Abrami, Bernard, Borokhovski, Wade, Surkes, Tamim, & Zhang, 2008; Marin & Halpern, 2011). In fact, developing students’ critical thinking skills is a stated goal of most institutions of higher education (Burbach, Matkin, Quinn, & Searle, 2012). Through the process and development of critical thinking, leadership educators guide learning experiences that meet specific learning goals as students learn to navigate complexity (Pigza, 2015). Further, as we develop students into future leaders that will encounter “complex problems that require complex solutions”, their ability to think critically becomes a valuable skill to develop (Flores et al., 2012, p. 218).

Critical thinking can be defined in a number of ways, with common agreements in these definitions including the ability to: analyze arguments, claims, and evidence (Ennis, 1985; Facione, 1990; Halpern, 1998; Paul, 1992); use inductive and deductive rationale (Ennis, 1985; Facione, 1990; Paul, 1992; Willingham, 2007); judge and evaluate information (Case, 2005; Ennis, 1985; Facione, 1990; Lipman, 1988; Tindal & Nolet, 1995); and make decisions or solve problems (Ennis, 1985; Halpern, 1998; Willingham, 2007). According to Abrami et al. (2008):

“This includes not only thinking about important problems within the disciplinary areas, such as history, science, and mathematics, but also thinking about the social, political, and ethical challenges of everyday life in a multifaceted and increasingly complex world.” (p.1102).

In addition, any conceptualization of critical thinking that focuses exclusively on cognitive skills is incomplete. A more comprehensive view must include the acknowledgement of a characterological component, often referred to as a disposition, to describe a person's inclination to use critical thinking when faced with problems to solve, ideas to evaluate, or decisions to make (Giancarlo & Facione, 2001).
Agriculture is commonly acknowledged as an increasingly globalized industry with social, political, and ethical implications worldwide. It is fundamental that students studying agriculture develop strong critical thinking skills as they enter a complex and foundational industry. Agricultural education students must be able to critically examine and evaluate their own reasoning of agriculture; expand their repertoire of more specialized procedures in agriculture; and increase their base of information and life experience for success in a future career (Ricketts & Rudd, 2004). Further, these students should be inclined, or intrinsically motivated to employ the critical thinking skills they possess.

**Literature Review and Conceptual Framework**

In an ever-changing industry with a workforce that is constantly evolving, the development and acquisition of reputable skills is crucial. It is evident critical thinking is a desired skill for students to possess upon the completion of secondary education. When embarking on the journey of developing students’ ability to think critically there are numerous avenues educators can travel to provide these opportunities. However, the challenge comes when evaluating students’ ability and inclination to apply those critical thinking skills (Lai, 2011). Researchers at the University of Florida developed the EMI: Critical Thinking Disposition Assessment to “more accurately measure critical thinking disposition” (Irani, Rudd, Gallo, Ricketts, Friedel, Rhoades, 2007, p.4).

The EMI assessment provided the conceptual framework for this study. This assessment measures students’ disposition in terms of three constructs; Engagement, Cognitive Maturity, and Innovativeness (Irani et al., 2007). Engagement describes a person’s ability to anticipate situations in which good reasoning will be necessary to employ (Irani et al., 2007). People with high engagement disposition are confident in their ability to use reason and make decisions, as well as communicate their decision process confidently (Irani et al., 2007). Cognitive maturity is described as awareness of one’s “own predispositions and biases in the decision making process” (Irani et al., 2007, p.5). Individuals with high cognitive maturity are aware that the variety of opinions should be objectively considered when making decisions and that there is rarely a single correct solution to a problem (Irani et al., 2007). Innovativeness describes a person’s drive to learn and seek knowledge and the truth (Irani et al., 2007). A person with high innovativeness disposition is characterized as wanting to expand their knowledge, even if the truth contradicts what they currently believe (Irani et al., 2007). Together, the overall score, along with the three construct scores, provide an indicator of students’ disposition toward critical thinking.

A critical thinking disposition has been defined as an internal motivation to use critical thinking skills (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Critical thinking skills are malleable, however, critical thinking disposition is one’s naturally occurring attitude or preference for critical thinking, and is not easily changed (Stedman, 2009). Therefore, influencing students’ critical thinking dispositions may be more difficult than influencing students’ critical thinking skills (Burbach et al., 2012). Research indicates that time spent in college tends to increase the overall disposition to think critically. Giancarlo and Facione (2001) found that seniors had increased their overall critical thinking disposition over the course of four years in college, while Lampert (2007) found that juniors and seniors possessed a significantly higher overall critical thinking disposition than freshman. Burbach et al. (2012) reported that while age and gender were not significantly related to any of the EMI instrument constructs, a classification of “freshman” was negatively
related to all three.

Fortunately, research indicates that certain teaching methods may indeed impact students’ development of critical thinking disposition. Friedel, Irani, Rudd, Gallo, Eckhardt, and Ricketts, (2008) identified a significant difference in students’ disposition when instructors overtly taught critical thinking skills. Phelan (2012) states critical thinking dispositions can be enhanced by integrating critical thinking language and practice into the classroom through explanation, interaction, modeling, and feedback. More specifically, classroom exercises such as journal writing, collaborative group discussions, Socratic questioning, and group presentations are significant when looking at the increase of critical thinking dispositions (Phelan, 2012). Furthermore, Bell and Loon (2015) found a direct link between certain methods of classroom instruction and specific EMI dispositions. By participating in discussions, analysis, and reflections students were given the opportunity to apply and strengthen the dispositions of engagement and cognitive maturity (Bell & Loon, 2015). Finally, weak but positive relationships have been identified between critical thinking skills and critical thinking disposition (Friedel et al., 2008; Ricketts & Rudd, 2004).

**Purpose and Objectives**

The purpose of this study was to analyze critical thinking disposition of students enrolled in a Special Topics: Contemporary Issues in Agriculture and Life Sciences course at Mississippi State University. Specifically, researchers sought to:

1. Describe critical thinking disposition of students at the beginning and end of the course.
2. Describe any difference in critical thinking disposition between the beginning of the course and the end of the course.
3. Identify constructs of critical thinking disposition that were impacted by the course.

This research directly addresses area two, priority three, of the National Leadership Education Research Agenda, the psychological development of leaders, followers, and learners through the development of critical and creative thinking disposition and the accompanying self-efficacy to demonstrate action (Andenoro et al., 2013).

**Methodology**

In order to address the purpose of this study, a concurrent triangulation mixed methods research design was employed (Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann, & Hanson, 2007). In a concurrent triangulation design, quantitative and qualitative data are collected and analyzed simultaneously and the results compared. This familiar research design is often used when attempting to confirm, cross-validate, or corroborate findings within a single study (Green et al., 1989; Morgan, 1998; Steckler et al., 1992 as cited in Creswell et al., 2007).

The underlying premise of mixed-method inquiry is that each paradigm offers a meaningful and legitimate way of knowing and understanding. The underlying rationale for mixed-method inquiry is to understand more fully, to generate deeper and broader insights, to develop important knowledge claims that respect a wider
This mixed methods study sought to analyze the critical thinking disposition of students enrolled in Special Topics: Contemporary Issues in Agricultural and Life Sciences at Mississippi State University. The course is taught during a full 15 week semester and offered as an upper-level elective for students in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. Ten contemporary agricultural issues are selected by the instructor at the beginning of the semester, based on current and relevant news, both state specific and nationally applicable. Each of the ten topics is taught over two class meetings. Typically, an expert speaker joins the class to provide the initial lecture on the issue. Students prepare by selecting, reading, and summarizing a current article on the topic and developing questions for the expert guest speaker to address. The following class period is dedicated to learning activities that help further expand students’ knowledge and understanding of the topic, develop an informed opinion on the issue, practice informed discussion regarding the topic, and integrate the topic with other relevant issues that have been or will be addressed in order to promote “systems thinking”. The stated course objectives include developing students’ ability to: (1) communicate the complexity and historicity of current agricultural issues, (2) locate, decipher, and critically analyze and evaluate sources of information, and (3) discuss, debate, and effectively communicate current agricultural issues both verbally and in writing, all while increasing their awareness, understanding and critical assessment of current global agricultural issues.

In addition to the expert lecture and learning activities, students participated in a study away trip. Students visited the state capitol to learn about policy and legislative processes, the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce to learn about programs and support for agriculturists and consumers in Mississippi, and to tour the Port at Gulfport, Mississippi. At the conclusion of the semester, the final learning assessment is a discussion meet, structured like that sponsored by Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers. Students are placed in groups of four, given a topic statement, and conduct a simulated committee discussion on that topic for approximately 20 minutes. This activity challenges students to employ the knowledge and skills they’ve worked to develop over the semester.

A total of 26 students were enrolled in the course during the Spring 2015 semester. A census of all students present during the times of data collection was used.

**Quantitative Methods**

Quantitative data was collected using the EMI: Critical Thinking Disposition Assessment. The instrument was slightly modified to be administered as a reflective pre- and post- assessment at the conclusion of the semester. The instrument consists of 26 questions on a 5-point Likert-type scale, measuring the three constructs. Eleven questions measure the engagement construct, eight questions measure the cognitive maturity construct and seven questions measure the innovativeness construct. According to the scoring guide, responses for all questions in each construct are summed to produce a construct score, as well as an overall score. Total scores may range from 26 – 130. Scores for the construct Engagement may range from 11 – 55, while possible scores for Maturity may be as low as 8 or as high as 40. The possible range of scores for the Innovativeness construct are a minimum of 7 up to a maximum 35. Matched pair t-tests were utilized to identify any significant differences between pre-test scores and post-test scores.
Reliability of the modified instrument was calculated post-hoc, with overall reliability at $\alpha = 0.91$. The constructs of engagement, maturity, and innovativeness were calculated at $\alpha = .852$, $\alpha = .778$, and $\alpha = .748$, respectively.

**Qualitative Methods**

Qualitative data was collected through structured reflective writings. Twenty students were present and completed the guided reflective writing assignment in class. Students were instructed to select a specific experience related to the class on which to write their reflection. They were then guided through the reflection process utilizing the D.E.A.L. model, in order to describe, examine, and articulate their learning (Clayton, 2010). Students’ reflections were transcribed and analyzed independently by the researchers. Researchers open coded and made notes in the margins on the transcriptions (Merriam, 2009). The independent analyses were compared, and codes were consolidated, combined, and categorized into themes which were then named (Merriam, 2009).

Trustworthiness of the study was established through triangulation for credibility, thick description for transferability, and an audit trail for dependability and confirmability (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993). Triangulation utilized two data sources, including the EMI instruments and the guided reflections, as well as multiple investigators who independently analyzed the qualitative data. The audit trail consists of the raw data, including the written reflections and the EMI instruments, as well as the researchers’ analysis notes.

**Results and Findings**

Twenty six students were enrolled in the Special Topics: Contemporary Issues in Agriculture course during the Spring 2015 semester. Five students were classified as sophomores, four students were juniors, with the remaining students classified as seniors. All students were pursuing a degree in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Mississippi State.

**Quantitative Results**

Overall, students’ ($N = 23$) scores on the EMI: Critical Thinking Disposition Assessment showed a statistically significant increase between the beginning of the semester ($M = 89.93$, $SD = 10.14$) and the end of the semester ($M = 107.13$, $SD = 11.73$), $t(22) = -5.71$, $p < .001$. The individual constructs (engagement, cognitive maturity, and innovativeness) were also evaluated and indicated significant differences between the reflective pre-test and the post-test. Scores from questions evaluating engagement displayed a statistically significant increase from pre-test ($M = 38.30$, $SD = 5.23$) to post-test ($M = 45.09$, $SD = 4.98$), $t(22) = -4.98$, $p < .001$. Moreover, cognitive maturity and innovativeness constructs also showed statistically significant increases from pre- to post-test evaluation ($M = 27.13$, $SD = 3.76$) and ($M = 33.22$, $SD = 3.91$), $t(22) = -5.83$, $p < .001$ and ($M = 24.39$, $SD = 3.31$) and ($M = 28.83$, $SD = 3.38$), $t(22) = -5.11$, $p < .001$ respectively. Table 1 illustrates critical thinking disposition increase between pre- and post-test assessments overall and by individual constructs.
### Table 1

**EMI: Critical Thinking Disposition Assessment: Overall (N = 23)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Pre-test (%)</th>
<th>Post-test (%)</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement</td>
<td>38.30</td>
<td>5.23</td>
<td>45.09</td>
<td>4.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maturity</td>
<td>27.13</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>33.22</td>
<td>3.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovativeness</td>
<td>24.39</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>28.83</td>
<td>3.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>89.83</strong></td>
<td><strong>10.14</strong></td>
<td><strong>107.13</strong></td>
<td><strong>11.73</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Means of scores summated in accordance with scoring guide.

Table 2 indicates the pre- and post-test means for each question in the engagement construct, as well as the overall mean for the construct. Each individual question saw an increase.

### Table 2

**EMI: critical thinking disposition assessment: engagement construct (N = 23)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Pre-test (%)</th>
<th>Post-test (%)</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q5</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q7</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q8</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q9</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2 (continued)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Pre-test (%)</th>
<th>Post-test (%)</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q14</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q17</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q18</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q19</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q22</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.47</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.48</strong></td>
<td><strong>4.10</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.45</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Answers based on a 5 point Likert-type scale with 1 = Strongly Disagree and 5 = Strongly Agree

Pre- and post-test means for each question measuring the cognitive maturity construct are identified in Table 3. Again, students indicated an increase in disposition on all questions in the construct.

### Table 3

**EMI: critical thinking disposition assessment: cognitive maturity construct (N = 23)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Pre-test (%)</th>
<th>Post-test (%)</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q22</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4

**EMI: critical thinking disposition assessment: innovativeness construct (N = 23)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Pre-test (%)</th>
<th>Post-test (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Pre-test (%)</th>
<th>Post-test (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q12</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q15</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>0.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q21</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q23</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>0.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Answers based on a 5 point Likert-type scale with 1 = Strongly Disagree and 5 = Strongly Agree.

Similar to the other two constructs, all questions measuring the innovativeness construct saw an increase in mean as well (Table 4).

Qualitative Results

Six major themes emerged from the analysis of the students’ reflections (N=20). Themes revealed include: 1) Understanding all sides of an issue; 2) Ability to discuss an issue; 3) Recognizing ignorance in themselves and others; 4) Transfer of knowledge; 5) Public dissemination, and 6) Linking knowledge to prior coursework. Students are referred to as respondents, more specifically, R1-R20.
Understanding All Sides of an Issue. Throughout their reflections, students recognized the need to seek out and understand all sides of an issue. “We have to look at all sides of these issues to form an educated discussion” said one respondent (R2). Respondents acknowledged the importance of actively pursuing a deeper understanding of the issue at hand, while conceding that their position on an issue is not the only one that exists. Respondent 3 said, “I think this helps to look at the other side and decide if you agree with part or some of the opposing view’s argument…”

Students identified their own biases as a result of their personal experiences and background and found value in looking at the same issue from a different and potentially opposing perspective.

Coming from a farming background I had personal experience or had heard of all of these issues we have discussed. It was interesting to take these issue and learn different sides and understandings of them. Being a farmer you know firsthand how that issue affects you, but you may not understand how it is affecting the consumers or the community. (R2)

Students accepted the importance and responsibility of considering all sides of an issue and actively pursuing complete understanding, increasing their overall knowledge on the issues discussed.

Ability to Discuss an Issue. As competent members of society, students believe they should be able to maintain an educated and accurate discussion on trending issues with a variety of people. Understanding the background, etiology, and implications of an issue gives students all of the necessary tools to apply their knowledge verbally through discussion. “I am able to use this knowledge in job interviews, having a conversation with someone, or discussing Ag with someone who is not knowledgeable on this subject.” said Respondent 12.

Students described engaging in discussions on class topics outside of the course (R3, R5, R6, R12, R13). Some students described feeling more confident when discussing issues with others, including Respondent 5, who said, “I was able to better explain my thoughts because I knew of issues and facts that support…” However, they are also frustrated with others’ inability to intelligently converse about important issues, as Respondent 13 described, saying “Following an article and guest lecture about GMOs, I had a conversation with my boyfriend, who is a culinary major, about the topic…. [I felt] frustrated and concerned, he knew nothing of GMOs and said ‘bleh’.” Finally, students described not just their ability to have a conversation, but to lead a productive conversation. “Now when I think and speak about current ag issues, I use tools I’ve gained from class (listening, understanding, relating, etc.).” (R18).

Recognizing Ignorance in Themselves and Others. At the beginning of the semester, the majority of students coming from an agriculturally based background expressed biases towards traditional agricultural methods during discussions pertaining to contemporary agricultural issues (R2, R3, R6, R7, R10, R17, R18, R20). Respondent 17 said, “This experience showed me that I have a bias towards traditional/conservative ag-based stories that support that side.” Moreover,
students expressed frustration with individuals who view conventional agriculture in a negative light as a result of personal beliefs, misinformation, or ignorance (R10, R11, R20).

However, over the course of the Contemporary Issues in Agriculture course, students began to recognize their own knowledge weaknesses and ignorance towards agricultural issues (R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R7, R9, R13, R14, R17, R19). Respondent 3 realized, in reference to his/her own biases, “it could be looked at as both a strength and weakness that my opinion is hard to change.” By being able to not only identify others’ ignorance, but one’s own ignorance, students are better equipped to discuss important controversial issues pertaining to agriculture. This skill allows students to focus on the pertinent issue and find the best route, or delivery method, for their potential audience (R1, R3, R4, R5, R6, R16, R17). “The [Contemporary Issues in Agriculture] course specifically helped me break the biases that were in the way of my better judgment.” (R17) Further, Respondent 7 realized “the hardest part of fighting an issue is the lack of understanding on both sides.”

Transfer of Knowledge. With any educational experience, the transfer of knowledge into applicable, real-life situations is ideal. Students grasped how participating during class and the educational opportunities presented to them would be beneficial to their everyday life, as well as, future career and life goals (R3, R4, R6, R9, R12, R13, R16, R19). Specifically, Respondent 6, realized “everything I have learned over the semester can be turned into great things to teach my future students.” Respondent 9 learned “how serious these issues really are [and] that they really do affect us in our everyday life.”

Through this learning experience, students were able to connect current and previous educational and personal experiences to increase their knowledge and awareness of contemporary agricultural issues, ultimately creating a better understanding of how our everyday processes connect full circle (R5, R7, R9, R11, R12, R13, R14, R18, R20). “Agriculture is so interdependent and being able to draw on a wide range of knowledge is important in learning, teaching, and understanding individual aspects of agriculture.” (R7) In addition, Respondent 12 is now “able to tie concepts together [he/she] would have never thought about before this class.”

