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Leadership Development In Higher Education: Exploring Model Impact Among Students And Alumni

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LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION:
EXPLORING MODEL IMPACT AMONG STUDENTS AND ALUMNI

by

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Submitted to the Graduate Faculty

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Title Leadership Development in Higher Education: Exploring Model Impact
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Michael Bommarito
April 24, 2012

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To Jesus Christ
My Lord and Savior
The Quintessential Servant Leader

To Katherine
My Wife, My Life
and
The Second Best Servant Leader
Next to Christ

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of an institution-wide leadership development model on students at a private Christian university. The university being studied in this research made a significant commitment to the principles of servant-leadership as well as Kouzes and Posner's (2002) Leadership Challenge development model. In 2001 the university adopted the mission of ensuring that every student grows as a leader in his or her own field of study. All courses and programs are required to include servant leadership development opportunities and outcomes. Key to the model selected is the premise that leadership, as a set of observable practices, can be taught and strengthened. As such, it would be expected that if the university is effectively following the leadership development model, students would grow in their practice of leadership behaviors while participating in classes and being exposed to leadership theory and practice. Although the university tracks leadership development between students' first-year students and senior years, there has been no research on the development model's impact past graduation.

This study assessed and compared participants' self-reported practice of five specific leadership behaviors as a means to explore the efficacy of the development model employed by the university. Measures associated with the Leadership Challenge (Kouzes & Posner, 2002) model were used to examine the leadership development of college students and alumni. A cross-section of first-year students, seniors, and alumni participated in the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI). The LPI was created by Kouzes

and Posner (2003) as part of their Leadership Challenge model and ranks participants' self-reported participation in five key leadership practices. Each group's mean scores for each of the five practices was determined and compared between groups for differences.

The data revealed that there was a significant difference in mean scores between groups. Groups with greater knowledge and experience with the leadership development model self-reported a significantly higher level of engagement in all five of the key leadership practices than did groups with less exposure to the model. Not only did the data suggest the effectiveness of the leadership development model, it also revealed a strong impact of servant leadership principles on the participants. All three student groups reported high levels of engagement in practices closely related to the servant leader ideals: enabling others, encouraging the heart, and modeling the way.

Results of this research suggest that the leadership development model employed by the university under study is successfully impacting students in servant leadership principles and practice.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Introduction to the Study

Wherever two or more are gathered, the issue of leadership comes into play. Although the term leadership does not seem to have made an appearance in English dictionaries prior to 1828, the concept has been discussed and debated throughout history (Cornford, 1951; Rost, 2000). Socrates, Aristotle and Plato often debated aspects of leadership in their various discussions of the one versus the many, the self versus the community (Cornford, 1951). Much of the early discourse on leadership focused on the authority of leaders and the need to exercise said authority in worthy and beneficial means. Leadership was often viewed in the context of a God-given ability and right. Concepts of leadership started to appear in academia through schools of administration, which then gave way to schools of management and business. In 1954 Peter Drucker radically changed the tone of management studies by introducing the idea of leadership as a practice, like that of medicine or law. Drucker challenged the notion that leadership was an innate ability by stating it was a skill set that could be developed and taught. By the end of the Twentieth Century, the field of leadership development had exploded with increased interest in areas of team work, facilitation, relational interdependence and serving others (Bennis & Nanus, 1998; Covey, 1992; Dungan, 2006; Kouzes & Posner, 2002; Miller, 1995; Senge, 1990; Spears, 1998; Tichy, 1997).

As the interest in leadership development continued to grow, colleges and universities in the United States began augmenting their curriculum and even creating specific programs devoted to the development of leaders (Dugan, 2006; Greenwald, 2010; Rost, 2000). Even a cursory internet search of leadership development programs reveals tens of thousands of such programs exist: South University's Master of Science in Leadership in their School of Business, the Get Involved program at Butler University, the Center for Leadership at Northwestern University, the Change Leadership Group in Harvard's Graduate School of Education, and the program of Leadership and Human Capital Management at New York University. As Greenwald (2010) points out, the leadership development movement evolved from its humble, if not marginal, beginning. It began with a handful of courses offered as part of business administration classes and transformed into a broad and growing field of study gaining greater respect and interest. Greenwald urges institutions of higher education to recognize the growing desire of students to gain and hone the leadership skills they will need once they leave the hallowed halls of education.

Background to the Study

One private, Christian university located in the Midwest responded to the call of students, as well as educators like Greenleaf and Greenwald, by instituting a campus-wide, cross-disciplinary approach to learning based on a biblical model of servant leadership. In 2001, the university committed to becoming a learning community that provides leadership experiences for every student, preparing them to become leaders in their specific disciplines through acts of service to others. Faculty started integrating concepts of servant-leadership, entrepreneurship and innovation in all of their courses.

The University adopted the Leadership Challenge development model of Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner (2002), using their Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) as a baseline guide and evaluation tool. All students enrolled in classes on campus take the LPI during the first semester of their first-year and again when they completed their program of study.

Theoretical Framework

In 1977, Robert Greenleaf stated that a crisis of leadership existed within the institution of education, as well as within society as a whole. Greenleaf held a strong conviction that education had an incredible opportunity to develop leaders and thus impact the business world simply by the fact that alumni would seek and find employment following their education. Greenleaf believed that society was mediated via the three primary institutions of business, church and higher education, and argued that as any one of these institutions shifted in their philosophy and practice of leadership, the others would naturally follow suit. By teaching and promoting a more civic-minded model of leadership, Greenleaf believed that higher education could help build “a society that is more just and more loving, one that offers greater creative opportunities for its people” (1977, p. 50).

Servant Leadership

Greenleaf was convinced that servant-leadership was the model that would create such a society, if only universities would rise to the challenge of producing such leaders. In his opinion, however, most universities assumed that leadership development naturally flowed out of general education. Noting what he considered a significant lack of leadership among the educated, Greenleaf decried “educators are avoiding the issue when they refuse to give the same care to the development of servant leaders as they do to

doctors, lawyers, ministers, teachers, engineers, and scholars” (Greenleaf, 1977, p.4). Even Greenleaf’s earlier writing of “The Servant Leader” (1970) urged young adults, specifically those in institutions of higher education, to take great responsibility for the social unrest of the time. Without a doubt, incredible social change was afoot, largely moved forward by the strength and leadership of that young generation, and Greenleaf worried that these shifts would be pushed from outside the established systems of society as opposed to within them.

Greenleaf (1977) favored the servant leadership model over other popular models, a review of which will be discussed more fully in Chapter II, because of its focus on the benefit of others, including community as a whole. As Greenleaf explained, the servant leader is first and foremost driven by a desire to serve, and is moved towards leadership only as a necessary means to accomplish that service. As a servant leader, he explains, “one is always searching, listening, expecting that a better wheel for these times is in the making. It may emerge any day” (p. 8). Realizing that leadership is usually a shade of gray between the extremes of servant-first and leader-first, Greenleaf cautions against the drive for power or ego that can often usurp the leader’s goals and desires. That being said, it is important to realize that the difference between a leader-first and servant-first leader is an issue of the heart, and often undistinguishable by act or method.

Although the tenets of servant leadership are not unique to the Christian faith or practice, they do have definite roots in the Christian scriptures and are promoted in Christian doctrine as the model of leadership to be emulated. Not only is Jesus lifted up as the quintessential servant-leader, but biblical teachings urge followers to become servants of all, to lay down their lives for others and to serve as if they were serving

Christ himself (Rinehart, 1998; Russell & Stone, 2002; Spears, 1995, Wilkes, 1998). As such, many Christian institutions, like the university under study, uphold a servant leadership model.

The Leadership Challenge and the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership

In 1983 Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner initiated a research project to discover what individuals did in leading others when they were at their personal best (Kouzes & Posner, 2011). Instead of interviewing recognized gifted leaders, they sought out seemingly ordinary individuals who had encountered “extraordinary leadership experiences” (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, p.32). To guide their research, Kouzes and Posner created a leadership survey of 38 open-ended questions and interviewed more than 550 leaders over the subsequent four years. From their research they identified five common practices in which those viewed as effective leaders regularly engaged: (a) modeling the way; (b) inspiring a shared vision; (c) challenging the process; (d) enabling others to act; and (e) encouraging the heart of others. These behaviors, which Kouzes and Posner call “the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership ,” are the basis of The Leadership Challenge, the leadership model developed by Kouzes and Posner which they describe in their book by the same name, originally published in 1987.