Public Dissemination. A significant part of the learning process is being able to take the information that has been learned and communicate it to others. Students stated a significant need to take what they had learned in the course and additional educational opportunities and give back to their community (R1, R7, R2, R15, R20). “[These experiences suggest that more effort is needed to involve the community.” (R15) On the same note, Respondent 2 stated:

Coming from a farming community in the MS Delta, most people realize what is occurring on the farm. They realize the importance and the impact GMO’s make to farmers in the Delta. Although they realize the issue with GMO’s I don’t think they realize how big this topic has gotten outside of our small town. We must use the information from this class to help educate others.

By taking information back to their home communities, students are able to share their knowledge and experiences. Though they are a younger generation of agriculturalists, they have
been given an abundance of opportunities to expand their education and knowledge of the large realm of agriculture; moreover, the students realize how important it is to transfer their agricultural knowledge to others. Respondent 12 was inspired “to become more active and get involved, other than just going to class.” In addition, Respondent 18 stated “I hope to continue expanding my knowledge on this topic, as well as my ability to speak on and debate with others about it.”

**Linking Knowledge to Prior Coursework.** An important aspect to any post-secondary education is being able to connect coursework throughout the length of an academic career. It is crucial to know and understand how different disciplines tie together to create one broad picture. “I learned to naturally relate what I have learned in all of my classes and this class particularly with what affects agriculture from farmer to consumer.” (R1) Respondent 5 “constantly had FFA events and encounters…[to] connect with” when engaging in class discussions and experiences.

To truly understand agricultural issues, more than just an agricultural background is needed. It is crucial that students learn to connect all of their coursework together and to identify how each class can aid in their understanding of current agricultural issues. For Respondent 7, this course was one of the first they enrolled in stating, “I am glad I took this course at the beginning of my college career because it has helped me to take information learned in other classes and relate them back to each other.”

**Quantitative and Qualitative Results**

Results from the EMI instrument indicated that students increased their critical thinking disposition overall, as well as on each of the individual constructs, engagement, cognitive maturity, and innovativeness. Findings from analysis of the qualitative data lend support to substantiate the quantitative results. Six themes were identified through analysis of structured reflective writings, each of which is indicative of one of the constructs.

The themes of ability to discuss issues and public dissemination align with the engagement construct, which indicates a person’s inclination to seek opportunities to discuss and provide reasoning to others in order to arrive at a decision or solution. People high in the engagement construct are “confident communicators” (Irani et al., 2007). Student reflections indicated that they believe it is necessary for them to apply their discussion abilities in transferring their knowledge to others. They found value in improving their ability to foster educated discussion with others, and clearly indicated their desire to do so beyond their immediate relationship circles, expanding to the broader community that surrounds them.

The construct cognitive maturity is further supported by the themes recognizing ignorance in themselves and others, and seeing all sides of an issue. Individuals possessing a high inclination of cognitive maturity understand that most problems are complex and rarely are solved with a single correct answer (Irani et al., 2007). The noted themes indicated students acknowledged there are views different from their own, and that seeking out those divergent views and opinions is necessary. Students recognized that their background influenced their current beliefs, and that those beliefs may not necessarily be built on a foundation of truth and fact. Further, they were clearly motivated to investigate the varying viewpoints they began to become aware of.
The remaining themes transfer of knowledge and linking knowledge to prior coursework corroborate the innovativeness construct. People who actively seek to expand their knowledge and connect levels of knowledge are said to have high inclination toward innovativeness (Irani et al., 2007). It is clear from the themes that students sought to use their newly acquired knowledge in other applicable situations, as well as bringing knowledge from other coursework in as support in their conversations in class. They were encouraged to know that their knowledge and experience had applicability across a broad context.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Statistically significant differences in mean scores were found between the reflective pre-test and post-test on each construct as well as the overall EMI instrument. All scores were found to increase. Further, qualitative data revealed themes supporting the self-reported development of each of the three constructs, engagement, cognitive maturity, and innovativeness.

The educational objectives for the course aligned with the constructs of the EMI; (1) Communicate the complexity and historicity of current agricultural issues, (2) Locate, decipher, and critically analyze and evaluate sources of information, and (3) Discuss, debate, and effectively communicate current agricultural issues both verbally and in writing, all while increasing their awareness, understanding and critical assessment of current global agricultural issues. Increased scores on the constructs of the EMI, in addition to data in the reflective writings, suggest students did achieve the educational objectives, which, when synthesized, encompass a number of the common components found in numerous definitions of critical thinking (Ennis, 1985; Facione, 1990; Halpern, 1998; Paul, 1992; Willingham, 2007; Case, 2005; Lipman, 1988; Tindal & Nolet, 1995). Furthermore, the teaching methods employed throughout the course reflect those indicated by previous research to contribute to the development of students’ critical thinking disposition (Phelan, 2012; Bell & Loon, 2015; Friedel et al., 2008). This lends support to the conclusion that the structure and content of the Contemporary Issues in Agriculture course at Mississippi State University effectively develops students’ critical thinking skills as well as their critical thinking disposition.

The implications of being able to structure learning experiences for agriculture students which overtly help them not only develop their ability to think critically but positively impact their intrinsic motivation to do so are substantial for an industry that faces advocacy and literacy challenges as more and more of the general population understand less and less about food and fiber production. Educators should continue to seek and employ methods to help students move beyond simply knowing content and having the ability to put that knowledge to use, toward developing their willingness to do so.

From a practitioner standpoint, it is recommended that educators work to include overt instruction in critical thinking where appropriate. Additionally, cross-curricular collaboration should be encouraged in order to facilitate students’ connection of content from a variety of courses. Ample time should be provided to allow students to reflect upon their own thoughts and beliefs and to consider the thoughts and beliefs of others. Students should be challenged to understand viewpoints different from and maybe even opposing their own. Opportunities to take
their learning to others are important and meaningful to students, in addition to occasions where they recognize their ability to engage in meaningful, intelligent, informed conversation.

Research recommendations include incorporating additional reflective writings for qualitative analysis. Students engaged in many topics and experienced a variety of teaching and learning methods. While the reflective writing was guided, it was difficult for students to focus their reflection on a single experience or the course as a whole. Additionally, it would be enlightening to allow students to include qualitative commentary on the reflective pre-post EMI assessment. The gaining further insight on how or why they perceived a difference in their disposition could prove valuable in determining the most effective teaching methods. Finally, it is recommended that this data collection be replicated in an upper level course that is not designed to overtly teach critical thinking skills and disposition, in order to determine if the advanced learning objectives and increased rigor of upper level coursework produces a similar change in students.

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Measuring Significant Learning through a Personal Leadership Transformation Assignment in an Undergraduate Leadership Course

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Abstract

Leadership educators should strive to promote deeper learning within their students. Fink’s (2003, 2013) taxonomy of significant learning is a framework for intentionally grounding leadership curricula in the principles and practices of evidence-based learning. The purpose of this study was to measure undergraduate students’ significant learning after the completion of a PLTA in a personal leadership course and reflection about the experience. A content analysis of 24 student reflections was used to analyze the six domains of learning: foundational knowledge, application, integration, human dimension, caring, and learning how to learn. Evidence of all six domains of learning were found within the student reflections and it was observed that students who had definite contexts in which to apply and well-defined goals for the assignment could better articulate their learning.

Introduction & Background

Leadership educators commonly understand the value of engaging pedagogy and active learning strategies in the classroom (Jenkins, 2012). This is evident in leadership education’s wide use of active learning techniques such as case studies, debates, role-playing, problem-based learning, small group activities, simulations, and community engagement within a broad range of leadership development programs. However, as the complexity of higher education increases and as student populations become more diverse, it is necessary for leadership educators to reexamine the active learning strategies and techniques used in their classrooms if they are to enhance leadership learning (Roberts, 2007).

Furthermore, as the problems leaders are called upon to solve grow in complexity and interdisciplinarity, the field of leadership education needs to undergo a transformation “where powerful pedagogies and emerging knowledge about the scholarship of teaching and learning” are utilized (Owen, 2015, p. 7). Incorporating integrative approaches to learning enables students to “think the world together [rather] than think it apart” (Palmer & Zajonc, 2010, p. 22). Integrated learning is more than merely making connections between disciplines. Rather, it is the ability to synthesize and apply what was learned into new contexts (Owen, 2015). Thus, in an integrated learning environment, the curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular experiences are not separated, but are valued equally.

Encouraging students to consistently integrate their leadership learning experiences can be challenging. However, intentionally including the five hallmarks of integrative learning within a leadership course provides a model whereby students can learn and become proficient. The first
hallmark is connections to experience. Finding ways for students to synthesize experiences outside the classroom with the content in the classroom enables students to deepen their understanding of leadership. Second, is connections to discipline. Leadership is a dynamic and interdisciplinary endeavor; therefore, students need to be able to combine information and content between classes/disciplines in order to know when and how to adapt their leadership approach effectively. The third hallmark is transfer; being able to adapt and apply what was learned in one context to another. Experience should never be limited only to the experienced context. Fourth, is integrated communication. The ability to effectively communicate across formats and with diverse audiences or in diverse contexts is key as the world becomes more interconnected and the speed of change increases. And the fifth hallmark is reflection and self-assessment. Students need to understand that leadership development is a life-long process and necessitates being able to recognize the need for change as well as continual learning and development (Owen, 2015).

Leadership educators, as well as leadership students, share the responsibility to create effective leadership learning environments (Roberts, 2007). Though efforts have been made to ground leadership in learning (Brungardt, 1997; Daloz Parks, 2005; Day, Harrison, & Halpin, 2009; Preskill & Brookfield, 2009; Roberts, 2007; Vaill, 1998) and multi-institutional research has been conducted to examine the influence of experiences and education in developing leadership, limited research exists detailing the programs that apply these evidence-based practices. Consequently, leadership educators should strive to promote deeper learning as there is evidence that deeper learning will foster deeper leadership (Roberts, 2007).

One way to engage in deeper learning is the use of active learning techniques paired with personal and shared reflection. Thereby, leadership educators are able to cultivate learning environments that help students effectively integrate knowledge, skills, and experiences (Owen, 2015). Furthermore, active learning techniques should be understood as levers of learning and for “how they might apply differentially to students with diverse backgrounds and prior experiences” (Owen, 2015, p.9). As a result, it is recommended that active learning techniques be intentionally used “to gauge learning in formative (i.e., during the process) and summative ways (at the end of the experience)” (Owen, 2015, p. 9).

Yet, utilizing active learning techniques in a classroom is not enough. Students must also learn to take ownership of their own education and become self-directed learners. To become self-directed learners, students must learn to “assess the demands of the task, evaluate their own knowledge and skills, plan their approach, monitor their progress, and adjust their strategies as needed” (Ambrose, Bridges, DiPietro, Lovett, & Norman, 2010, p. 191). As students progress through higher levels of education and into their professional lives, having the skills to be a self-directed learner becomes increasingly important as students take on more complex tasks and greater responsibility for their own learning. According to Ambrose et al. (2010), there are five student stages within the cycle of self-directed learning. First, students must learn to fully assess the task at hand, including any major goals or constraints. Equipped with this understanding, students may next move on to evaluate their own knowledge and skills as well as any strengths or weaknesses they may personally have that would affect their work. Then, self-directed students can plan their approach to the task in such a way that accounts for the current situation. To enact their plan, students may proceed to applying various strategies as they monitor their
personal progress. Lastly, self-directed students will take the time to reflect on the degree to which their current approach is working; this stage can lead to adjusting the plan and restarting the cycle.

As research relating types of learning in an academic leadership context is limited, this study was an opportunity to expand the current literature. The active learning experience of a personal leadership transformation assignment (PLTA) in an undergraduate leadership course was used to describe the types of learning the students experienced throughout the three weeks of the assignment. This research study was designed to address the Association of Leadership Educator’s National Leadership Education Research Agenda Priority I (Andenoro, Allen, Haber-Curran, Jenkins, Sowcik, Dugan, & Osteen, 2013). By focusing curriculum development frameworks to enhance the transfer of learning, leadership educators are better able to explore the developmental nature of leadership (Andenoro et al., 2013).

Theoretical Framework

Traditionally, educators have turned to the cognitive domain of Bloom’s (1956) taxonomy to formulate course work and measure student learning; this domain lists six kinds of learning arranged in a hierarchical sequence: 1. Evaluation, 2. Synthesis, 3. Analysis, 4. Application, 5. Comprehension, and 6. Knowledge. While the value of Bloom’s (1956) taxonomy remains unquestioned, it may be difficult to apply all six kinds of learning identified in the taxonomy’s cognitive domain to the goals and priorities of leadership education specifically in the areas of learning how to learn, ethics, communication skills, character, ability to adapt to change, and leadership and interpersonal skills (Fink, 2003).

As an alternative to Bloom’s taxonomy, Fink’s (2013) taxonomy offers a clear guide for leadership educators to intentionally ground their curricula in the principles and practices of evidence-based learning. The taxonomy is based on the notion that for learning to occur, change must also occur within the learner (Fink, 2003). Unlike Bloom’s (1956) taxonomy, Fink’s (2013) taxonomy is not hierarchical but rather interactive and relational in nature, resulting in a synergistic approach to learning. Practitioners of evidence-based learning can use the taxonomy to evaluate their lessons and programs. Fink’s (2013) taxonomy includes six domains that may work together to promote significant learning:

Foundational Knowledge

The basis of most kinds of learning requires the student to know something, referring to the student’s ability to understand and remember specific information and concepts (Fink, 2003). It is important for students today to have some basic working knowledge of the general fields of study, such as science, history, mathematics, and geography; however, students should also possess foundational knowledge of major ideas or perspectives, such as evolution or capitalism. According to Fink (2003), “foundational knowledge provides the basic understanding that is necessary for other kinds of learning” (p. 31).

Application
Beyond understanding and remembering facts and ideas, students also learn how to engage in a new kind of action, which can be intellectual, physical, or social (Fink, 2003). Engagement in different kinds of thinking, such as critical or creative thinking, can be a valuable form of application learning. Application learning also includes the development of skills like communication, project management, or other manual skills. Fink (2003) stated, “application learning allows other kinds of learning to become useful” (p. 31).

Integration

Fink (2003) described integration learning as when students are able to make connections across ideas, people, and/or contexts in the present for use in the future. The act of making these new connections gives learners a new form of power, “especially intellectual power” (Fink, 2003, p. 31).

Human Dimension

As students learn something new or important about themselves or others, they become prepared to function and interact with others more effectively (Fink, 2003). What is learned or how it is learned can potentially give students “a new understanding of themselves (self-image) or a new vision of what they want to become (self-ideal)” (Fink, 2003, p. 31). Furthermore, the discovered social and personal implications of learning about others can influence students’ interpersonal relationships. According to Fink, “this kind of learning informs students about the human significance of what they are learning” (p. 32).

Caring

Sometimes an outcome of learning is a change in the degree to which a student cares about a matter, resulting in new formed feelings, interests, or values (Fink, 2003). When students care about something, they then have the energy they need to learn more about it and make it a part of their lives. Without this energy for learning, “nothing significant happens” (Fink, 2003, p. 32).

Learning How to Learn

Students can learn about the process of learning itself while learning other subjects in their studies (Fink, 2003). Such learning can result in the student developing self-authorship, self-regulation, critical self-reflection, self-efficacy, resilience, adaptability, and motivation. Fink (2003) states this kind of learning “enables students to continue learning in the future and to do so with greater effectiveness” (p. 32).

Fink’s model posits that each learning domain is related to the other 5 learning domains. Thus, the learning is synergistic and meeting one type of learning can enhance the other types of learning. According to Fink (2003), a learning experience that promotes all six learning domains can be deemed significant. It is plausible then, that leadership educators who use a combination of significant kinds of learning will create interaction effects that enhance the achievement of overall significant learning by students. Additionally, Owen (2015) suggests leadership practitioners could “examine their leadership curricula, programs, and initiatives to see to what
extent they are addressing each of Fink’s domains” (p. 12).

**Purpose**

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe the significant learning students experienced after the completion of a PLTA in a personal leadership course. Content analysis was completed on the students’ reflective essays at the conclusion of the assignment. Fink's (2013) six domains of learning were used as the constructs for documenting the learning achieved.

**Methodology**

**Study Context**

The context of this study was an undergraduate personal leadership course taught within a 15-week semester in the [department] at [university]. The course was structured around the five practices of exemplary leaders (Kouzes & Posner, 2014). One assignment in the course, the PLTA, consisted of choosing one of the five practices/behaviors of exemplary leaders (Kouzes & Posner, 2014) to develop over a timespan of three weeks. Students then engaged in activities that allowed them to focus, apply, and develop the practice over the three-week period. Students also used Twitter to "tweet" about their practice on a daily basis. Finally, students completed a reflection at the conclusion of the experience. Because of the richness of the reflections, the researchers decided to analyze them after the course had ended to understand what meaning students took away from the assignment and course experience. Reflections were not specifically completed for research purposes as Bryman (2012) asserts that documents for qualitative content analysis should not “have been produced specifically for the purpose of social research” (p. 543).

A purposive sample (Merriam, 2009) of students enrolled in the personal leadership course in the fall 2015 semester was chosen for this study. There were 70 students enrolled in the course. Each reflection was downloaded from the online learning management system and given a code (N = 70) and will appear within the narrative as part of the audit trail. A sample of 24 reflections were chosen for review for the final data analysis (n = 24). To attain maximum variation in the sample (Merriam, 2009, p. 227), individuals were selected to represent the population. The class was divided into learning communities (four students each) and five teaching assistants along with the instructor were assigned to assist with two or three learning communities. To help alleviate biases from teaching assistants, the sample was taken from one learning community of each of the teaching assistants and instructor for a total of six learning communities, consisting of four students in each to arrive at the final sample of 24 student reflections. This study was approved by the Institutional Review Board.

**Research Approach and Analysis**

Because this study examined indirect human behavior through an analysis of communications (reflections), content analysis was used as the methodological framework (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Huyn, 2012). The objectives of content analysis include: 1) produce descriptive information; 2) cross-validate research findings; and 3) test hypotheses (Borg & Gall, 1989). In this study, the
researchers participated in all three. First, descriptive examples of six domains of significant learning were identified within the reflections and coded. Second, the findings were cross-validated using independent corroborative techniques. Finally, the researchers sought to test the working hypotheses that students were involved in all six types of significant learning through the course assignment.

Three approaches for qualitative content analysis include interpretive, social anthropological, and collaborative social research (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This research employed a social anthropological approach (Berg, 2001). Two of the researchers were course instructors and spent three months of prolonged engagement with the study population. This provided perspective on the reflections gathered for research and contributed to understanding how participants interpreted their social world (Berg, 2001). Content analysis allows the researcher to examine written documents by "systematically and objectively identifying special characteristics of messages" (Holsti, 1968, p. 608).