Kouzes and Posner (2002) build on the premise that leadership is a set of identifiable skills and practices which are available to everyone, and not the reserved domain of those in positions of authority. Their initial research, as well as subsequent investigations, identified numerous examples of individuals exhibiting leadership with no recognized position or authority, as well as numerous individuals who held recognized positions of authority yet exhibited little to no leadership. Instead of leadership being a

function of position, they proposed that leadership is the result of specific skills and behaviors being practiced in relationship with others, in other words, the response of individuals who choose to follow those who behave like leaders. Since leadership is a set of behaviors to which others respond, Kouzes and Posner affirm that leadership can be learned, honed, strengthened and practiced by nearly anyone.

Kouzes and Posner used The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership to develop the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) which was also originally published in 1987. The LPI is a survey instrument that rates the frequency with which individuals exhibit specific behaviors of the five identified exemplary leadership practices. Since its development, the LPI has been administered to over 100,000 individuals. Its reliability and validity have consistently been tested and verified since its introduction (Kouzes & Posner, 2002; Posner, 2010). The tool has been shown to be a helpful and effective tool in assessing individuals' leadership capacities (Kouzes & Posner, 2006). The LPI is used to help individuals assess the level at which they exhibit each of the five leadership practices, in an effort to assist them in identifying areas for personal growth and development.

Although Kouzes and Posner espouse that leadership can be learned and enhanced, they are quick to point out that the ability to learn leadership does not imply guaranteed success in any or all positions of leadership. History contains numerous accounts of gifted leaders who failed, some even to the point of execution. In many of these cases, however, failure was not the result of a lack of leadership ability on the part of the leader, but often due to the simple strength of those in opposition. Furthermore, one's strength to lead does not imply one's ability to handle various challenges or

responsibilities. For example, a classroom teacher may not have the specific skills or aptitude necessary to become the CEO of a Fortune 500 company, but that does not make him or her any less of a leader. The issue at hand, according to Kouzes and Posner, is that all individuals can become the strongest leader possible, regardless of their official position or role.

Linking Servant Leadership and the Leadership Challenge

The Leadership Challenge, along with its counterpart, the Leadership Practices Inventory, was designed by Kouzes and Posner (2002) to explain and develop leadership propensity and practice. The Leadership Challenge is a unique leadership model in the field of leadership development and it is also a helpful tool that is applicable in many other models. For the models that espouse leaders are born and not developed, the Leadership Challenge offers helpful advice for those born with leadership tendencies to develop their abilities. Kouzes and Posner (2002) hold that all leaders, whether formal or informal, positional or relational, participative or management oriented, leader-first or servant-first, will become better leaders by engaging in the five practices of exemplary leaders. As such, it is a helpful tool and process for all leaders, including servant leaders.

It was important to link servant leadership and the Leadership Challenge model for this study, largely because the university under study has linked the two in their model of leadership development. Laub (1999) identified that servant leaders exhibit the following characteristics: (a) valuing people, (b) developing people, (c) building community, (d) displaying authenticity, (e) providing leadership and (f) sharing leadership. Kouzes and Posner (2002) identify the following the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership : (a) modeling the way; (b) inspiring a shared vision; (c)

challenging the process; (d) enabling others to act; and (e) encouraging the heart of others. The concepts behind the five practices put forth by Kouzes and Posner are certainly complementary to Laub's characteristics. As one university faculty member shared with the researcher, by merging the two models the university has created a developmental model that lifts up Christian doctrine and gives students the concrete tools they need to follow that doctrine successfully. "In other words, it explains what people should do, and gives them the tools to do it" (personal communication, October 12, 2011).

Statement of the Problem

The university studied in this research has made a significant commitment to the model of servant-leadership and the Leadership Challenge model, seeking to ensure that all students grow as a leader in their own discipline. All courses and programs are required to include servant leadership development opportunities and outcomes. Key to the model selected is the premise that leadership, as a set of observable practices, can be taught and strengthened. As such, it would be expected that if the university is effectively following this leadership development model, students would grow in their practice of leadership behaviors while participating in classes and having exposure to leadership theory and practice.