Sociological constructs based on the researcher's scholarly knowledge and knowledge of the substantive field of inquiry were used to examine the data (Strauss, 1987). For this study, Fink's taxonomy of significant learning (2013) was used as the sociological construct and coding scheme to add "breadth and depth to observations by reaching beyond local meanings to broader social scientific ones" (Berg, 2001, p. 244). The unit of analysis was words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs within the descriptive reflections. The process of identifying themes through immersion into the documents (inductive) first and then using a categorical scheme or social construct for analysis has been suggested by Abrahamson (1983). This can also be referred to as qualitative content analysis or ethnographic content analysis, which are types of content analysis that refers to an approach to analyzing documents and allows categories “to emerge out of data and on recognizing significance for understanding the meaning in the context in which an item being analyzed appeared” (Bryman, 2012, p. 291).

This study used an open coding technique involving carefully reading documents to determine concepts and categories (Strauss, 1987). The constant comparative method was employed allowing the researcher to integrate data (descriptive reflections) and theory (Fink's taxonomy of significant learning) using joint coding and analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Each reflection was read by two independent reviewers and words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs were highlighted and categorized by kind of learning. A peer debriefing with an individual not involved in the coding was conducted to check for initial categorization of units.

The trustworthiness of this study was established through Lincoln and Guba’s (1985) concepts of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility was established through peer debriefing with other leadership faculty not involved in this study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985); transferability was established through the use of maximum variation sampling and participant quotes throughout the findings of the study (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993); and dependability and confirmability were established through the use of audit trails, and peer audits (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

**Findings**
Participant reflections were analyzed using the framework of Fink’s taxonomy of significant learning to understand how students found the personal leadership transformation experiment (PLTE) assignment to promote significant learning. Each of the kinds of learning will be discussed using quotes from student reflections. Two additional themes emerged based on the data which provide additional information on the meaning students made from the assignment. These themes included: influence of context and influence of defined goals.

**Foundational Knowledge**

Foundational knowledge refers to student’s ability to remember information and ideas and provides the basis for understanding other kinds of learning. Students were able to articulate what they learned from completing readings related to each of the practices. Specifically, two students reflected on the practice of encouraging the heart: “I also took away from the readings that I need to encourage others by more than a superficial complement, but encourage the ones around me with deeply thought out letters or gifts” (62). And, student 35 wrote:

> From reading about Encouraging the Heart I learned that it's more than what it seems. Encouraging the Heart is never giving up, it's inspiring others to want to never give up, and we need a big strong heart to be a great leader. I learned that you must have a connection with others to make things work well. You must have connection and unity to be a good leader (35).

Another student discussed what they learned from the readings by stating “I assumed that challenging the process had to be something huge or extreme but there are small things that I could do every day that reflected a way in which I challenged the process” (4). One paragraph by a student shows how the foundational knowledge type of learning is the basis for other kinds of learning. In this instance, the student also demonstrated caring as a kind of learning:

> Show them you believe. The story about Tiffany in the office was easily relatable to me as what her boss did for her is what my ag teacher did for me in high school. I never fully realized it until I read that part of the chapter, but when I did it really hit me how much my ag teacher had impacted and encouraged me. It's so easy to just recognize the things people do, not matter how small. "People need to know they matter," so that is the strategy I tried my hardest to implement (64).

**Application**

Students demonstrated the application domain of learning through areas of student organizations, with roommates, family and friends, work experiences, volunteer experiences, and other random areas of their life such as cooking. Some students reflected on how they applied their learning from the assignment in student organizations. One student wrote “I met face to face with members of my organization to speak to them. I came into conversations with specific questions that would remind the members why they are committed to [organization]” (60). And, student 35 reflected:

> In [organization] I spearheaded a new idea of including the directors into the sophomore's
"Lunch Buddies" so that we will be paired up with a sophomore in order to have more one on one time and get to know them. At these lunches I got to talk about their past and what fuels their success, which was very interesting (35).

Student 4 discussed ways they practiced and applied the behavior including ". . . places in my life that could be improved such as my food budget and exam scores. Then I thought about ways in which I could make such improvements." Other students reflected generally about applying the practices to their work and daily actions and relationships: “I learned about the importance of connecting all of the practices together. They are individually important but when used altogether it really makes a difference in your work place or even home” (58) and

Through these reflections, we are able to chart our progress through actions we intentionally take, but are also, I’ve found, more susceptible to falling into reflection in other areas of our lives we didn't intend on thinking about. So now the reflection becomes twofold and we benefit in more ways than one in a reflection, [which] in my case, was a disheartening task at its launch (41).

Sometimes standing up for what you believe in is challenging, especially when it may damage current relationships with others you care about. In the end, everyone makes his or her own decisions and this must be accepted in order for everyone to move forward (27).

Integration

The integration domain of learning was demonstrated through various areas of student's lives including student organizations, everyday life occurrences, workplace, and with roommates. Three students wrote specifically about integrating the practice into their daily and weekly routines. According to student 4 “I know that in the future I will be more comfortable challenging the process and in time, with baby steps, I can find bigger ways to challenge the process, both as a leader and in my regular, everyday life” (4). And, two more quotes from students indicate how students integrated their practice outside of class:

I learned that there is not just one way to be a leader and that we all have different areas and strengths that we each contribute to as a whole. Learning to want to challenge the way I conducted my weekly routines. It became more of a way to challenge myself than a need to for this class (32).

I integrated these two strategies from the reading by: basing my decisions on if they would set a good example to others and expressing my values to others in order for them to understand who I am and what I believe in. (7)

Another student reflected on how the practice they focused on promoted a sense of togetherness, which was important in many contexts:

I learned that we need to feel connected to others and, in turn, they do to us because greatness is never achieved alone. Encouraging the Heart is the leadership practice that
connects us with one another. It signals and documents that we're in "this" together - whatever this project, program, campaign, neighborhood, congregation, or whatever it is may be (26).

Yet another student specifically reflected about how they intend to integrate the practice of modeling the way as a habit in their life:

I’ll definitely be taking the reflection part of this project with me in continually trying to make this a habitual behavior, as well as the simple act of picking up trash. It isn’t something that I consciously avoid doing, but is also not my first thought or inclination to do. Through these three weeks though, I have seen this innate inclination showing its face more in my daily life. I like this improvement of my attention to the surrounding world and personal responsibility for it, and I hope to continue working this basic action into my days both in familiar and new areas (41).

**Human Dimension**

The human dimension domain of learning involves learning about oneself and others. Through this domain, students may learn things about themselves that enables them to function more effectively with others. Students may also experience a new understanding of others and how and why they act the way they do (the human significance of what they are learning). One student reflected on realizing how their actions can affect others:

I knew I was a leader but I never knew the importance of having such a strong and nice heart. By slightly changing the way I do things I was able to build relationships and have a very good dynamic with the sophomore class below me (35).

Other students focused on their ideas of what it meant to become a better leader. Student 63 stated "What makes a good leader is a person that has the ability to step back and say I need to do this to become better" (63). And, student 58 wrote "Developing as a leader for me will look different than anyone else and I am okay with that" (58).

Some other students focused on how to deal with frustrations of being a leader and how to navigate setbacks including student 45 who wrote "... being able to stay positive and shake off the mistakes is what it takes to be a leader." And, student 26 reflected in the following way:

The only setback I somewhat had was finding more courage within myself to be more encouraging and I was able to handle this by looking at what behaviors I wanted to have and realizing that I had to do this to obtain this behavior as part of who I am.

Another student discussed learning about themselves due to feedback from their accountability partner in this assignment:

The best feedback I received from her is that I have to focus on what the person I am talking to really needs to hear to help push them forward. I cannot just reach into my mind for a standard sentence, I need to really pay attention and focus on the individual
Caring

Student reflections revealed the PLTE assignment motivated them to learn more and energized them to be engaged in the leadership behavior more frequently. Student 62 wrote: "now that I have realized how much of a difference encouraging others does for the human heart and mind I will never be the same." And, in reference to receiving a "favorite" through their tweets posted as part of the assignment, one student reflected that "also receiving favorites was able to help encourage myself because it made me feel as if my other classmates and TA were proud of my actions" (7).

One student specifically mentioned how leadership involves caring and this is what they set out to do:

I read this in the reading and it specifically spoke to me, ". . . [a]nd at the heart of leadership is caring. . . As a relationship, leadership requires a connection between leaders and their constituents over matters, in the simplest sense, of the heart." . . . This is what drove me during this assignment. In everything I do I have really been trying to genuinely care and show others that I do care. (26)

One other student realized the value of caring about another individual:

I have realized that they will perform better if they are praised for their hard work, or at least have it acknowledged. . . I did this so that they would know I'm invested in them and care about their success (35).

Learning how to Learn

This domain of learning may result in students developing self-authorship, self-regulation, self-efficacy, resilience, adaptability, and motivation. One student’s reflection dealt with the development of self-efficacy as a leader: “I find myself searching for new ways to challenge myself without even realizing it, but I still struggle with challenging others. I find myself a little more confident in stepping out of my comfort zone as well” (1).

And, two students’ reflection seemed to highlight the development of resiliency through the assignment: "[Personally developing as a leader] is a process and it takes time. We are constantly learning as individuals and leaders" (33). And, student 1 reflected:

As a leader, I learned that it takes time to develop and sometimes I am going to make mistakes and fail. This is only part of the process because I am constantly learning no matter what. I also learned that as hard as I try, sometimes I just won't become as comfortable with certain aspects of challenging the process, as I would like.

This student further elaborated on how the assignment motivated them in their daily lives: “This assignment really helped with motivating myself by taking what I have learned in class and integrating it into my everyday life” (1). Two students seemed to focus on the notion of self-
regulation and the use of reflection for improvement. In the case of student 62, “I feel like it [twitter] was effective, because reflecting on your actions is one of the best ways of learning, just like when one reflects on mistakes in order to learn from them” And, another student wrote:

I learned that I can develop my leadership skills if I increase my awareness of my behaviors and seek opportunities to take action towards specific goals...Reflecting on my actions is a great way for me to analyze events and learn how to improve them for the future (27).

Influence of Context

In the reflections, students discussed what they did to engage in their behavior over the course of three weeks. Students who had definite contexts to apply through the PLTA could articulate their learning at a higher level and make concrete connections to concepts learned more than students who did not have a defined context. Examples of definite contexts were student organizations, student employment, and other class projects.

Influence of Defined Goals

Students were also asked to develop goals for the PLTA at the beginning of the assignment and then to reflect on how these were achieved or not over the timespan of three weeks. Students who had well-defined goals at the beginning of their PLTA were also able to better articulate their learning at a higher level and make concrete connections to their learning more than students who did not have well-defined goals.

Conclusions & Recommendations

Fink’s (2013) taxonomy of significant learning is a roadmap for helping leadership educators ground leadership education in principles and practices of evidence-based learning (Owen, 2015). The taxonomy includes six domains of learning: foundational knowledge, application, integration, human dimension, caring, and learning how to learn. Through a content analysis of student reflections about a PLTE assignment in a personal leadership course, types of significant learning were measured (Fink, 2013).

Students’ reflections provided evidence that all six types of learning were achieved through the PLTE. This research is an example of evidence-based practice that demonstrates how a pedagogy can foster significant learning in students. Though all types of learning were found among the 24 reflections, the researchers did not examine how many of the reflections each contained evidence of all six types of learning. As Fink (2003) suggests the more kinds of learning that exists within an experience, the more significant the learning can be, further research could examine whether the experience promoted significant learning for each individual.

Two findings outside of measuring the six kinds of learning resulted from the content analysis of the student reflections. Students who had defined goals and more defined contexts could better articulate and reflect and illustrate their kinds of learning. The researchers did not ask students
specifically to reflect on their kinds of learning they achieved; they completed reflections about their experience and the researchers made sense out of their reflections as to what kinds of learning were achieved. It is recommended that leadership educators who want to utilize an assignment like this be purposeful in getting students to have defined goals and to apply the learning of their practice to a more defined context such as work experience, student organizations, or other class projects.

Active learning techniques are used by leadership educators to enhance the quality of learning for the leadership learner. It has been recommended that active learning techniques be used to assess learning both formatively and summatively (Owen, 2015). The PLTA, which was the focus of this study, allowed for assessment of learning during the process (formatively) through the use of micro-reflections by the students using Twitter. Students “tweeted” daily about their chosen practice, which captured how they were engaged with the practice. The “tweets” were not analyzed for this study, but a recommendation for further study would be to analyze the “tweets” made by students throughout the three-week time period to gain a more holistic view of the learning taking place through this pedagogy.

References


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On the Road to Legitimizing Leadership Studies: Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment
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Want to Develop a Sustainable Global Service-Learning Study Abroad Program? Shut Up and Listen.
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**Prospecting for Leadership Hardiness at High Altitude: An Experiential Mountaineering Course**
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Dr. Jennifer W. Purcell & Deborah N. Smith,
*Kennesaw State University*
Leadership and Gender: Application to Teaching and Practice

Tania Carlson Reis, Ph.D.
Gannon University

Abstract

Research on gender and leadership exposes the challenges faced by women leaders. Social Role Theory (Eagly & Karou, 2010), and the implications for women leaders who operate outside the expected norms of gender, paints a complicated but important discourse within graduate and undergraduate leadership programs. This discussion explores the ways gender conversations can inform and enrich leadership discourse.

Introduction

Discussion of ways gender intersects with leadership is an important topic within leadership programs. The lived experience of a student often informs his or her lens on leadership. Women lead with a more team oriented vision and shared leadership approach. Men are often expected to lead with agency and strength (Eagly & Karou, 2010). The discordance experienced by followers when these styles change and gender roles shift creates challenges for both genders in regard to leadership effectiveness and outcomes.

For women, leadership is a particularly complicated business. Historically, women have been underrepresented in leadership positions in corporate and educational roles. Reasons for women’s underrepresentation have been attributed to gender barriers, discrimination, and a late entrance into the workforce and academia (Eagly & Carli, 2007a,b; Glazer-Raymo, 2008; Rhode & Kellerman, 2007). Still, the conversation of women and leadership is broader than the proverbial glass ceiling. Although disproportionate to men, women are moving into leadership positions. The intricacies of the environment, and the need to negotiate multiple barriers, make a woman’s path to leadership increasingly complex.

This roundtable’s purpose is to explore ways the topic of gender is integrated into undergraduate and graduate leadership programs. The goals of this interactive conversation are:

1. To facilitate a conversation of ways current research on women and leadership informs leadership program development
2. To identify practical approaches to integrating gender as a variable within a leadership framework
3. To outline one graduate instructional model used to explore women’s leadership within the psychosocial leadership domain

Background

The story of women in leadership remains complex. The majority of women working in business function in mid-level management positions. In 2016, women currently hold 4% of CEO positions at Fortune 500 companies and 51% of management and professional positions (Women
CEO’s of the S&P 500, 2016). The trend is similar for higher education, 57% of faculty and administrative staff are women but only 26% are represented in the presidency (American Council on Education, 2012). The disproportionate number of women who are close to top leadership positions but not promoted remains an important area of research.

Eagly and Carli (2007a) described the evolving structure of the workplace. Rather than encountering a glass ceiling, women pursuing leadership positions face a labyrinth. The traditional glass ceiling, which allowed women to see the corporate top without being allowed to access it, has been replaced by a complex maze filled with barriers and roadblocks. However, although difficult to navigate, women are finding ways to move and reposition themselves around these barriers, and continue on a forward path. Eagly and Carli argued that women still must meet the expectations of a historically male domain, and organizational processes can slow women’s assent to leadership. Yet, as women navigate the barriers to leadership positions, organizations also change in response to gender leadership styles and expectations. Most importantly, the path for women to leadership is not furthered by displaying male behaviors as a survival mechanism in a male world but rather for women to remain authentic to a female leadership style (Eagly & Carli, 2007a).

Leadership programs are more successful for women when they incorporate a communal environment that supports feminist thinking (Shim, 2013). However, according to Coder and Spiller (2013), leadership development programs should focus on developing good leadership practice versus giving specific attention to gender. Regardless of the focus, gender remains a pivotal concept within the framework of leadership instruction.

**Means for Discussion/Interaction**

The roundtable facilitator will provide an overview of current research as it relates to women in leadership, provide an example of how one Ph.D. program in leadership uses data collection and analysis to investigate gender as a research theme, and create discussion with the following questions:

1. How do students perceive gender as a variable within the leadership conversation?
2. How do students understand gender as an implication for leadership practice?
3. What are the empowering experiences of gender in leadership discussion?
4. How can instructors support students in integrating research with personal experience?

**Foreseeable Implications of Discussion**

Women in leadership is a growing area of research. Legislation created an entry for women into leadership positions, but the path to leadership is different for woman than it is for men. The research on ways woman move into leadership informs how we teach the topic. The intersection of research and student experience supports empirical ways of knowing and sound pedagogical practice. This discussion gives discursive space to new thinking on the ways gender and leadership translate to students.

**Recommended next steps/Actions**
This is a beginning conversation in collecting information on ways research on women in leadership and student personal experience can create new pathways to knowledge. Possible next steps include: a collection of ideas as a hub of best practice; a connection between leadership educators interested in intentionally integrating gender into the leadership conversation, new ways of framing the discussion of gender in leadership to students.

References


Engaging Students in Ethical Leadership Concepts

Kerry K. Fierke
University of Minnesota

Abstract

The connection between ethics and leadership has been intensely scrutinized in the last several decades because of the proven positive results that can be achieved through the practice of ethical leadership. The study's purpose was to examine students’ perceptions of leadership after experiencing a specific instructional and reflective practice based on real events. Evidence-based journal questions allowed students to investigate: 1) climate and culture; 2) roles of leaders and followers; 3) words and actions of ethical leadership; and 4) conscientiousness of actions. Results show that when placed in unethical situations, the majority of students would either speak out or act out in a way to rectify the situation. In developing inclusivity, students would act in various ways that would provide a welcoming environment and culture.

Introduction

The objective of the research was to explore the concepts of ethical leadership from a student perspective. The exposure to ethical leadership, as well as reflection for their actions, provide a level of awareness and the ability for students to evaluate and assess their own behavior. The purpose was to provide an experience for students to explore real world situations, reflect upon their own personal experiences, and proactively prepare if and when they are placed in unethical situations in the future (Cicero 2006, Maloney & Campbell-Evans, 2002). Specifically, students were asked what they would do differently upon reflection of unethical situations they had experienced themselves. Students were also asked how they would create inclusive ethical environments in the future. This reflective journal was assigned after students review of the ethical leadership course materials which consisted of textbook, course content, historical video footage and a reflective journal.

Discussion subtopics and learning activities will include defining ethical leadership and the implications of incorporating content and student-learning activities into courses. This includes a highlight of the materials used within an online leadership course and journal questions.

Participants will review results of student outcomes and identify ways to integrate materials and learning activities into current courses.

Background

The study of ethical leadership incorporates the morality of a leader’s action, and the impact on followers and those affected. Ethical leadership includes situations in history that can have a significant impact on society. Brown, Treviño and Harrison (2005) describe ethical leaders as "engaging in ongoing behaviors that are evaluated by followers as normatively appropriate, and that suggest altruistic (rather than selfish) motivation" (p. 120). In contrast, Bass and Riggio (2006)
describe the pseudotransformational leader as a leader with focused personal gains rather than morality for followers.

Ethical leadership incorporates the focus on the values and morals of the leaders. This moral efficacy is what defines individuals as a "moral agent" within their organizations (Brown & Mitchell, 2010, Schaubroeck, et al, 2012, Mayer et al, 2012). It is a health provider’s ethical practice of integrity, truth, respect, confidentiality, consent, and informed decision making (Barr and Dowding, 2012). The role of follower in ethical leadership is just as important as a leader’s role in regard to ethical leadership. Actions of the leaders must be confirmed to be moral within the organization (Fehr, Yam & Dant, 2015). The relationship between the follower and the leader with ethical leadership identifies that followers are conscientious and not as likely to participate in unethical or immoral actions (Taylor and Pattie, 2014).

Means for Discussion/Interaction

Attendees will actively discuss various ethical leadership materials, including preparation of students toward the concept of ethical leadership as well as ways to incorporate the topic into courses. The roundtable discussion will also include examples of journal questions used in leadership courses and an examination of outcomes. A discussion of existing research data and future collaboration regarding the topic will also occur during the round table.

Foreseeable Implications of Discussion

Activities designed with intentional ethical leadership focus are intended to prepare students in advance of real-life situations, and thus proactively work toward a culture of ethical leadership. Overall the results of the students’ journals (Table 1-3) showed that the majority would consider choices of ethical leadership in future circumstances. When placed in unethical situations, students wrote that they would either speak out or act out in a way to rectify the situation. In developing a culture of inclusivity, students would act in ways that would provide a welcoming environment for others. As a result of discussion related to the above issues, leadership instructors may look into incorporating ethical leadership materials and discussions into coursework in order to begin cultivating specific leadership behaviors.

Recommendations Next Steps/Actions

The researchers are continuing to identify ways to incorporate ethical leadership concepts into various learning environment for students. This roundtable session provides an opportunity for educators with like-minded student-centered philosophies to have a dialogue regarding the practice, design questions related to their own teaching environments and leadership courses, as well as create connections for future collaborative research on the topic. Furthermore, a discussion of how to help students fully explore their own ethical leadership practice by engaging in a learning activity may prove fruitful.
### Table 1. Ethical Leadership Journal Question: How would you react differently now?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Sub-Theme</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speak out</strong></td>
<td>Confront unethical individual</td>
<td>“If I were faced with the same ethical leadership situation again, instead of being a bystander, I would speak up.”</td>
<td>27 (79.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inform individual’s supervisor</td>
<td>“If I were placed in the situation again, I would talk to the assistant principle, the principle, or even the superintendent.”</td>
<td>7 (20.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discuss unethical situation with others</td>
<td>“I would try and speak up about it in front of the whole group because other team members would probably be feeling the same way they just didn’t want to bring it up.”</td>
<td>6 (17.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Take legal or professional action</td>
<td>“However know what I know now, I would file a lawsuit myself or join and help build a case as much as I can.”</td>
<td>3 (8.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Act out</strong></td>
<td>Do what was right instead of what I was told</td>
<td>“I could also continue to do what I know was right from the beginning instead of letting my manager make me do things I knew I wasn’t supposed to do at the time.”</td>
<td>8 (23.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stick up for myself</td>
<td>“If I were to go back to this situation I would have shared more of my ideas with other members of the government to show them that those who were my age were worthy of being heard and respected.”</td>
<td>4 (11.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wouldn’t react different – to avoid getting fired</strong></td>
<td>Establish different protocol</td>
<td>“If placed in the same situation I would ensure that we had a protocol set in place for monitoring his actions and ensuring that he was unable to take things for free.”</td>
<td>3 (8.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organizational strategy</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 (5.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Establish different protocol</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 (5.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Haven’t witnessed unethical leadership</strong></td>
<td>Total # students responding</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 (2.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Comments may fit into more than one theme/sub-theme, so the sum of percentages may exceed 100%. Percentages reflect the proportion of the total number students responding with comments related to a particular theme/sub-theme.
Table 2. Ethical Leadership Journal Question: How can you contribute to a culture of ethical leadership?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Sub-Theme</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Frequency (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Act out</td>
<td>Be fair</td>
<td>“treating everybody fairly”</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lead by example</td>
<td>“As a leader I would start by being personally responsible for my actions, and lead by example.”</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Help others</td>
<td>“I will help my co workers whenever I can and provide feedback when it is asked of me”</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Follow organizational policies</td>
<td>“I can do so by following our rules and procedures”</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Be ethically inclusive and</td>
<td>“…I would like to make sure that people within my lab do not fall into groupthink and that there is a diverse group of people contributing to decision making.”</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Show integrity</td>
<td>“to admit it when I’ve done something wrong instead of trying to hide it or blame it on other people”</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Be kind, positive, or</td>
<td>“act respectfully towards customers and fellow staff”</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>respectful</td>
<td>“Expressing my appreciation for others is something that can be seen, and I believe is appreciated by people”</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do what I say I am going to do</td>
<td>“I will do what I say I am going to do”</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak out</td>
<td>Call out unethical behavior</td>
<td>“I can also work on speaking up when I see an ethical situation that is not being handled appropriately.”</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Remind others of ethical</td>
<td>“By reminding my coworkers how it is important to respect our residents…”</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>behavior</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational strategy</td>
<td>Make sure all voices are</td>
<td>“One way would be to make sure everyone’s voices are heard.”</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>heard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improve communication</td>
<td>“This year, I have made it clear that I, and the entire board will be open about anything the brigaders want to know and nothing will be ambiguous.”</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Properly train staff</td>
<td>“One of them being teaching others how to be effective and positive leaders.”</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Establish guidelines for</td>
<td>“I would have the group create a guideline for ethical behavior.”</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ethical behavior</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total # students responding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Comments may fit into more than one theme/sub-theme, so the sum of percentages may exceed 100%. Percentages reflect the proportion of the total number students responding with comments related to a particular theme/sub-theme.
### Table 3. Ethical Leadership Journal Question: How can you display ethical leadership?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Sub-Theme</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Act out</td>
<td>Provide quality patient care</td>
<td>“...some ways to display my own ethical leadership model include prioritizing the well-being of the patient.”</td>
<td>11 (33.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be fair</td>
<td>In the future as a physician I will be sure to be fair with my staff.</td>
<td>5 (15.2%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be kind or respectful</td>
<td>I will be honest, but in the kindest way. I will show respect to each and every one of them.”</td>
<td>5 (15.2%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show integrity</td>
<td>“...it is essential that I am honest about what I do and do not know so that I can develop the skill set necessary to be an asset to the pharmacist at my worksite.”</td>
<td>3 (9.1%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be ethically inclusive and sensitive</td>
<td>I believe that the most important part of ethical leadership is increasing inclusion and diversity.”</td>
<td>2 (6.1%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow organizational</td>
<td>“I hope to be just as good as an ethical therapist by...following the rules...”</td>
<td>1 (3.0%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be thoughtful</td>
<td>As a leader I will need to make sure I take the time needed to fully access the situation to come to a decision of what to do next.”</td>
<td>1 (3.0%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak out</td>
<td>Teach others about ethical leadership</td>
<td>“I want to teach others to always consider the ethical implications behind their actions as well.”</td>
<td>6 (18.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call out unethical behavior</td>
<td>“I will not be afraid to step up and voice my opinion if I feel the patient care in the hospital is not up to par or needs improvement.”</td>
<td>2 (6.1%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognize ethical behavior</td>
<td>“I could even provide praise to team members when I see that they are showing ethical leadership themselves.”</td>
<td>2 (6.1%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational strategy</td>
<td>Properly support staff</td>
<td>“I would want to be able to recognize ethical dilemmas and train my team members to do so as well and teach them how to deal with such situations.”</td>
<td>9 (27.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create open environment</td>
<td>“I want to show my organization that they are encouraged to come to me when they have an idea or want to speak their mind.”</td>
<td>3 (9.1%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarify core values</td>
<td>“When my organization knows what the core values are, they will know what to respect and in the right environment, it will be easier to adapt to these values.”</td>
<td>1 (3.0%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**General statement about ethical leadership**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total # students responding</th>
<th>3 (9.1%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Note: Comments may fit into more than one theme/sub-theme, so the sum of percentages may exceed 100%. Percentages reflect the proportion of the total number students responding with comments related to a particular theme/sub-theme.

### References


Prospecting for Leaders in Education Research by Forming a Community of Scholars

Janice Cardwell, Bonnie Ellis & Yvonne Phelps
University of Phoenix

Abstract

This research defines “practitioner faculty” as an industry professional who is also an associate or adjunct faculty member teaching in higher education. With dual responsibilities, practitioner faculty retain a career in industry while preparing and facilitating college courses. These time commitments may interfere or limit opportunities to explore formal research and/or scholarship. Recognizing these limitations and seeking to expand faculty engagement has inspired an action research project by administrative leaders of a satellite campus. The goal is to examine the social constructs, challenges, opportunities and outcomes when practitioner faculty are given opportunities to join a community of scholars. The roundtable discussion was to engage scholars in dialogue around this issue and to capture ideas or perspectives that may be incorporated into the action research project.

Introduction

Today, there are many colleges or universities that employ “practitioners” as adjunct, full, or part-time faculty to facilitate courses (Bartunek and Rynes, 2014). This faculty hiring method works for all intended purposes. The practitioner college instructor is able to continue their professional career while creating an academic career (Reybold, 2008). The practitioner hiring model allows college or universities to meet instructional human resource needs with industry experts. This merging of industry and academics works well in adult learning environments and aligns well with adult learning theories or andragogy (Knowles, 1980). This is because practitioners are able to relate course content and theory to current industry issues, problems, or experiences which, creates a more interactive and dynamic experience for learning (Reybold, 2008). According to Bensimon (2007), “the significance of the practitioner in facilitating the achievement of equitable educational outcomes is underestimated” (p. 441). The problem is that practitioner faculty rarely engage in scholarly research that may benefit adult learning environments and/or student outcomes (Bartunek and Rynes, 2014).

Faculty engagement includes “intellectualism and inquiry” as explained by the Higher Learning Commission Criterion Three. “Faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their programs and the institutions mission” (HLC, 2013 Core Component 3b.5). Recognizing the critical role of faculty scholarship in higher education poster sessions has emerged as one method to encourage intellectual inquiry by practitioners. Faculty participate by developing conceptual posters with great ideas; however, after the viewing event(s) many posters are left to collect dust. Documenting the opportunities, processes and challenges to create a “Community of Scholars” as an action research project may benefit other education administrative leaders seeking to increase faculty engagement in research.

Background
Exploring the development of a community of scholars aligns with the National Leadership Education Research Agenda (NLERA) for 2013–2018 in three priority areas. First, “Priority Three” addresses the psychological development of leaders, followers and learners. Specifically, “through the development of critical and creative thinking dispositions and the strategically aligned initiatives, and self-efficacy to act upon those dispositions, individuals are offered a greater opportunity to empower self-development and organizational growth” (p.13). Leaders in education have many responsibilities for organizational growth and sustainability. They are required to align with missions, visions, accreditation criteria and a variety of job requirements; however, the “how-to” component may need creative exploration or development. This study seeks to document a real-world leadership how-to process designed to address a specific challenge concerning faculty engagement.

The second alignment is with, “Priority Four” which addresses the sociological development of leaders, followers, and learners. Specifically, “this priority promotes and encourages leadership educators and scholars to explore the potential for creative contexts, innovative practice, and holistic learning across organizational hierarchies” (p.16). This study emerged in response to requests by practitioner faculty to learn more about the development of research projects, methodologies, and approval processes. There was an assumption that faculty teach therefore they know. This assumption was invalidated as administrative leaders provided platforms for feedback concerning scholarship, research, and faculty engagement.

The third alignment with the NLERA is with “Priority Five” which addresses influences of social identity. When given opportunity to belong to a community designed to enhance their scholarly engagement and academic careers - how will faculty respond to the social aspects of the experience? The social networks and collaborations that can be created by encouraging practitioner faculty to become scholars has unlimited potential. The goal is to encourage collaborations that may eliminate hesitancies by practitioner faculty to collaborate and engage in scholarly research. According to Roscorla (2016) the time to break down research silos and create collaborations among researchers and across disciplines is now. Developing faculty leaders with research agendas that are executed has potential to advance faculty careers and the institutions they work with, both in industry and education.

**Means for Discussion/Interaction**

Why create a community of scholars among practitioner faculty? “By their unique nature, universities are expected to be a repository of the most specialized and skilled intellectuals. They serve as storehouses of knowledge for nurturing the manpower needs of the nation” (Khushboo Raina Puja Khatri, 2015, p. 286). Mayher and Selznick (2016) propose that higher education must be responsive to the manpower needs in the workplace to produce graduates that are innovative. For example, leaders in business are expected to be transformative, innovative, and intrapreneural. The transformational leader manages vision and purpose for change (Bass (1985). The innovative leader offers enterprising ideas (Borins, 2000); the intreprenueral leader reinvents existing processes (Hennessey 1998). These same competencies are expected in education and in faculty engagement.
The social implications to engage faculty in research is a strong component of this research project. The ultimate objective is to develop faculty research competencies, identify interests, support actions and ultimately uncover new ways to impact student outcomes. Put simply - to help faculty to become leaders in research. To generate discussion and interaction the following statements and questions are being presented:

1. Would practitioner faculty be more inclined to pursue research and scholarship if given opportunities for collaborations, training, resources and support?
2. How can research or scholarship be promoted as an opportunity for practitioner faculty to be transformational, innovate, or “intrepreneural” in their industry workplace and within the education workplace?
3. What is the connection between faculty scholarship and student outcomes?
4. Should practitioner or part-time faculty be expected to engage in scholarship or research, if so, what impact can this have on industry and education?

**Foreseeable Implications of Discussion**

The world of education is changing and with it the concepts of leadership in education. This is a time for innovations, creativity, and collaborations that can have a positive impact on teaching, student learning, and institutional sustainability. Education institutions are looking for ways to improve faculty engagement, align curriculum with jobs and industry requirements and to stay relevant as leaders in the education industry. If innovation is a competency that employers are looking for (Mayer & Selznick, 2016), these same leadership competencies should be encouraged by administrators and faculty in higher education. The potential to improve or validate teaching/learning outcomes, the image of the learning institution, and the opportunity to encourage students to be innovative and creative is elevated when faculty (practitioners and full time) engage in scholarly contributions.

**Recommended next steps/actions**

Elliot and Tsai (2008) propose that “new paradigms of educational inquiry do not come in tightly wrapped and sealed parcels” (p. 578). This action research project is not tightly wrapped, packaged, or sealed. It is exploratory, which is why the concept is being presented to scholars for input on development. The goal is to capture questions, thoughts, and ideas that may be integrated into the design.

Prospecting for Leaders in Education Research by forming a Community of Scholars is conceptually designed as action research. The goal is to address a practical situation that needs action. According to Elliot (2010) action research has an embedded social capital implication that empowers action researchers to attempt to understand practical situations they face, as a basis for action.

Action research, in the current case, is the overarching methodological foundation; however, the study will employ additional research tools and approaches (case study and grounded theory) as
well as specific action research sequences. This mixed method approach is to augment, provide details, and to illuminate emerging insights concerning this specific phenomenon.

Action research, according to Torbert (2004) is useful on a broader plain when taken as an overarching “process of transformational learning that individuals, teams, and whole organizations can undertake if they wish to become:

- Increasingly capable of making future visions come true.
- Increasingly alert to the dangers and opportunities of the present moment
- Increasingly capable of performing in effective and transformational ways.”

Couglin (2004) provides another perspective to explain why an action research approach could be appropriate for this leadership initiative. The goal of action research is not to position the leaders as experts in research or theory development. The goal is to create a collaborative learning environment that includes: researchers, study participants, and institutional stakeholders. This collaboration generates sharing of question development, data collection and analysis, self-reflection and testing. In this holistic action research environment, the community has the opportunity to grow collectively building a stronger organizational unit.

References


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On the Road to Legitimizing Leadership Studies: Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment

Jill Arensdorf, PhD & Kaley Klaus
Fort Hays State University

Abstract

Leadership education and development programs number over 1,000 in higher education institutions across the country (Riggio, Ciulla, & Sorenson, 2003; Brungardt, Greenleaf, Brungardt, & Arensdorf, 2006) and continue to expand worldwide. With the rise of leadership programs, it is integral that leadership programs have specific, well thought out student learning outcomes. This roundtable will discuss the development of student learning outcomes for leadership education programs, and how they can inform rigorous assessment practices.

Introduction

It is well documented that for leadership programs to remain current and relevant, it is critical that learning outcomes assessment be an essential part of leadership education programs. However, prior to rigorous, thorough assessment should be the development of solid, higher order student learning outcomes that challenge students and share the values of the field (Riggio, Ciulla, & Sorenson, 2003; Andenoro et al., 2013). In a paper focused on the creation of a formalized leadership program review, an International Leadership Association (ILA) taskforce identified that intentionality in the development of learner outcome and assessment can provide a framework that assists in the maturity and legitimacy of Leadership Studies as a discipline or field of study (Sowcik, Lindsey, & Rosch, 2013). This roundtable will continue a conversation around the development of student learning outcomes in leadership education, and discuss ways in which these can lead to robust assessment measures, thereby creating more credibility for the field of study (Riggio, 2013). Participants will have an opportunity to share not only their student learner outcomes, but also discuss how to utilize those for continuous improvement not only for their program, but for the field of Leadership Studies.

Background

Student learning outcomes are a critical component of leadership education programs. As a core component to any educational program, outcomes can not only enhance the intentionality of a students’ experience, but can lead to coherent assessment and subsequent program improvement. The International Leadership Association’s Guiding Questions document (2009) was created collaboratively as a “living document,” in tangent with the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS, 2009) and the Handbook for Student Leadership Programs (Komives, Dugan, Owen, Slack, & Wagner, 2006). This particular document provides an opportunity for programs to explore their content and standards. Scholars note that program outcomes “need to be clearly described conceptually as well as operationally. These descriptions also need to identify the connection between the individual outcomes and the expected way these outcomes will contribute to growth and competency in leadership” (International Leadership Association, 2009, p. 27). Furthermore, outcomes that are measurable are intended to describe
what graduates of a leadership program will be able to do at the conclusion of the program (2009).