As cited above, first-year students and graduating seniors are surveyed each year to assess their practice of the five key leadership practices identified by Kouzes and Posner (2002). Although these data allow the university to track the overall development of student commitment and practice while on campus, no research is carried out to determine if alumni continue their practice of leadership behaviors following graduation.

As such, there has been no means of assessing whether changes in core commitments and behaviors are simply a short-term result of the campus influence or reflective of deeper, sustained growth. In other words, to what extent are students still engaging in key leadership behaviors several years after having gone through the leadership development model?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of an institution-wide leadership development model on students at a private Christian university in the Midwest. The study assessed and compared participants' self-reported practice of five specific leadership behaviors as a means to explore the efficacy of the development model employed by the university. Measures associated with the Leadership Challenge (Kouzes & Posner, 2002) model were used to examine the leadership development of college students and alumni.

Rationale and Benefit of the Study

This study is important for three primary reasons. First, the data collected through this study serves as a baseline to determine the levels of practice of leadership behaviors of students at the university and to assess the extent to which the students have adopted the model. This data helps educators and administrators better understand whether students are in fact emerging as stronger leaders and whether alumni are putting into practice the principles of leadership they learned while in school. Although there have been studies comparing students' growth from the beginning to the end of their courses, no studies were found that looked at students several years after completing the course to investigate whether what was learned about leadership had been retained or was still

being practiced. These data provides university administration the opportunity to review the results of this study and determine how best to build upon existing programs. Second, by participating in the survey, students and alumni had the opportunity to reflect on their current involvement in leadership activities and to make changes they may deem desirable. Third, this study compared empirical research on leadership to a specific leadership development model. This research will help answer Dugan's (2006) concerns that "a gap exists between research on college student leadership and the models used in practice" (p. 335). Additionally institutions of higher education may review this study as a means of assessing their own leadership development endeavors or to develop similar, campus-wide approaches on their respective campuses.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

What differences occur in self-reported participation in each of the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership between a cross-section of 2009 and 2010 first-year students and 2010 and 2011 graduating seniors who attended a university with a leadership development emphasis?

What differences occur in self-reported participation in each of the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership between a cross-section of 2010 and 2011 seniors and 2001-2008 alumni who attended a university with a leadership development emphasis?

Hypotheses

Recent literature proposes that leadership is not so much a specific role, position or quality as it is a set of characteristics and behaviors (Covey, 1992; Drucker, 1954; Kouzes and Posner, 2002). The literature also suggests that these behaviors or practices

of leadership are observable and in varying degrees objectifiable or measurable (Kouzes & Posner, 2002; Laub, 1999). The Leadership Challenge model advocates the more one engages in the five key leadership practices, the stronger a leader one becomes and the more one is recognized as a leader by those around him or her. In other words, a leader is *if* a leader does. As such, the notion that leadership can be taught to or at least developed in someone has become a key component of leadership educational models. Therefore, it is reasonable to hypothesize that if a leadership model were implemented strategically and followed efficiently, one would see an increase of the leadership practices espoused by said model in its participants. As such, the following hypotheses are offered:

H1: The level of self-reported participation in each of the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership will be significantly higher for seniors compared to first-year students who attended a university with a leadership development emphasis.

H2: The level of self-reported participation in each of the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership will be significantly higher for alumni compared to seniors who attended a university with a leadership development emphasis.

Definition of Terms

Several specific terms are used in this study. Although many of these terms are developed and discussed further in the next chapter, for clarity the terms and their definitions are provided here:

Challenge the Process. One of the five practices of exemplary leaders identified by Kouzes and Posner (2002), and one of the variables tested by the LPI as part of this research project. Challenging the process is the act of searching for new opportunities, experimenting, taking risks and learning from one's mistakes.

Enable Others to Act. One of the five practices of exemplary leaders identified by Kouzes and Posner (2002) , and one of the variables tested by the LPI as part of this research project. Enabling others to act entails fostering collaborations, understanding the needs and potential of others, and helping others to learn and grow.

Encourage the Heart. One of the five practices of exemplary leaders identified by Kouzes and Posner (2002) , and one of the variables tested by the LPI as part of this research project. Encouraging the heart of others means recognizing and celebrating the values, contributions, and victories of others.