A culture of assessment has permeated Leadership Studies programs (Andenoro et al., 2013). This assessment can assist programs and the discipline to understand impact, but also address legitimacy to both internal and external stakeholders (International Leadership Association, 2009). However, prior to the appropriate design of assessment procedures and measures, programs need to have comprehensive student learning outcomes developed and vetted (Wolf & Hughes, 2007).

**Means for Discussion/Interaction**

Participants in this roundtable discussion will have the opportunity to explore their student learning outcomes from a conceptual and operational perspective, and discuss how those student learning outcomes filter into course objectives and program assessment. The discussion questions will be as follows:

- What importance do student learning outcomes have on program development? Program legitimacy?
- What role do student learning outcomes and assessment play at your institution?
- What are the conceptual and operational student learning outcomes for your program?
- Do these learning outcomes connect to larger college or university goals or outcomes?
- How are your program learning outcomes communicated to students?
- What methods of assessment are used to measure student learning of these outcomes?
- Does curriculum mapping inform your course and assessment planning? How?
- Should leadership programs have common student learning outcomes? What would be the benefits and costs of such an effort?

**Foreseeable Implications of Discussion**

Many leadership organizations have conducted conversations around student learning outcomes and program assessment; however, progress is still to be made. This roundtable could lead to cross collaborative research centered on student learning outcomes and assessment in leadership education, as well as more intentional conversations around legitimizing Leadership Studies as a discipline, using rigorous and robust student learning outcomes as its foundation.

**Recommended Next Steps/Actions**

Brungardt and Crawford (1996) asserted that program assessment aims to understand a student’s ability to apply leadership knowledge, skills, and abilities for the long term. This cannot be done, however, without clear and concise student learning outcomes. Understanding the complexity of leadership education and assessment, and given the rise in the number of leadership education programs in higher education, Sowcik (2012) calls for more intentional exploration and discussion centered on ILA’s *Guiding Questions*. His goal in critiquing the *Guiding Questions* was to “encourage a collaborative dialogue” (p. 193), and offer scholars a more effective *Guiding Questions* framework. This particular roundtable discussion will serve as a catalyst in
that collaborative dialogue, as well as offer scholars the opportunity to reflect on, or refine, their program’s student learning outcomes in order to cater to the increased demand for legitimacy of higher education, and more specifically leadership studies.

References


Using the Counsel for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) resources to Assess and Enhance Leadership Programs

William Smedick
Johns Hopkins University

Gayle Spencer
University of Illinois at Urbana - Champaign

Abstract and Introduction

The Council for the Advancement (CAS) of Standards in Higher Education provides a platform for functional areas in student and academic affairs for in depth, comprehensive and meaningful self-assessment. The facilitators of the session include a former and current member of the CAS Board of Directors. The discussion will center around the ways in which higher education professionals can use the CAS standards to improve their ability to enhance student services and learning. The facilitators will use the Leadership Programs standards as an example.

Discussion participants will learn
- An overview of CAS and its value for leadership educators
- The basic process for conducting a CAS self assessment
- The elements of the CAS Leadership Programs standard
- The CAS student learning outcomes and rubrics related to leadership programs.

Background

The Leadership Programs CAS standards go through a rigorous vetting process that includes representatives from many leadership related professional associations (including members of ALE) and scholars. The standards are developed based on a well-known and regarded theories and best practices.

Means for Discussion/Interaction

The facilitators will introduce the services and processes offered by CAS. The process for self-assessment will be introduced and facilitated conversation about implementation of the self-assessment process for participants will be addressed.

A review of the elements of the Leadership Programs standard will be introduced and discussed with participants. The learning outcomes and rubrics related to the CAS Leadership Programs standard will be introduced and discussed.

Recommended next steps/actions

The CAS Leadership Programs standard is due for review and revision next year (all CAS standards go through the review and revision process every five years). The facilitators will capture responses and reactions from participants and share with the Leadership Programs
review and revision committee for their consideration.

References

http://www.cas.edu
Want to Develop a Sustainable Global Service-Learning Study Abroad Program? Shut Up and Listen.

Dennis W. Duncan, Nicholas Fuhrman, & Eric Rubenstein
University of Georgia

Abstract

Developing and implementing a sustainable global service-learning program that provides impactful experiential learning opportunities coupled with the importance of university students gaining a greater awareness and understanding of food insecurity issues both locally and globally requires students and faculty to connect with those they wish to serve at the beginning – in order to build a program that addresses the needs of those being served. This roundtable discussion will focus on sharing experiences leading up to, the implementation, and evaluation (both quantitative and qualitative) of the global projects, reflection of best practices, and consideration of implications these practices could have within leadership education.

Introduction & Background

As institutions of higher education place more emphasis on experiential learning opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students, faculty and administrators are being charged to develop new experiential learning opportunities – such as global service learning programs. Global service learning programs provide a foundation for students to gain valuable knowledge and experience in developing and implementing impactful projects all the while immersing themselves in the culture and history of the host country. Not only can the experience be life changing for both the student and those they are serving, it may provide an avenue for students to polish their communication skills, leadership and teamwork skills, interpersonal and social networking skills, and problem solving skills – all of which are important to industry leaders (Crawford, Lang, Fink, Dalton, and Fielitz, 2011; Employers, 2010).

Service-learning has a long standing history in America. The service-learning terminology was coined in the 1970’s; however, many of the tenets are built upon educational scholars such as Dewey (Speck and Hoppe, 2004) and others who embraced the value of experiential learning. Faculty at a southern land-grant university sought to address the need for increased experiential learning opportunities coupled with the importance of university students gaining a greater awareness and understanding of food insecurity issues both locally and globally. This was addressed by developing a global service learning program that required students to connect with youth and seniors in the local university community and in Scotland. Prior to the start of the semester, faculty developed the groundwork for a sustainable study abroad program by visiting the host institution, building bridges between faculty and administrators on both campuses via distance technology, securing service learning sites near both university campuses, and developing pedagogical resources.

In preparation for the service learning projects, students conducted needs assessments in cooperation with local leaders and teachers, developed a Logic Model, listened to youth voice groups, secured resources for engaging in service projects in the local community and abroad,
and prioritized service activities they would engage in working alongside stakeholders. This participatory approach resulted in students feeling a sense of ownership and personal commitment to the project, gaining valuable leadership skills, increased reflective abilities, and an appreciation for community programs. Lastly, and most importantly, they listened to the needs and desires of those they planned to serve at the start and through the duration of the planning and implementation phases.

This roundtable discussion will focus on sharing experiences with this type of experiential learning, reflection of best practices, and consideration of implications these practices could have within the context of global leadership education.

Means for Discussion

The facilitator will share personal experiences related to all phases of building and implementing this study abroad program. Discussion will flow out of the examples and lessons learned through experience and a semester of quantitative and qualitative student data collection and feedback. Participants will be encouraged to share personal experiences of using global service-learning in their own departments and units and discuss opportunities for future collaboration.

Implications of Discussion & Next Steps

At the conclusion of the roundtable discussion, participants will have an understanding of: (1) various means of utilizing service learning on a global scale; (2) best practices of these experiences; and (3) potential connections for collaboration of research and how global service learning will continue to be an impactful pedagogical tool for leadership educators.

References


What if we don’t call it “Leadership”?  

*Marianne Lorensen, PhD University of Minnesota – Twin Cities*

**Abstract**

“Leadership” is increasingly common on college campuses. As with definitions of leadership, the ways in which leadership education has emerged are varied. Leadership has homes in student activities, engineering, education, business, and agriculture—to name a few. Whether we believe that colleges have become “obsessed with leadership” (Burton, 2014), it is clear that this increased popularity has brought with it territorial issues and turf wars. As Kaufman, Rateau, Carter and Strickland (2013) note, context matters. Arguing that business leadership is different from agricultural leadership is different from educational leadership only gets us so far. What happens when a department or college wants to offer leadership education on a campus where prominent broad-based leadership education already exists? Partnership? Competition? Meeting particular niche needs not already satisfied by existing programs? If the latter, what are those needs? And—once identified—how do we know if “leadership” best describes what we are after?

**Introduction & Objectives**

On some level, everyone on a given campus is sharing students. This means that, on some level, everyone on a given campus shares the responsibility of addressing students’ needs. It would seem that overlap is almost inevitable. In some instances, that can be good. After all, we want to be working together to make sure that no needs fall through the cracks. One could argue that there are certain aspects of college education which cannot be over-emphasized. Examples of this might include things like civility, critical thinking, and cultural competence. Since leadership is an overarching aim of higher education (Baxter Magolda & King, 2004; Bowen, 2004; Greenwald, 2010), would we argue that it too should be woven into multiple aspects of the collegiate experience? For many, the answer to that question is likely affirmative. Leadership education and development is everybody’s job. Philosophically, that sounds good. Unfortunately, it is not always a very satisfactory position to take in practice. Having multiple programs with “leadership” in the title can get messy. This is particularly true when colleges and departments want to offer a leadership program at a university where long-standing leadership programs already exist.

To be good stewards of our resources, we want to avoid re-inventing the wheel. To be good stewards of the students entrusted to us, we want to do what is required to meet their needs. To add value to our institutions, we want to use our talents and expertise—or protect our talents and expertise from being assumed and co-opted by others. The key to offering a new leadership program often lies in differentiating the new from the established. Whether the new program defines and explores leadership differently, is aimed at a very specific group or sub-group of students, or meets leadership learning needs that are not addressed by existing programs, this approach to distinction seems fairly common sense. In assessing and articulating unmet needs, educators may find themselves heading down a path where leadership is not the destination. This can be disconcerting—especially if we initiated the process assuming that “leadership” is what we were after.
In this round table, participants will have the opportunity to discuss their personal and professional perspectives on leadership, the goals and objectives of their leadership programs, and the ways in which the term “leadership” does and does not accurately capture those objectives.

As a result of their participation, conference attendees will be able to:

- Analyze the term “leadership”, as it pertains to collegiate experiences, from multiple perspectives
- Identify the advantages and disadvantages of using the term “leadership” in the title of their courses and programs
- Articulate alternative course and/or program titles that may more accurately reflect the leadership goals of those courses and/or programs

**Background**

The variation among types and locations of leadership education on college campuses is at least partially related to the variety of definitions used for the term “leadership”. With so many different ways to think about the concept, it follows that there would be many different ways to learn about it as well. Even so, some may argue that “leadership” is over-done. The same broad umbrella that allows for multiple definitions and academic or co-curricular homes has perhaps helped leadership to become ubiquitous. The latest in a series of silver bullets that promise to make us better people and fix all of our personal, professional, and societal problems—provided we learn how to use it correctly. Leadership educators are confronted with this argument regularly, and also with arguments about whether leadership is something that can be learned.

We can set those arguments aside for the moment and assume that most who identify themselves as leadership educators believe that leadership can be taught and are able to articulate a nuanced definition of the term which demonstrates it to be more than just a broad trendy topic. The focus of this roundtable will, instead, be on another perpetual debate in leadership education—namely, the question of who can and should be “in charge” of leadership education. To say that everyone can and should be in charge of leadership education sounds nice; but it doesn’t always suffice on campuses that are looking to streamline, work with ever-tightening budgets, and maximize returns on their investment of resources. If one leadership program already exists and is doing well, making the case for additional leadership initiatives becomes increasingly challenging.

Furthermore, new players aren’t always encouraged to invite themselves into the arena.

To justify the creation of new leadership programs when others already exist, and to identify ways in which they are poised to provide those programs, leadership educators must re-visit the meaning of “leadership” itself. As Northouse notes in the theory textbook (2015) used by many leadership educators, we all know what we mean when we use the term; yet we would all probably articulate that meaning in different ways. The word “leadership” has the advantage of being recognizable and (in a lot of cases) appealing. It’s a term that we believe is attractive to students, administrators, and prospective employers. We are told frequently, by that latter group of stakeholders, that they want to hire graduates who are able to demonstrate leadership. The
implicit mandate for higher education, then, is to teach students how to do that. Kouzes and Posner (2010) tell us that leadership has content and context—and that, although context matters, it doesn’t really change the content of leadership.

If the content of leadership is fairly stable, regardless of context, does that mean that one leadership program is sufficient? Perhaps, but not necessarily. If leadership is a broad umbrella, that likely means there is a great deal of content to consider. So perhaps the question we should be asking ourselves as leadership educators isn’t, “Who should be in charge of leadership education on our campus?” Perhaps the real question—and the more important one—is, “What is the content within leadership education for which I can and should be responsible?” The answer to that question should be informed by the specific needs of the particular students being served. Assessing and identifying those needs will allow us to articulate related objectives which could then be used to design educational interventions. The same needs and objectives will also frame how we talk about leadership—or whether we use the term “leadership” at all.

Means for Discussion/Interaction

The roundtable facilitator has experience in both student affairs and academic affairs and has served as a faculty member in both established and emerging leadership programs on different college campuses. These experiences will provide a foundation for discussing the challenges and critical questions surrounding collegiate leadership programs.

Roundtable participants will be invited to share their experiences of developing new leadership programs on their campus and/or of being part of more established programs as new programs emerge (or attempt to). This discussion will include, but is not necessarily limited to, those experiences around needs assessment, development of learning objectives, creating and sustaining partnerships with other programs, preservation of program identity, and decisions about course/program titles.

Prompting questions may include:

8. What are the advantages/disadvantages of using the term “leadership”?
9. What terms are used instead of, or in addition to, “leadership”? Why?
10. What are the learning objectives for your program and how do they tie to leadership?
11. What are the challenges faced by established leadership programs on campus?
12. What are the challenges faced when creating new leadership programs on campus?
13. What are the biggest concerns and considerations around the co-existence of leadership programs on campus? How do those concerns and considerations impact our work?

Implications

As the collegiate field becomes increasingly crowded with leadership programs, it is vital for leadership educators to be able to clearly identify their students’ needs, articulate the focus of their programs, and (most likely) distinguish their programs from others on campus. In most cases, the goal is not for programs to compete with one another. Rather, the goal is to create programs that meet diverse needs under the leadership umbrella. Whether programs closely
partner or simply co-exist, it is important for each to understand the others’ role in leadership education on campus. If there are concerns about treading on someone else’s turf, it may be that those concerns spring from use of the term “leadership” (and assumptions around what that means) rather than from a true duplication of effort or potential competition for student resources. If there is a duplication of effort, then communication across and among programs is also needed in order to clarify that issue and determine how to resolve it. This roundtable aspires to expose leadership educators to varying perspectives on the issue, help them think more critically about their own campuses and programs, and allow for the sharing of ideas and best practices.

Recommendations

This roundtable proposal arises from the belief that it is becoming increasingly important to articulate the aims of leadership education beyond simply widespread use of the term “leadership”. Most conference attendees are likely to believe that leadership is more than just a flash in the pan. As we continue to advocate for and provide leadership education on our campuses, we must be able to drill down into the concept and sift through a vast array of content in order to more clearly articulate the aims of our work. Prospecting for leadership is certainly about helping our students uncover their leadership potential; and it is also crucially about having a clear understanding of how we define leadership, who we serve, and the purpose and identity of our leadership programs.

The time is past when we can simply say that we serve all students and believe leadership education is for everyone. Even if that remains philosophically true, we must be able to go beyond that and clearly describe the distinct aims of our programs in deeper detail. It is common practice, in describing our work in higher education, to use language which will appeal to a wide audience and demonstrate a multi-pronged approach to meeting student needs. In other words, we offer one program and communicate that it will be as many things as possible to as many people as possible. That strategy is particularly helpful if we want others to view leadership broadly, and it was an appropriate strategy when leadership education was trying to gain a foothold and develop a presence on campus. For many campuses, though, leadership has a presence. Perhaps a long-standing one. In those cases, the task turns to one of differentiation and clarification of purpose. This may mean reconsidering our use of the term “leadership”. It’s not a bad word by any means, but it may not be entirely adequate to describe our specific aims now that we have done such a good job of offering it to the world as an all-encompassing idea.

Whether we begin to use other terms (e.g. citizenship, followership, social responsibility, public service, engagement) or continue with our more familiar language, we must at least grapple with the question, “What if we don’t call it leadership?”

References


E-Learning Perceptions: Learning & Leading in the Digital Era

Shannon Wiley, Hannah Scherer, & Nicholas Anthony Clegorne

Virginia Tech

Abstract

A shift to adopt e-learning is not universally welcomed, nor is it widely understood within cooperative extension programs. While this learning environment may be thriving across the nation, personal attitudes and perceptions are a major factor affecting usage amongst extension education leaders. Although the shift to adopt e-learning strategies within the workplace is somewhat stagnant, this will ultimately become the ‘classroom of tomorrow’ in an effort to prepare the next generation of agricultural leaders whom are considered laborers of the ‘digital era’. Technology will continue enhancing workplace demands, becoming a common strategy utilized within the realm of teaching and learning. As future leaders are continually sought after for competitive positions, the level of readiness amongst those individuals will play a significant role in the adoption of e-learning.

Introduction

E-learning is emerging as the new paradigm of modern leadership education. Within the 21st century, there has been a surge in the use of web-based learning opportunities in the workplace. However, the shift to adopt e-learning is not universally welcomed, nor is it widely understood. Essentially, within the Cooperative Extension organization, there is an array of perceptions and attitudes displayed by extension leaders as a result of this shift in technology. Smoak & Williamson (2005) discuss, when utilizing specific language associated with the term e-learning, there is an immediate transference of emotions displayed by leaders within the extension organization. Although there is disconnect amongst the extension community, leaders in extension education must realize that new technologies and developments in e-learning are transforming the way that individuals, groups and societies communicate, learn, work and govern (Meyers, Erickson, & Small, 2013).

As the next generation of leaders begin to surface, current employers can predict an even greater increase in the implementation of e-learning. Bennett, Matton, & Kervin (2008) states, this new generation of leaders are optimistic, team-oriented achievers who are talented with technology, and claim they will be America’s next ‘great generation’. These leaders are held to be active experiential learners, proficient in multitasking, and dependent on communications technologies for accessing information and for interacting with others (Frand, 2000; Oblinger & Oblinger, 2005; Prensky, 2001a, b; Tapscott, 1999).

Although online learning has advantages over traditional face-to-face education (Piccoli et al., 2001), there are present concerns that exist amongst individuals whom are participating in e-learning tactics within the workplace. As a result of a recent research study conducted regarding perceptions of e-learning in the workplace, individuals are aware of what e-learning is and have utilized e-learning in some capacity, however, the perceptions regarding methods in which e-learning is utilized varies. Individual responses vary when discussing utilizing e-learning to participate in work-related duties such as meetings, workshops and other professional
development opportunities. As the new leaders begin to grace employers with their presence, there could be an increase in implementation of work-related opportunities facilitated online which could greatly impact the future of teaching and learning. Participants within this roundtable will ultimately gain a greater understanding of the following objective:

- How will e-learning affect the ‘readiness’ of the next generation of agricultural leaders?

**Background**

As electronic technologies continue to modernize the way we view teaching and learning, the level of difficulty of encouraging this movement continues to escalate. While E.M. Rogers’, Diffusion of Innovations theory discusses the rate at which individuals’ adopt innovative ideas, Hersey-Blanchard’s Situational Leadership Model discusses the ‘readiness’ of leaders to perform or accept a task which will greatly impact the leaders of tomorrow whom are immersed within the digital era. As with Rogers’, the rate in which individuals progress towards the acceptance of innovative task can stagger between those whom are readiest and those whom are not as willing. The growth of computer networks has increased at an exponential rate since about 1990, when the critical mass for this innovation occurred (Rogers, 2003). This rapid diffusion of the Internet presented a unique opportunity for scholars to investigate various aspects of the diffusion model, especially the role of the critical mass (2003).

**Means for Discussion/Interaction**

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<th>Roundtable Facilitation Session I 25 minutes</th>
<th>Roundtable Facilitation Session II 25 minutes</th>
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<tr>
<td>5 Minutes-Introduction to e-learning</td>
<td>5 Minutes-Introduction to e-learning</td>
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<td>5 Minutes-Overview of e-learning perceptions</td>
<td>5 Minutes-Overview of e-learning perceptions</td>
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<td>15 Minutes-Discussion ‘What does leadership look like in the digital era…where do we go from here’?</td>
<td>15 Minutes-Discussion ‘What does leadership look like in the digital era…where do we go from here’?</td>
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**Foreseeable Implications of Discussion**

E-learning is becoming a dominant instructional method in workplace-learning settings across organizations of various sectors and of varying sizes (Kim, K., Bonk, C., & Zeng, T, 2005). While e-learning has become a dominant resource for individuals within the workplace, individuals are challenged with the implementation of traditional methods of program delivery as well as the perceived readiness to adopt e-learning opportunities within their daily work priorities. The acknowledged leaders of tomorrow are products of the digital era, as a result of this generational technology sector, employers are beginning to provide resourceful tools such as e-learning, essentially allowing employees the opportunity to manage and develop their continued professional skills (Kim, K., Bonk, C., & Zeng, T, 2005). As a result of this digital shift, foreseeable implications of discussion include a) competitor to traditional program delivery, b) the quality of educational programs in the future, and c) leader readiness to adopt e-learning strategies within the workplace.

**Recommended Next Steps/Actions**
According to a recent research study conducted regarding the perceptions of e-learning within the workplace, the following recommended next steps have been concluded a) limitations to implementing professional development via e-learning, b) the effects of age regarding one’s willingness to adopt e-learning, and c) preference of why individuals select certain methods of interaction within the workplace; e-learning vs. traditional, face-to-face.

References


Serving Those Who Served:  
A Discussion of Leadership Education to Assist Transitioning Veterans

Dr. Laura Lemons, Col. (Ret) Ken McRea, and Andrew Greenhaw  
Mississippi State University

Abstract

This roundtable discussion focuses on identifying potential opportunities to assist veterans in their transition to civilian life through leadership education. The barriers transitioning veterans face are well documented, including the barriers they face as they return to higher education. Through previous research, the presenters have identified differences in leadership as one area where veterans encounter frustration during their transition. The aim of this session is to foster discussion among faculty and student affairs professionals, regarding opportunities to implement leadership education as a transitional aid for veterans entering the civilian workforce. Participants will be encouraged to share their experiences working with transitioning veterans, or as veterans who have made the transition themselves.

Introduction/Background

Challenges facing American’s veterans are well documented (Plach & Sells, 2013). Some of our military veterans returning to civilian life encounter more severe challenges than others. In addition, student veterans who return to higher education must overcome unique challenges (Ruman & Hamrick, 2010). Veterans’ affairs professionals strive to assist and support student veterans, service members, and their families on university campuses across the nation in persisting to the completion of their degree. University faculty would benefit from understanding the existing knowledge and experience brought to their classrooms by student veterans and service members. In particular, leadership educators and student affairs professionals should combine their knowledge and expertise in order to better assist these students as they transition.

Currently, there are over 21 million veterans across the United States with roughly 1.8 million of those under the age of 35 (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, n.d.). A Gallup poll (Riffkin, 2015) recently indicated that the average expected retirement age is 65 and increasing, which means almost 2 million of our veterans have an average of 30 years of civilian work experience ahead of them, theoretically. The multitude of challenges transitioning veterans may encounter as they re-enter civilian life can be daunting. One such challenge is adjusting to the differences in leadership structure that veterans will encounter as they enter civilian organizations. These differences may be real or perceived. Regardless, they must be managed in order for the veteran to sustain success in leading within the civilian workforce.

The military is a highly structured and regimented organization with well-defined leadership education (Department of the Army, 2012). Civilian organizations ascribe to a variety of leadership beliefs, styles and practices. Therefore, application of leadership knowledge and skills must be tailored for effectiveness across the broad continuum of structures that exist in civilian organizations. Some organizations mirror the strict structure of the military, however, many businesses apply a much more relaxed structure, necessitating a different application of
leadership knowledge and skills.

These perceived and real differences may present challenges and frustrations to veterans as they transition from military life to civilian life and to service members such as reservists and guardsmen who must perform in both a military and a civilian role. However, according to the facilitators’ previous research, common leadership theories and concepts underpin service members’ and veterans’ perceptions of both military and civilian leadership. Specifically, the facilitators propose that skills model of leadership, leadership-member exchange theory, power and influence, situational leadership, and the behavioral approach are just a few of those leadership theories and concepts that veterans’ perceptions of military and civilian leadership had in common.

Educating our transitioning service members and veterans on the theoretical and conceptual ideas that guide their military-based knowledge and application of leadership that are similar to those that guide civilian leadership, may ease some frustration in their transition.

The specific objectives for this roundtable discussion include:

1. Reviewing the presenters’ previously presented research on differences in military and civilian leadership as perceived by student veterans and service members;

2. Identifying the common underpinning theories and concepts within the perceptions of military and civilian leadership;

3. Generate ideas for curricula to assist transitioning veterans’ adaptation and application of their current leadership knowledge and skills to new civilian situations.

Discussion/Interaction

This roundtable discussion is intended to provide an opportunity to share knowledge and experiences with regard to leadership education in the military and transitioning those competencies and skills to a civilian orientation. The facilitators’ backgrounds combine leadership education and experience in the military. Facilitators have conducted and presented previous research on leadership perceptions of student veterans and service members. In addition, our facilitators bring with them the experience of transitioning their military leadership knowledge and skills into the civilian workplace. They represent three different departments on their University campus, encompassing a variety of contexts within which leadership theory can be applied and practiced.

The proposed roundtable will begin with a short overview of the presenters’ previous research on student veterans’ and service members’ perceptions of military and civilian leadership. Themes will be shared in order to facilitate discussion about the common underpinning leadership theories and concepts. Participants will be encouraged to share their own personal experiences in transitioning leadership skills from the military to a civilian environment, in additional to experiences helping veterans transition their leadership knowledge and skills. Other experiences in assisting students with adapting their learned leadership knowledge and skills to different
environments will be sought out, as well.

Specific guiding questions to structure the discussion include:

- What specific leadership theories and concepts underpin military leadership education?
- What (additional) leadership theories and concepts underpin military leadership practice?
- What competencies should be included in leadership curriculum to assist transitioning veterans in adapting their leadership knowledge and skills to the civilian environment?
- How might this curricula be delivered?
- What are the most effective pedagogies for teaching this curricula?
- What are some possible barriers to implementing this curricula?
- What additional research and outreach could be beneficial in assisting transitioning veterans or similar populations of students?

Foreseeable Implications

The primary foreseeable implication of this roundtable is to connect leadership educators who have an interest in working with student veterans. Through this facilitated conversation, personal relationships can be forged and relevant advice and experience can be shared among the participants. A secondary foreseeable implication is the rough draft design of curriculum that could be developed and implemented by a variety of organizations to assist returning veterans in their transition from the military to civilian organizations. Certainly collaborative partners should be identified among the roundtable participants for the development of leadership education programs focused on transitioning veterans entering the civilian workforce.

Recommended Next Steps/Actions

Comments and discussion from this roundtable will be captured and shared with the ALE membership. To facilitate the exchange of best practices for service learning, it is recommended that the Association of Leadership Education develop a specific discussion thread related to leadership education for veterans. This would provide a forum for ideas and experiences, along with a support network for educators interested in or currently working with veterans either as students or employees of civilian organizations. Finally, it is recommended that leadership development programs implemented by civilian organizations who employ a large number of veterans be mined for additional curricular components to be included in programs to assist transitioning veterans.

References


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The Leadership Education Collaborative:  
The Value of Pluralistic Leadership Philosophies on College Campuses

Nicholas Anthony Clegorne, Heather Smart Evans, Kimberly Ann Carlson, & Denise Rutledge Simmons
*Virginia Tech*

**Abstract**

An emerging strategy – The Leadership Education Collaborative – will be discussed as a strategy to maintain pluralistic leadership definitions for dynamic collegiate leadership development. This strategy will be linked to contemporary leadership theory and competencies and a case study will be used to demonstrate practical application of the process.

**Introduction**

In 2012, roughly 70% of Americans agreed or strongly agreed that “we have a leadership crisis” in this country and “unless we get better leaders, the United States will decline as a nation” (Rosenthal, 2012, p. 3). That same report found that more than 80% of Americans believe that our “nation’s problems can be solved with effective leadership,” despite the complexity of those problems (Rosenthal, 2012, p. 8). Boundary crossing scholars argue that leaders can learn necessary skills to deal with these complex problems, such as identification of new insights, coordination and communication across disciplines, reflection and learning from others, and transformation and decision making to implement changes in processes (Akkerman & Bakker, 2011).

Faculty and staff in higher education acknowledge the importance of boundary crossing leadership education. To this end, many higher education institutions have found success by developing offices or standards that define leadership for the entire university, and act as guidelines and manage widespread leadership programming and curricula across campus. Others highlight the value of pluralistic leadership philosophies dependent upon program and student goals. In this roundtable, we will discuss a campus-wide collaboration across pluralistic leadership education programs that highlights the value of curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular experiences.

In the leadership classroom, educators often push students beyond the simplicity of the notion that *ineffective leaders are to blame for our problems and effective leaders can save us all*. Indeed, Peter Block (2008) suggests that we must leave the notion of leadership behind in favor of citizenship if we want to imagine successful alternative futures. This leads to a discussion of various frames surrounding the contexts, processes, missions, and values associated with defining leadership and measuring as well as developing leadership competencies. The Leadership Education Collaborative at Virginia Tech is committed to preserving a variety of leadership definitions and frameworks and equipping students with the tools to develop broad, flexible, and rich skillsets to work across boundaries to solve complex problems.

**Background**
The Leadership Education Collaborative seeks to help learners develop their own leadership competence through a co-authored curriculum. Ultimately, instead of giving students several pathways for leadership development, there is a plan to survey the entire university landscape, identify the outcomes provided by each curricular, co-curricular, or extra-curricular program and experience, and provide a map on which a student can plot his or her own path. The model affords for this in three equally important ways. First *equipping* students with pertinent knowledge and technical, human, and conceptual skills will be discussed. Next *empowering* students to use their own gifts will be addressed. Finally, the manners by which students are encouraged to *engage* will be covered.

Ultimately, the work of the Leadership Education Collaborative draws on a broad spectrum of historical and contemporary leadership theories. While the totality of trait, skill, style, contingent, and new periods of leadership studies surround the program to *Equip, Empower,* and *Engage* college students for life long leadership and citizenship, primary lenses for the program are drawn from Seemiller and Murray’s (2013) leadership learning outcomes, Strengths-based approaches (i.e. Gallup, 2015), and BreakAway’s (2012) Active Citizenship Continuum. Leadership Identity Development theory (Osteen et al., 2005) provides the theoretical framework for these conceptual lenses and serves as a common language for students as they make choices about their own journey of leadership development.

**Equip** – After examining the outcomes of 475 academic programs and 72 academic settings regarding student leadership development, Seemiller and Murray (2013) identified eight major competency areas: Learning and Reasoning, Self-Awareness and Development, Interpersonal Interaction, Group Dynamics, Civic Responsibility, Communication, Strategic Planning, Personal Behavior; each with a number of related competencies. By using these areas and their subordinate competencies to better understand each program/experience across the university, our students can construct, in collaboration with a peer advisor and a university administrator, a leadership curriculum that is not only complete, but connects to his or her interests, career path, goals, etc. Additionally, the Leadership Identity Development model (Osteen et al., 2005) will guide our peer advisors and university administrators as they mentor each student through the available leadership programs and experiences on campus.

**Empower** – Utilizing positive psychology concepts, instruments are useful for developing a common language and point of departure for a student’s co-authored leadership curriculum. The Leadership Education Collaborative employs the StrengthsFinder (Asplund et al., 2007) assessment by Gallup to help a student identify their talents and discover how to make the most of them. Virginia Tech has a partnership with Gallup and the assessment is offered to all faculty and staff at the institution.

**Engage** – Finally, a student’s ability to employ his or her talents in a meaningful and effective way with regards to community engagement and decision making will be discussed. BreakAway’s (2012) Active Citizenship Continuum describes progressively more engaged citizenship roles within organizations and communities, from member to volunteer to conscious and finally, active citizens.
Means for Discussion and Interaction

This discussion will highlight the introduction and mission of the program, briefly discuss the conceptual and theoretical framework, and spend the bulk of the time engaging the group regarding possibilities and limitations of the program highlighted by a case study of one student interfacing with four different programs/experiences at Virginia Tech. Our example student is a general engineering major (curricular) participating in a living learning community for leadership and social change (co-curricular). S/he has also expressed interest to enroll in the Business Leadership Minor (curricular) and participate in student government (extra-curricular). Each of these experiences will be discussed, analyzed, and evaluated according to the Equip, Empower, and Engage model to demonstrate how efficiently an individual leadership co-curriculum can be created and implemented by a student and supported by peer advisors and university administrators.

Recommended next steps and actions

Foreseeable implications of discussion include: a) implementation and evaluation of a medium-scale pilot program encompassing several academic, student affairs, and off campus partners; b) implementation of a campus-wide program; and c) consistent and effective assessment strategies for the Collaborative.

References


Developing Critically Conscious Leadership Educators

Kerry L. Priest
Kansas State University

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University of Oregon

Abstract

This roundtable invites conversation in exploring the intersection of critical theory and leadership education, specifically the role and requirements of critically conscious leadership educators. We will consider how our classrooms, programs, and teams promote critical learning tasks, and identify opportunities for professional development and future research in the area of critical leadership education.

Introduction

Consistent with our changing times, ALE members have increasingly called into question current paradigms of teaching and learning leadership. Indeed, the question “Leadership for what?” is only a starting point for examining the work of leadership in shaping our world, presumably for the common good. Have we - as educators, scholars, and practitioners - examined our own identities, subjectivities, and assumptions within dominant social, political, economic and cultural systems and structures? To do so requires new, critical lenses. We invite participants to reflect on their own practice as critically conscious educators and generate ideas for integrating critical practice into our curriculum and pedagogy.

Background

Theory-based practice is a hallmark of leadership education. The inclusion and integration of leadership theories in a program or course’s conceptual framework is not only a best practice, but often an indication of quality and rigor (ILA, n.d.). Munin and Dugan (2011) suggest that “how a leadership program is designed and the nature of its content both carry significant weight in shaping students’ perceptions of leadership” (p. 157). Contemporary leadership programs that emphasize relational, ethical, and socially responsible approaches to leadership for social change (HERI, 1996) are well served to examine the role of critical social theory in shaping not only their content, but approach to leadership education. Critical social theory “attempts to understand and explain the causes of structural domination and inequality in order to facilitate human emancipation and equity” (Levison et al., 2011). Brookfield (2005) suggests that critical theory applied to education “extends democratic values and processes, to create a world in which a commitment to the common good is the foundation of well-being and development” (p. 32). Dugan et al. (2014) suggest that social perspective taking is a necessary element of effective leadership development, while Satterwhite, Sheridan, and McIntyre Miller (In press) suggest that nurturing an ability to connect with and operate from deep timescales is also required to effectively prepare students for future leadership challenges and contexts. These are several of the outcomes that can be found when applying a critical lens to leadership education.
Smolovic Jones et al. (2016) apply a critical lens to the praxis of leadership development, resulting in a framework that includes “enabling opportunities for individuals to experiment with new leader identities,” “radicalising the democratic process” including “enabling constructive disruption at appropriate points,” and “grappling with targeted, reflexive acts of symbolic violence” as a means to challenge the prevailing symbolic order (p. 8). Collinson and Tourish (2015) make a strong case for a critical approach to leadership education in business schools, which is certainly expandable to other academic and applied contexts. They summarize by saying that, “our approach [to leadership education] can be defined as a dialogic one, in which multiple perspectives are presented and debated, without an expectation that they will be fully resolved. Our goal is to promote openness rather than closure. To achieve this, those teaching leadership critically should themselves be reflexive about their purpose, values, assumptions, and classroom practices” (p. 591). This call for reflexive practice on the part of leadership educators connects with the core of this proposal. Owen (2015) suggests that the application of critical theory to leadership education is not only an integration of ideas, but an interrogation of our own “bias, beliefs and practices” in order to “develop a critical consciousness” (p. 14).

Means for Discussion/Interaction

Our conversation invites us to focus in on becoming critically conscious leadership educators. Participants will review Table 1. Considerations for critically conscious leadership education (Owen, 2015), and share their reactions/response to these provocations. The following questions will serve as a guide:

- How are these critical tasks reflective of your own program/organizational/university mission?
- How am I/are we demonstrating these tasks of critical learning in our courses and/or the minor as a whole?
- Where do I feel most challenged? In what areas can we collectively grow?
- And, what kind of professional learning and development is required of us to create the conditions of critical learning and leadership development for our students?
- Do we agree or disagree with this list? Are there critical “tasks” that seem to be missing based on our own understanding of critical education/critical learning?