Inspire a Shared Vision. One of the five practices of exemplary leaders identified by Kouzes and Posner (2002) , and one of the variables tested by the LPI as part of this research project. Inspiring a shared vision involves communicating a clear picture of where the group is going and motivating others to participate.

Leader. A leader is an individual who influences others within a given relationship to act or move toward real changes that reflect mutual purposes. The leader need only be in a recognized relationship with others to lead, and does not need to function from a formal position of authority (adapted from Rost, 2000).

Leadership. “Leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect mutual purposes” (Rost, 2000, p.102).

Leadership Practices. The Leadership Challenge is based on the premise that leadership is “an identifiable set of skills and practices” that are available to all people and carried out in relationship between those who choose to lead and those who choose to follow (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, p.20). As such, the term leadership practices is used throughout this paper over terms such as leadership traits, characteristics or styles. For

purposes of variety, the terms leadership practices, leadership behaviors, and leadership skills are used interchangeably.

Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI). Created by Kouzes and Posner (2000), the LPI is a survey instrument that measures an individual's perception of commitment and participation in five critical leadership practices (Kouzes & Posner, 2002).

Model the Way. One of the five practices of exemplary leaders identified by Kouzes and Posner (2002), and one of the variables tested by the LPI as part of this research project. Modeling the way is the act of living out personal beliefs and setting an example for others to follow.

Servant Leadership. Servant Leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and followers in and through which the leader puts the good of those led over the self-interest of the leader or organization to bring about real changes that reflect mutual purposes. The act of service does not manipulate the follower to follow, but rather frees the follower to respond (Kouzes & Posner, 2002; Laub, 1998; Rost, 2000; Spears, 2002).

Assumptions and Limitations

Assumptions

This study is based on the conceptual framework of The Leadership Challenge model (Kouzes & Posner, 2002), and therefore relies upon the following assumptions. It is assumed that leadership practices are observable and therefore measurable. It is assumed that leadership involves the practice of certain behaviors, and that these behaviors are able to be taught and learned. It also assumes that participants will fill out the research surveys accurately and to the best of their abilities.

Limitations

This study will be limited to a cross-section of three specific groups of students. The first two groups include traditional first-year students and final year seniors who were enrolled in classes on campus and who participated in the Leadership Practices Inventory administered by the university during the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 academic years. The third group includes students who attended classes on campus and graduated from the university between 2001 and 2008. The decision to recruit alumni of these years was made to allow time for alumni to find jobs, get settled and begin operating in these new environments. The decision to recruit individuals who had graduated after 2001 was made because the university initiated its leadership emphasis in 2001. The study is further limited to students and alumni of one private, Christian university in the Midwest in order to examine the efficacy of the particular leadership development model more precisely.

Organization of the Remainder of the Study

The following chapter contains a review of the relevant literature. Topics covered include (a) a summary overview of leadership development theories, (b) a critical assessment of historical models, and (c) a discussion on a new theoretical base for leadership. Chapter 3 discusses the study's methodological approach that includes the development of Kouzes and Posner's Leadership Practices Inventory survey and how the survey and performance data were collected. Chapter 4 presents the data results and the statistical analysis used for interpretation. Chapter 5 delivers a discussion of the findings, conclusions and further research opportunities based on the analysis.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This review of literature considers the historical and theoretical context of leadership development as it pertains to this study. It will review and discuss key historical leadership models, investigate weaknesses and gaps in the current theories of leadership development, and offer new insights into the field of study.

Historical Models of Leadership

Although leaders and leadership as a phenomenon have been around since the dawn of time, it has been only over the past century that they have developed into a specific field of study and interest (Campbell, 1977; Northouse, 2007; Rost, 2000). Early leadership theories focused on the qualities that distinguished leaders and followers, while later theories considered situational factors, specific skills and interpersonal relationships. This section will review several of the theories of leadership which have been developed over the past century.

“Great Man” and Trait Theories

The “Great Man” and trait theories suggest that leaders are born not made. Leadership comes from an inherited set of qualities and traits that make some individuals, usually men, better suited for leadership. Northouse (2007) observed that researchers of this approach sought to identify particular personality and behavioral characteristics that were considered indicative of those born to lead. Common traits upheld by this model include intelligence, self-confidence, integrity, determination, and sociability/charisma.