Table 1.
Questions to Develop Critically Conscious Leadership Educators (Owen, 2015)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Learning Tasks of Critical Theory</th>
<th>Questions to Develop Critically Conscious Leadership Educators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Challenging ideology</td>
<td>How/where are leadership educators learning forms of reasoning and action that challenge social, cultural, and political ideologies? How are we modeling these processes for students?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contesting hegemony</td>
<td>How are leadership educators learning about hegemony (according to Brookfield [2005])—“the process whereby people learn to embrace</td>
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<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Question</td>
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<td>---------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unmasking power</td>
<td>How are leadership educators learning to examine issues of power in their lives and communities? Where are leadership educators spending their privilege (Gorski, 2012) to create more equitable conditions for students and communities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overcoming alienation</td>
<td>How are leadership educators developing connectedness to others (as individuals, groups, and communities) and using these networks to draw on the power of the collective? How are we modeling these practices for students?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning liberation</td>
<td>To what extent do leadership educators challenge notions of groupthink or the dominance of the collective? Where do leadership learners experience individualized learning and support so that they can foster “rebellious subjectivity”? (Brookfield, 2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reclaiming reason</td>
<td>To what extent do leadership educators inculcate the values of civil society in students (according to Brookfield [2005] “the relationships, associations, and institutions not directly under state control within which people form relationships and develop identities” [p. 31])?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning democracy</td>
<td>What are the links between leadership education and democratic values, practices, and processes? How are students learning to practice democracy while embracing its many contradictions and tensions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching criticality</td>
<td>What does it mean to teach leadership from a critical perspective? How might leadership educators embrace deliberative dialogue and the collective creation of knowledge? What is the role of resistance in leadership education and development?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Foreseeable Implications of Discussion**

The conference theme, ‘Prospecting for leadership,’ conveys an active, engaged and ongoing search for newness. New truths, new ideas, and perhaps most critically new questions. Applying critical methodology to leadership theory and education yields many critical questions that leadership educators must now wrestle with as the answers are not immediately apparent.

Following a review of recent leadership literature, Mumford & Fried (2014) offer a strong critique of positivist ideology in leadership theory. They suggest that “scholars should move away from the increasingly popular prescriptive perspective and focus their research and teaching on the reality of leadership, including the tradeoffs, ethical dilemmas, messiness, and
ambiguity that are part of real organizational life” (p. 622). If good leadership education is not about teaching a prescriptive way to be a leader, then what should it in fact be about? In order to answer these questions, the prompts contained in the above table create space for reflection and shared meaning making.

Recommended Actions

The implications of this discussion space have many possible outcomes and pathways. We envision the potential for shared, collaborative writing agendas, future conference proposals. Ideas generated may inform on-going professional development discussions (e.g., ALE Candid Conversation) and/or training (e.g., ILA Leadership Education Academy).

References


Mining Leadership for Critical Thinkers

Barry L. Boyd & Jennifer Strong

Texas A&M University

Abstract

Employers expect colleges and universities to prepare work-ready graduates. However, colleges and universities do not appear to have a firm grasp on developing critical thinking skills in their undergraduate students. Participants at this roundtable will discuss the status of the teaching of critical thinking, strategies for teaching and assessing critical thinking. Outcomes include a list of teaching and assessment strategies that can be shared with conference participants as well as potential new grant and research collaborations.

Introduction

Participants will discuss the status of critical thinking in the field of leadership education and how the intentional teaching of critical thinking can be increased.

Participants will also discuss strategies that they use in the classroom for teaching and assessing critical thinking skills.

Background

Employers expect colleges and universities to prepare work-ready graduates. Key among the skills sought by employers is the ability to think critically (Burnett, 2003; McMurtrey, Downy, Zeltmann, & Friedman, 2008). More than three-fourths of employers want colleges to place more emphasis on key learning outcomes like critical thinking and complex problem-solving (AACU, 2015). This emphasis on critical thinking by employers is seen as a way to increase the competitiveness of the United States in a global market.

However, colleges and universities do not appear to have a firm grasp on developing critical thinking skills in their undergraduate students. Casner-Lotto, Barrington, and Wright (2006) note that less than 28% of employers rated college graduates’ critical thinking abilities as excellent. In their 2015 report, the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AACU) found only 26% of employers believe students to be prepared for the workforce in the area of critical thinking and analysis.

While many faculty claim to be developing critical thinking skills in their students, Stedman and Adams (2012) found faculty in the food, agriculture, and natural resources fields have little knowledge on the intricacies of critical thinking. To add to the problem, Tsui noted many faculty lack instructional training to help students gain critical thinking skills (2007). The gap between perception of ability and actual results is too great to ignore. A recent study concluded instructors who are well-trained in educational methodology can positively influence students’ critical thinking disposition, even within the time limits of a college semester (Burbach, Matkin, Quinn & Searle, 2012).
Means for Discussion

The following questions will provide the impetus for discussion:

Macro
- Is critical thinking a priority at your institution?
- How is critical thinking taught/implemented at your institution?
- How is critical thinking assessed at your institution?
- How can leadership educators lead initiatives to improve critical thinking?

Micro
- What training or professional development have you had on how to teach critical thinking?
- What teaching strategies have you used to engage students in critical thinking?
- How do you assess critical thinking in the classroom?

Implications of Discussion

Critical thinking has become an expectation in higher education accreditation. The Commission on Institutions of Higher Education (CIHE) standards state that students completing an undergraduate program demonstrate competence in “…critical analysis and logical reasoning” (CIHE, 2016, p. 9). Thus, it is important that faculty and administrators have a focus on graduating critical thinkers. Participants in this roundtable will gain teaching strategies and assessment measures for critical thinking. It is also expected that new research or grant partnerships on this topic may be formed.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the teaching and assessment of critical thinking skills be integrated into the National Leadership Education Research Agenda (NLERA).

References


Prospecting for Leadership Hardiness at High Altitude:
An Experiential Mountaineering Course

Adrian B. Popa PhD, MPA
Gonzaga University

Introduction

Prospecting and innovation during the gold rush and contemporary times were accompanied by a constant cognitive process of decision making whereby prospectors are presented with opportunities to choose the future or the past. Maddi (2004) describes choosing the future as breaking trail towards new and unknown territories whereas choosing to repeat the past involves harboring and holding on to what is most familiar to us. He goes on further to explain that we choose the past because it lessens the ontological anxiety found in new experiences and future oriented decisions. Although safer and more predictable, perpetually choosing the past contributes to a sinister cycle that may lead to boredom, feelings of missed opportunities (Maddi, 2004) for not ‘striking while the iron is hot,’ and potentially even long term sense of displeasure from a sense of meaninglessness (Kierkegaard, 1954). Existential theorists may vary in describing pathways to purpose and meaning but their writings converge to spotlight that it is the capacity to choose and decide that embodies human living and sense of meaning (Frankl, 1963; Kierkegaard, 1954; Maddi, 2004). Frankl goes on further to explain that “between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom”. This roundtable discussion will facilitate dialog about creative experiential methods that may contribute to leadership identity, purpose and resilience during adversity.

Background

According to Maddi (2006), overcoming adversity and moving through stress is not easy. It requires transformational coping, giving and getting social support, and the daily practices of self-care. Using the more common and less effective means of coping like withdrawing, avoiding, and denying are easier and thus, do not require the same amount of courage and motivation that is needed to manage stress successfully. Courage and motivation is a fundamental aspect of hardiness and successful coping that stems from existentialism (Maddi, 2004, 2006).

The construct of hardiness is deeply rooted in existential psychology and philosophy, which emphasizes the ongoing search for meaning in life and the courage that is needed to pursue it (Kobasa, 1979; Maddi, 2002; Maddi, 2004). From this perspective, individuals, whether they know it or not, are constantly in the decision making process. They are either choosing the future, which is full of uncertainty, or the past, which is familiar and predictable. Existentialists believe that choosing the future facilitates personal growth and development which is necessary to fulfill ones desire to find meaning in life. Conversely, choosing the past is viewed as being useless and empty. Ideally, one would want to continuously choose the future. However, choosing the future can be difficult. As mentioned before, the future path is full of uncertainty which is anxiety provoking. In order to overcome the anxiety and continually choose the future,
individuals must cultivate and apply ‘existential courage’. With that in mind, Maddi (2004) has claimed that those individuals who are high in commitment, control, and challenge are more likely to choose the future, rather than the past. Therefore, hardiness can also be viewed as an operationalization of ‘existential courage’ (Maddi, 2004).

The 3Cs of Hardiness

Commitment, control, and challenge, also known as the 3Cs of hardiness, work interdependently to provide the courage and the motivation that is needed to turn stressful circumstances from potential disasters into opportunities for growth (Kobasa, 1979; Maddi & Kobasa, 1984; Maddi, 2002; Maddi, 2005). Individuals high in commitment are driven by a deep desire to find meaning and purpose in life. They are more likely than their counterparts to be engaged in a variety of life domains (e.g. family, work, and play). They find isolation meaningless and, consequently, they tend to get involved in whatever life throws at them. For those who have a strong sense of control, they believe that they have the power to influence the outcomes of life events and circumstances. Instead of feeling helpless when things get hard, their healthy sense of control empowers them and makes overcoming stressful circumstances seem possible. Individuals with a high sense of challenge view stressful situations as a normal part of life. For these folks, change is seen as an opportunity to grow rather than a threat and something to fear. As a result, they embrace change and express optimism in the face of adversity.

Means for Discussion/Interaction

The Leadership and Hardiness course introduces students to existential psychology and psychological hardiness in the context of organizational leadership in four modular stages. Students first begin to explore leadership purpose by understanding existentialism and how it represents the foundation of psychological hardiness. Secondly, students learn about transformational coping strategies that equip them with psychological hardiness in times of adversity. Next, students explore and operationalize principles of hardiness embedded in organizational culture, climate, structure, operations, and leadership. Lastly, students integrate and apply principles of hardiness on a mountaineering expedition to challenge the application of the hardiness framework in a highly complex and challenging climate. Participants in this roundtable discussion will explore current leadership educational curriculum that contribute to competencies of resilience. The following questions will be explored:

1. Where do you begin with leadership identity formation
2. How does your curriculum clarify leadership priorities and commitments
3. How do you create a pathway that challenges and coaches growth of transformational and adaptive coping
4. How do you create experiential opportunities for students to practice and refine leadership efficacy

Foreseeable Implications of Discussion

The facilitator of this discussion foresees two outcomes. First, the identification of how resiliency theory or asset-based frameworks are embedded in curriculum or specific courses. Second is an opportunity to explore how mechanisms or principles of resilience are embedded in
leadership curriculum.

**Recommended next steps/action**

Participants will gain insights about the relevance of leadership hardiness principles that contribute to personal and organizational resilience through experiential opportunities. These insights can be used by participants to mine their own leadership curriculum for contributive concepts that lead to existential clarity about leadership identity, purpose, and formation.

**References**


The Politics and Practices of Curriculum Approval in Higher Education: What Leaders in Higher Education Need to Know

Janet L. Applin
Western Kentucky University

Abstract

“Is it this difficult everywhere?” is the question that will guide this roundtable discussion. Practices from master’s level institutions across the U.S. were reviewed to evaluate institutional procedures governing curriculum approval. Similarities, differences, and the politics involved will be discussed. The study investigated the steps involved in the process, the types of committees required, the timelines required, and the stakeholders involved. Results indicate that the answer is, YES, it IS this difficult everywhere. The study raised questions related to faculty workloads and curriculum development, the length of the process, and the politics involved in garnering curriculum approval.

Introduction

Literature on curriculum approval in higher education is virtually nonexistent. The literature that is available examines curriculum development frameworks and strategies for curriculum development but not the approval process itself (Lattuca & Stark, 2011; Mestenhauser & Ellingboe, 1998). But for a very few opinion and editorial pieces, one is hard pressed to find any literature examining best practices for curriculum approval in higher education (Kilbourne, 2012; Small, 2015). The process in an agonizingly slow one and, as Kilbourne (2012) noted, “it is unfortunate that many colleges, which are charged with preparing the next generation of entrepreneurs and innovators, embrace a culture of time-consuming, unhurried progress when it comes to curriculum, personnel, and governance. Nowhere is this more evident than in their committee structures.” As leaders and leadership educators, we must support practices that are evidenced based as opposed to tradition and it is difficult to find evidence for the current processes in place at many institutions of higher education.

Background

There is a need for curriculum to be ever evolving and improving to meet the demands of new technology, new business models, and new mandates from a discipline’s governing and accrediting bodies, and new research in various fields. Leaders in all disciplines need to be willing to change with trends and new research. In higher education, navigating the waters of curriculum development and approval is often a challenging and slow process. Many academics avoid curriculum committees at all cost and choose to let others dive in to those waters. One may be surprised at the number of senior level faculty members in academia who have no knowledge of how new programs or new courses are approved. Often, once they are informed, they choose to leave their program as is, sometimes obsolete and out of date, rather than going through the arduous process. The question that led the study to be discussed in this round table discussion was, “Is it this difficult everywhere?” To answer that question, the author evaluated practices from over 25 comprehensive regional master’s level institutions across the U.S., that
were benchmark institutions of her own institution, to evaluate institutional procedures for governing curriculum approval. The study investigated the steps involved in the process, the types of committees required, the timelines required and the stakeholders involved. Questions were raised related to faculty workloads and curriculum development, the length of the process, and finally, the politics involved in garnering curriculum approval.

**Means for Discussion/Interaction**

The roundtable participants will be introduced to the topic with a quote from Alex Small (2015), “Even now, when I’ve mastered some of the dark arts of curricular kung-fu, it still annoys me to no end that even the simplest things require so many reports and meetings?” From there, a brief overview of the current study’s results will be presented and then four questions will guide the remainder of the discussion: 1) Is there an historical and empirical basis for the current curriculum development process in higher education? 2) How long does it take to get a new program or new course approved at your institution? 3) What role do politics play in curriculum development and approval? 4) Might there be a better way?

To aid the discussion, the facilitator will share personal experiences with curriculum approval and political factors involved. In addition, data from the study will be available to spark additional discussion on comparing and contrasting procedures at different institutions. At the conclusion of the roundtable, handouts will be provided suggesting future research directions for curriculum approval in higher education.

**Foreseeable Implications of the Discussion**

The facilitator of this discussion foresees two outcomes. First, is to develop greater awareness of the curriculum development process in higher education that may lead to questioning of the process. Second, is to spark an interest in creating a literature base in best practices for curriculum approval processes in higher education.

**Recommended Next Steps/Actions**

Participants will gain insights into similarities and differences in institutions of higher education processes for curriculum approval as well as the political aspects of the process. These insights may be used as the participants return to their own institutions and seek to evaluate procedures required for curriculum development. In addition, intentional efforts will be made to develop possible collaborative research agendas to be pursued in this area.

**References**


Teen Excellence in Leadership Institute (TELI): Successful Integration of Youth Development Models for Engaged Community Leadership

Megan M. Seibel, Benjamin Grove, Sarah Bush, Jeremy Johnson, & Tonya Price
Virginia Tech

Abstract

A planning team was coordinated to envision, plan, and implement a new teen leadership program for [State]; the Teen Excellence in Leadership Institute (TELI) was the result. Outstanding teens, nominated by 4-H agents or FFA advisors/agriculture teachers, were selected through a competitive process. The institute design encompasses in-person events and interactive virtual meetings. Institute goals are to: 1) understand self and develop a personalized action plan for engaged leadership, 2) network with teens interested in learning about issues facing youth and communities, 3) design a team project to address community leadership needs, 4) learn about advocacy and outreach. Topics include: Strengths-Based Leadership, problem solving style, group facilitation skills, youth-adult partnerships, team building, project collaboration, peer feedback and evaluation, leadership principles, and critical reflection.

Introduction

Adolescents are barred by constraints and threats that serve as obstacles for sustaining personal and self-regulatory growth (Larson, 2006). Recently, positive youth development efforts and the demand for soft skill development of new professionals entering the workforce has called for a reform in the way we think about youth leadership development programs (Lerner, 2005; Crawford, Lang, Fink, & Dalton, 2011). Positive youth development requires the growth of the Five Cs: competence, confidence, character, connection, and caring (Lerner, 2005). In addition, leadership, communication, problem solving, and decision making skill development is crucial to foster career readiness (Rutherford, Stedman, Felton, Wingenbach, & Harlen, 2004). Worker (2014) acknowledged leadership development of youth as a proven strategy to create experiences that foster essential elements of youth development, including: a sense of belonging, mastery, generosity, and independence. With this in mind, youth leadership programs that incorporate soft skill advancement can lead to positive youth development.

Various youth organizational programs, such as 4-H and FFA, have addressed these issues, but are generally context specific and geared towards youth with similar interest and access to specific programs (Radhakrishna & Sinasky, 2005). Further, program leadership in [State] identified the need to better integrate motivated youth from both 4-H and FFA organizations under the pretense of collective capacity building. Therefore, we have created a leadership development opportunity for teens with this challenge and purpose as the foundation. By engaging and developing outstanding teens, we are actively working to identify and address global issues that face communities today. TELI combines two face-to-face weekend retreats with virtual sessions for team project development and updates. Supplemental content on peer feedback interactions and political process engagement are integrated in recorded and archived virtual learning. In addition, youth-adult partnerships are incorporated based on previous research that demonstrates the effectiveness of these partnerships in positive leadership growth.
for teens (Anderson & Sandmann, 2009). Overall, the experiences fuse a well-rounded lineup of topics that lead youth towards a more holistic consideration of their personal leadership skills and philosophies.

**Background**

The TELI program seeks to accomplish the following goals: 1) to understand self and develop a personalized action plan for engaged leadership, 2) to network with other teens interested in learning about the issues facing youth and communities, 3) to design a team project to address community leadership needs in [State], 4) to learn more about advocacy and outreach that will improve the lives of others. Several frameworks and models reflect the overarching goals of the program and aided in the creation of the TELI Model (Figure 1). Ricketts and Rudd (2002) conducted a meta-analysis of youth leadership development and established a conceptual model that included five dimensions: leadership knowledge and information; leadership attitude, will, and desire; decision making, reasoning, and critical thinking; oral and written communication skills; and intra and interpersonal relations. With this model in mind, Chickering’s (1993) Theory of Identity Development, which is commonly utilized within FFA, provided guidance for the development of the seven vectors: developing competence, managing emotions, moving through autonomy toward interdependence, developing mature interpersonal relationships, establishing identity, developing purpose, and developing integrity. In addition, this program utilizes the 4-H Citizenship Framework by incorporating the key focus areas of civic engagement, service, civic education, and personal development (4-H National Headquarters, 2011). The incorporation of these models and frameworks provided a solid foundation for youth leadership development.

![Figure 1. Graphic Element of TELI Theoretical Model. Copyright 2015 by [College] Communications Department.](image-url)
Means for Discussion/Interaction

An opportunity exists, via roundtable discussion format, to engage dialog with conference attendees around youth leadership program purpose, implications, and evaluation. Presenters will share the methods around program planning; from initial discussion to inception, from selection of participants to expectation of successive program cycles. With an expectation that there are opportunities for other states to replicate similar youth leadership programming, we anticipate opening the discussion for input and inquiry.

Fifteen of the 25 minutes will be devoted to presenting TELI to the group, with discussion around development of program objectives, conceptual framework, budget and design, participant selection criteria, evaluation, and plans for sustainability.

The remaining 10 minutes will be devoted to engagement with roundtable attendees. Anticipated questions for discussion will attempt to be generative and related to the four TELI program participant objectives as listed in the background section.