As Glynn and DeJordy (2010) point out, trait theory tended to dominate the opinion and practice of the western world well into the Twentieth Century. Even with the introduction of democracy, those worthy to lead were largely considered to have been born as such. Hackman and Johnson (2004) point out that a shift started to take place in this thinking in the aftermath of the two world wars, as individuals began to process the global devastation caused by purported “great men.” Many researchers began noting inconsistencies in the body of research, and pointing out individuals who exhibited accepted leadership “traits” but were not leaders, and likewise, recognized leaders who lacked these traits but led through other venues. Trait theorists were not able to overcome the reality that there were all sorts of different types of leaders: young and old, tall and short, outgoing and reserved, strong and mild (Glynn & DeJordy, 2010). Despite its weaknesses, trait theory is still considered a viable model today. Northouse (2007) referenced a 1991 study by Kirkpatrick and Locke that delineates the distinctive traits of leaders. Northouse also suggested that the more recent focus on visionary and charismatic leadership is a throwback to the trait theory model due to the emphasis placed on an outgoing, salesmanship personality as being critical to effective leadership.

Behavioral, Style and Contingency Theories

As the “Great Man” theory began to be called into question, behaviorists began focusing on the actions of the leader, convinced that leadership could be learned as any skill or trade. As Kouzes and Posner (2002) stated long after the behavioral theory first took root, “Leadership isn’t the private reserve of a few charismatic men and women. It’s a process ordinary people use when they’re bringing forth the best from themselves and others” (p. 56). This idea gave rise to a wave of new theories. Instead of focusing on the

traits of leaders, the style approach considers the way a leader approaches the tasks of providing structure for subordinates and nurturing them. Based on the particular circumstances a leader might use a number of styles to accomplish the task at hand, such as direction, consultation, participation, negotiation or delegation (Northouse, 2007). According to this theory, no leadership style is preeminent in all situations, and a leader must consider any number of variables at play.

Similar to the style theory, the contingency approach proposes that leaders choose the best course of action based upon situational variables. However, in this case, the situation is determined by the needs of the follower, in that a leader's ability to lead is contingent upon the followers' ability and willingness to follow. The leader must assess the level of follower development and adapt accordingly: directing low developed followers, coaching low to moderately developed followers, supporting moderately developed followers and delegating to highly developed followers (Blanchard, Zigarmi & Zigarmi, 1985). Kouzes and Posner (2002) point out that there is a great need for the leader to keep a healthy tension between the levels of expectation one places on a follower and the follower's ability to meet those expectations. Critics of these theories thought the relationships between the leaders and followers were of greater significance and needed greater attention (Northouse, 2007).

Transactional and Excellence Theories

Transactional theories, also called management theories, are based on supervision, organization and group performance, often using a system of reward and punishment to motivate accomplishment of task (Northouse, 2007). The relationship between leader and follower is similar to a business transaction. The leader wants something from the

follower, often accomplishment of a task; the follower wants something from the leader, such as payment. Organizational success is usually the primary goal of transactional leadership, with personal success closely tied to organizational success; as goes the company, so goes the employee. In his 2000 book, *Leadership for the Twenty-First Century*, Rost noted that this drive for success gave way to the excellence theory, which states that excellent leadership produces excellent organizations. Great leaders have the traits and skills necessary to correct behavior and motivate individuals to do the right thing in the right situation, and these abilities are available to the willing and able student. This model, Rost (2000) explains, has dominated the leadership landscape during the final decades of the Twentieth Century.

Relational, Transformational and Servant Leadership Theories

The relational theories of leadership began to emerge, according to Northouse (2007), as a response to the organizationally driven models that seemed to make leadership a one-man-show and portrayed leaders with superhero-like qualities. Relational theorists, such as Foster (1989), assert that leadership is not the action or even the result of one individual person, the leader, but it is the sum of all interaction between the leaders and followers. Although an individual may be identified as the leader, leadership itself flows from and, in fact is, the relationship shared and expressed among a given group of people. In other words, leadership is not what the leader does, but it is what the leader and followers do together.