Questions are:

1) What types of activities and/or assessments are you aware of that contribute to individual action toward leadership?
2) What opportunities have you been involved with that allow teens to network around community issues?
3) What is the importance of building a culture of advocacy and outreach at an early age?
4) Would you be interested in having similar programming in your state that is focused on youth leadership development that is organizationally collaborative and community focused? Why or why not?

Foreseeable Implications of Discussion

The TELI program was modeled, in part, after the adult leadership program for agriculture in [State]. Lessons learned from delivering related content to professionals in the industry helped shape the program for 4-H and FFA members. Program administration in [State] has expressed a desire to see more collaboration between these youth-serving organizations. The success of the initial TELI program has been encouraging. The TELI approach has been very encouraging in terms of empirical and anecdotal feedback gathered to date. In addition to participant outcomes, the program has attracted donor investment from 4-H, FFA, and private donors.

As a result of engaging in discussion with other leadership educators and practitioners, much can be learned around this topic. Youth leadership development is essential to the future of our communities, and truly fits the conference theme of “Prospecting for Leadership.” We anticipate generating interest for the establishment of similar leadership programs in other states. These programs would have direct implications for: working with unique, but similar organizations to create a novel approach to youth leadership capacity building; TELI as a pipeline for future leaders; and sustainability for new youth leadership programs.
Recommended next steps/Actions

To date, lessons learned stem from observation, data collection, and evaluative feedback obtained during the execution and completion of one full program cycle. Results were positive and justified continuation into a second program cycle the following year, which is currently in session. Our method for tracking measureable impacts and collecting both formative and summative feedback changed in the second program cycle based on what was found with the first group. This change emphasized continued and reflective improvement in program development and implementation.

Twenty-three youth were accepted for full participation in the 2014-2015 TELI inaugural sequence. The institute convened in November 2014. One virtual meeting was executed in January 2015 and the final weekend, including a project presentation and report to an invited panel of experts, took place in March 2015. Students worked in five diverse project teams and addressed issues such as low rates of youth involved in community organizations, education (including CTE), bullying, lack of community pride, and a need for increased club/chapter involvement. Certificates of completion were awarded to each youth participant.

Sixteen youth were accepted into the second cohort of TELI attendees for participation throughout academic year 2015-2016. This number allowed programming to be focused on both individual and group learning with outstanding teens. We held our first face-to-face weekend in November 2015, where we discussed implications of individual leadership assessments (Strengths and KAI) in group dynamics as we formed project teams. Two virtual meetings have been held, in January and February 2016, and the final in-person weekend will be in April 2016 when programs plans will be presented and participants will be recognized as program completers. Engaged leadership is necessary for impact on project topics this cycle, which focus on a range of community issues. These include: participation rates in school activities, servant leadership with community elders, addressing food waste, and environmental protection of natural waterways.

The theoretical framework of TELI contributes to opportunities for higher level leadership development and engagement of youth, which is evidenced by the range of topics chosen by participants over two years. Plans are in place for survey data collection along the common measures at the closing session of this class in April, but reflective discussion around concepts learned will also take place. Additionally, the program planning team continues to debrief regularly about formative and summative ways to impact program outcomes.

Discussion with conference attendees will allow a fresh perspective to be shared and questions asked that will stimulate interest in program enhancement and replication, as we share ideas forward via publication and developed materials.

References


Let’s Use the “F” Word: 
Promoting an Exploration of Followership in Leadership Education

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Abstract

Is it truly important for leadership educators, researchers, and practitioners to “reverse the lens” (Sharmir, 2007) to begin to strategically focus on the follower? This roundtable discussion seeks to collaboratively and constructively reexamine the follower in the leadership process through critically analyzing semantics, discover implications of the romanticism of leadership (and the passivity of followership), understand and value the vast roles of followers, and promote innovative means to address the ethical resistance of followership. This dialogue will provide tangible insights for leadership educators and researchers to best answer the question, “How can we be effective leaders if we don’t understand the follower?”

Introduction

Define the problem: Is it important for leadership educators to “reverse the lens” (Sharmir, 2007) to begin to strategically focus on the follower? Many leadership educators would agree that the role of the follower is much more complex and multifaceted than much leadership research suggests (Carsten, Uhl-Bien, West, Patera, & McGregor, 2010). Despite the fact that there is no leadership without followers, many times these key players are left out of the ‘leadership research equation’ (Uhl-Bien, Riggio, Lowe, & Carsten, 2014).

Raffo (2013) concluded that Harris, Bruce, & Jones’ (2011) examination of leading academic and popular texts within leadership education expanded on the incredibly limited attention paid to followership within leadership education as a discipline. If followership should be integrated more effectively into today’s leadership education, why is there a lack of scholarly research? Because individuals take on more follower roles than leaders, followership should become more prevalent not only in our research (Chaleff, 2009), but also further integrated into our teaching (Raffo, 2013).

Learner/participant objectives: Upon active participation in this roundtable, participants will have successfully accomplished the following objectives:
1. Identify, evaluate, acknowledge personal responsibility in regards to the lack of followership among leadership education research
2. Discuss and assess the use of the term ‘follower’
3. Critically analyze and find the teachable implications of the romanticism of leadership (and passivity of followership)
4. Explore ways to enhance understanding and value of the vast roles of followers
5. Promote innovative means to address resistance in leadership education
6. Establish partnerships to better explore followership in leadership research and education

Background
Not until the past decade have researchers focused on followership within leadership research and education (Uhl-Bien, et al., 2014). Several types of followership approaches have ensued they provide us for a framework for integrating such perspectives in our classrooms. Follower-centric approaches stemmed as a response to leader-centric views to leadership (Uhl-Bien, et al., 2014). These approaches to leadership focused on the follower’s perspectives and perceptions of leadership (Meindl, 1995). Although many follower-centric approaches take the follower into account, the leader still becomes the primary focus (Uhl-Bien & Pillai, 2007); followership is still, therefore, constructed by the leader (Carsten, et al., 2010).

Many leadership theories, such as shared leadership (Pearce & Conger, 2003) and self-management (or self-leadership), have placed privilege on the role of followers (Carsten, et al., 2010). Considering these theories, self-leadership views the role of leadership as a developer of the follower, while shared leadership promotes enhanced team productivity and less need for external leadership (Carson, Tesluk, & Marrone, 2007). Although such theories bring followership into the equation, the ultimate focus still remains on the behavior of the leader, not the follower (Carsten, et al., 2010).

The more recent development of followership, on the other hand, addresses the “behaviors of individuals acting in relations to a leader(s)” (Carsten, et al., 2010, p. 545). Followership focuses on how followers themselves perceive their own behaviors and roles in their relationship with the leader (Uhl-Bien & Pillai, 2007). Because leadership has been seen as a dynamic system of leaders and followers interacting together in context (Uhl-Bien & Ospina, 2012), Uhl-Bien and colleagues (2014) defined followership through two lens: as a rank or position, and as a social process. These lens provide two theoretical frameworks for the study of followership within leadership education and research: a role-based approach and a constructionist approach. In a role-based approach, followers are the moderators of leadership influence, while in a constructionist approach, followers help ‘construct’ leaders and the leadership process (Uhl-Bien, et al., 2014).

**Means for Discussion/Interaction**

*Overview of the Session Plan:*

0 – 5 minutes: Introduction of Facilitators (and participants)

5 – 10 minutes: Introduction to Followership within Leadership Education

- Lack of followership literature
- Significance of followership in leadership education
- Types of followership literature (*role-based approach versus constructionist approach*)

10 – 20 minutes: Facilitated Conversation

- Each topic will be followed by discussion questions (*addressing participant objectives*): (1) semantics of ‘follower,’ (2) romanticism of the leader, (3) the role of the follower, and (4) resistance in leadership education
- Additional background information is provided for participants to present further context and insight into presented topics
20 – 25 minutes: Where do we go from here?
 Participants will be encouraged to exchange contact information for ongoing dialogue, initiate an Advisory Group, and/or provide ongoing outreach to enhance conversation on followership among leadership education and research

Discussion Questions:
1. Semantics of Followership
   a. Do we need to reevaluate the term ‘follower’ in leadership education?
   b. “Rost (1993) says that we shouldn’t use the term “followership” because followers engage in the “leadership” process, not the followership process. On the other hand, some say that the term “followership” best describes what followers do and how they differ from leaders... Do followers participate in leadership as Rost advocates or do they engage in followership?” (Raffo, 2013, p. 268).

Background: Many negative connotations have been associated with the word ‘follower’ (Rost, 2008), simply due to the historically role-based, leadership-centric view of leadership research (Hoption, et al., 2012). The term itself romanticizes leadership (Uhl-Bien & Pillai, 2007), creating images of passivity, powerlessness, and individuals who automatically attend to the leader and his/her wishes (Kelley, 2008). Several alternative terms have been suggested, including ‘collaborators,’ ‘participant,’ and ‘member’ (Uhl-Bien, et al., 2014).

2. Romanticism of the Leader, Passivity of the Follower
   a. Has anyone successfully addressed this paradox in the classroom?
   b. How do we instill the active, relational, and dynamic characteristics of the follower in our classroom?
   c. Several alternative terms have been suggested, including ‘collaborators,’ ‘participant,’ and ‘member’ (Uhl-Bien, et al., 2014); what are your thoughts on using these phrases as alternatives to ‘follower?’

Background: Many negative connotations have been associated with the word ‘follower’ (Rost, 2008), simply due to the historically role-based, leadership-centric view of leadership research (Hoption, et al., 2012). The term itself romanticizes leadership (Uhl-Bien & Pillai, 2007), creating images of passivity, powerlessness, and individuals who automatically attend to the leader and his/her wishes (Kelley, 2008). Despite traditional leadership literature demonstrating the follower as a passive recipient, recent research has suggested a more active influence over leaders and their behaviors (Oc & Bashshur, 2013). Especially in the United States, many times the act of following is considered an insult because there is such an aversion to the characteristics often attributed to ‘followers’ within the leadership process (Kellerman, 2008). However, many recent approaches have been taken that address the significance of followership as a key influence to the leaders behaviors and the emergence of leadership (Shamir, 2007). From this perspective, the follower holds significant power (individual and group level) in the social context of the leader (Oc & Bashshur, 2013).

3. The Role of the Follower
a. Are role-based approaches to followership still applicable to leadership education and research, considering today’s organizations shifting towards shared leadership?
b. How can we demonstrate to our students the significance of the continuum of roles (passive and proactive followers) among followers?

Background: Role-based approaches to followership studies the leadership process through the role of the follower in a hierarchical context (Uhl-Bien, et al., 2014). Such an approach allows one to better understand how followers work with leaders in order to either contribute or take away from leadership outcomes (Carsten, et al., 2010). Due to the status differential between followers and leaders, followers take a multitude of roles. While some followers may construct their role in a more traditional, ‘subordinate’ sense, (reduced responsibility-taking, conformity, and reluctance), others may construct a more dynamic and courageous role in their relationship with the leader (or even as co-leader) (Carsten, et al., 2010). Carsten and colleagues (2010) suggest that there is a continuum between passive and proactive followers. Within this continuum, there are also individuals who perceive followership as an active role; however, these individuals will only express their opinion if they are given the opportunity to do so (Carsten, et al., 2010). Their place on the continuum also aligns with their organizational climate, including the amount of authoritarian style and hierarchical environment within their workplace (Carsten, et al., 2010).

4. Resistance
   a. How do we encourage students to critically examine ethics within leader-follower relationships?
   b. How can we initiate conversation among our students of intelligent disobedience (Chaleff, 2015)?

Background: In opposition of the more traditional view of followership as a passive, submissive role, several researchers (Tepper, et al., 2001; Tepper, et al., 2006; Carsten & Uhl-Bien, 2013) question the role, responsibility, and actions of the follower when met with abuse or unethical requests from his/her leader. Such follower behaviors could include passive-aggressive responses (Tepper, et al., 2001) or constructive resistance (Carsten & Uhl-Bien, 2013). Ultimately, research shows that followers with weaker co-production beliefs of leadership will more likely obey a leader’s unethical requests, while followers with stronger co-production beliefs will more likely resist the leader (Carsten & Uhl-Bien, 2013).

Foreseeable Implications of Discussion

Similar to the ALE Conference theme of ‘Prospecting for Leadership,’ the role, term, and outcomes of followership within leadership education has tensions and challenges. Although most leadership educators agree of the significance of followers within the leadership process, many cannot answer the question of how? How do we teach, study, and practice followership within the context of an ever-changing world? This roundtable discussion will not only allow participants to constructively discuss and reflect on the ramifications for our lack of incorporating followership into our research and teaching, but also provide collective, tangible solutions for how to do so most effectively.
Recommended next steps/Action

Ultimately, traditional leadership and followership research has lacked comprehensive coverage (Kupers, 2007). This round table allows for further insights to be drawn, the enhancement of research collaboration, sharing of innovative pedagogy, and the initiation of a conversation key to the success of future leadership education.

“I believe we have an obligation to help our students get past an elitist view of leadership that coincides with a conformist view of followership… As leadership educators, we can help our students re-conceptualize how they view followers and nudge them past the preconceived notion that followers are unimportant and inconsequential to organizational success” (Raffo, 2013, p. 269, 270).

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leadership: An overview, a study, and a research agenda. *Small Group Researcher, 37*(5), 522-539.


Documenting Teaching Effectiveness in the Online Environment: 
Online Teaching Observations in Leadership Education

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Abstract

This proposal for Online Teaching Observations in Leadership Education supports discipline specific growth opportunities for practice and the scholarship of teaching and learning. Teaching observations are classic artifacts used by faculty to document effective teaching, and universities typically provide protocols and instruments for conducting teaching observations. Unfortunately, such protocols and supporting infrastructure are not equally available for online faculty. This gap in instructional resources available to faculty coupled with the increasing prevalence of online leadership education programs and courses presents a growing need for the discipline. This roundtable will provide a space for leadership educators to discuss best practices for documenting teaching effectiveness in the online environment, share related resources, including instruments and processes, and discuss queries pertaining to teaching leadership in the online environment.

Introduction

The concept for this roundtable emerged from an ongoing effort to incorporate best practices for teaching leadership education courses online through an undergraduate program in leadership. Faculty members teaching in the program were charged with piloting innovative technologies, assessing student learning, and determining measures for evaluation teaching effectiveness. The latter call proved surprisingly challenging due to limited institutional resources for documenting teaching effectiveness in the online environment and the dearth of literature on the topic as it relates specifically to the discipline of leadership education. The two facilitators, an assistant professor and the program director, developed a pilot online teaching observation tool and protocol informed by resources available in other disciplines. While similarities in such tools and protocols are expected across disciplines, the facilitators desire feedback from fellow leadership educators to ensure the nuanced teaching roles of leadership educators are reflected in the teaching observation tool and protocol.

In this roundtable, participation will learn:
1. How to utilize existing online teaching observation tools and protocol.
2. How to document teaching effectiveness through teaching observations.

Participants will be asked to provide their feedback on the pilot materials developed by the facilitators and share examples from their institutions, including resources and experiences. The facilitators welcome this opportunity to share their developments while learning from colleagues. Furthermore, the facilitators will use the feedback collected during the roundtable to refine the pilot materials for future applications and elements of discipline specific scholarship of teaching and learning.
Background

Teaching observations serve multiple functions for educators (Chism, 1999). The observations may serve as a formative evaluation of the faculty members’ teaching strategies. This use of teaching observations encourages reflection and self-assessment as a measure of professional development. In addition to utilizing the teaching observation as a data point for self-evaluation, teaching observations may also be utilized by academic units to identify professional development and training needs among the faculty. For example, online teaching observations could affirm the faculty member’s utilization of technology in the course or provide an opportunity for such recommendations. A variety of technologies exist to support faculty teaching in the online environment. Examples include screen capture and video recording software, educational social media tools, and expanded communications technologies that integrate with existing learning management systems (LMS). Additionally, research suggests teaching online influences instructor’s teaching strategies in traditional classroom settings. Therefore, teaching observations across multiple deliveries may provide a more holistic understanding of instructors’ strengths and weaknesses related to teaching (McQuiggan, 2012).

Research on online teaching suggests a differentiation between teaching personas exists among instructors who teach through varied delivery modes. For example, Richardson, Koehler, Besser, Caskurlu, and Mueller (2015) note that instructors may have distinct presentations of themselves in social and instructional elements of the course. Whether intentional or not, these distinctions may have a negative influence on student-instructor interaction as the student attempts to discern acceptable norms of engagement. Baran and Correia (2014) advocate for targeted professional development, such as that identified via online teaching observations, to enhance teaching effectiveness.

Despite initial reluctance to pilot online content delivery, faculty members routinely express confidence and satisfaction with online teaching (Dietrich, 2015). It is important for current online educators to document their successes and refine their practice in order to advance the online presence of our growing discipline. Nicolson and Harper (2014) found that online peer observations promote collegiality across disciplines. Within the discipline of leadership education, such peer observations across institutions could initiate new professional collaborations. At a minimum, cross-institutional online peer observations would support the development of collegial networking promoted by the Association of Leadership Educators while also providing a valuable service to participants.

Means for Discussion/Interaction

Following introductions of the facilitators and participants, the facilitators will provide a brief overview of a recent pilot to document teaching effectiveness in credit-bearing, online, undergraduate leadership education courses and distribute samples of the instrument and teaching observation protocol. The overview will capture lessons learned, references used to inform the pilot development and subsequent revisions, and lingering questions. Roundtable participants will then be invited to share their experience in documenting teaching effectiveness in the online environment and related activities. Participants will also be encouraged to share
resources utilized in teaching observations and other methods of documenting teaching effectiveness in online leadership education.

**Foreseeable Implications of Discussion**

Although online education has expanded significantly in the past decade, the majority of faculty and students still consider the online environment an unknown territory compared to the traditional face-to-face classrooms. Expansion to the online environment is a promising venture with great reward and undeniable risk for faculty unfamiliar with online teaching strategies. Certainly, there are examples of current leadership education faculty who have identified golden opportunities to expand the traditional delivery of content; however, many faculty members lack the requisite skillset, tools, and institutional infrastructure and support to venture into unknown territory. Similarly, those who have accepted the challenge of teaching online may find themselves without appropriate versions of traditional measures for documenting and improving teaching effectiveness. This roundtable will support both experienced and inexperienced-but-interested online leadership educators. Documenting teaching effectiveness in online leadership education through teaching observations is one strategy to demonstrate the potential rewards and benefits to students, faculty, and the discipline through expanded online course delivery.

**Recommended next steps/actions**

Following the conference, the facilitators will compile any resources shared during the roundtable and forward a resource sheet to participants via email. The facilitators will also incorporate feedback received into the instrument and protocols piloted at their institution. Once the pilot materials are refined, the facilitators will expand the online teaching observation initiative as part of a broader scholarship of teaching and learning study involving leadership education at their institution. The findings from this study will be disseminated via leadership education journals and a future Association of Leadership Educators conference.

**References**