The transformational approach also focuses on the relationships formed between the leader and followers. Although these leaders are certainly interested in the performance of group members, they also want each person to fulfill his or her personal

potential. In 1989, William Foster suggested that leadership is not defined merely by the traits, styles, behaviors, or qualities of leaders, but as a holistic blend of values, motives, aspirations and needs. Transformational leaders inspire their followers beyond a simple task and seek to bring change to themselves and the world around them (Burns, 1978).

Comments Regarding Historical Leadership Theory

It was not the intent of the above review to provide an exhaustive discussion on leadership development, but to identify some of the key models that have impacted the evolution of leadership theory. Although the literature on leadership over the past 50 years has grown substantially, at least in respect to the number of articles and books published, what is missing from the discussion sheds an equally important light on the overall understanding of leadership development. In *Leadership for the Twenty-first Century*, Rost (2000) analyzed the development of leadership theory as understood in the last 75 years. What he discovered, however, was a so-called discipline of study that was disorganized, confusing and marked by greater disagreement than collective agreement on the subject.

In his critique of the subject, Rost (2000) raises two overarching complaints against the development of leadership theory at the end of the Twentieth Century. His first criticism is that the discussion of leadership is too narrow, focusing mostly on management and social-psychology and overlooking the leadership stories from many other disciplines. Many theorists begin from the point of view of their own disciplines (anthropology, business, political science or social psychology) and then generalize findings to the field of leadership as a whole (Dugan, 2006; Northouse, 2007). In contrast to this historical trend, Rost (2000) urges theorists to approach leadership from an

interdisciplinary perspective. He calls for a broader thinking of the purpose and scope of leadership, one that goes beyond the notion of simply giving direction to organizational and societal needs.

Rost's (2000) second concern is that while the predominant leadership narratives suggest that consistent progress has been made in the field of leadership – that each phase of development is separate and distinct, with clear beginnings and endings – such progress is simply not present. To support his claim, Rost points out that the theories submitted over the years are not really distinct from one another, but rather “a mish-mash of the structural-functionalist framework of groups and organizations” (2000, p. 23). Northouse (2007) repeats a similar concern, stating that not only do subsequent theories beg, borrow and repackage previous ideas, but they also fail to supplant their predecessors. The older theories do not die out or give way to a more informed articulation, they continue to be offered up and discussed in the literature. As such, a singular, focused theoretical field of study has yet to emerge above the cacophonous litany of regurgitated theory that has become modern leadership development theory (Bennis & Nanus, 1998; Northouse, 2007; Rost, 2000; Tichy, 1997).

Despite the seeming lack of originality in emerging leadership theory, there remains a distinct lack of a clear, concise definition of leadership (Campbell, 1977; Dugan, 2006; Rost, 2000). In his analysis of 587 books, chapters and journals on leadership written since 1910, Rost (2000) noted that over 60% did not even offer up a definition of the term. Not only are definitions missing from most of the literature, but so is any discussion or argument about the need for definitions or the criteria to evaluate the few definitions that have been suggested. Years earlier, Campbell (1977) lamented that a

clear understanding of leadership is necessary if one hopes to make any sense of it from one generation to another. Campbell pointed out the advantage of more effort being put forward in defining, describing, and measuring the phenomenon known as leadership.

From Criticism to Solutions: A Post-Industrial Model

Drawing from his research, Rost (2000) offers this summary of leadership theory offered through most of the Twentieth Century:

Leadership is good management. In a more detailed, bigger picture, the painted surface reveals this: Leadership is great men and women with certain preferred traits influencing followers to do what the leaders wish in order to achieve group/organizational goals that reflect excellence defined as some kind of higher-level effectiveness. (p. 180)

Rost, influenced by Burns' transformational leadership model, struggled with what he called an industrial emphasis of leadership on several issues. First, the managerial emphasis of industrial leadership seemed too restricting to encompass the full significance of what real leadership entails. Although good management is certainly important, and many managers also lead, for Rost, leadership seemed a different category altogether. Second, Rost struggled with the leader-centric aspect of these industrial models of leadership, which suggest leadership as something a leader does to those who follow; that the follower is a mere object upon whom the leader acts. Third, this industrial leadership was too task-oriented. Certainly accomplishment of task is important and has a place in leadership, but accomplishment in and of itself seemed too shallow a standard against which to judge leadership.

To address his concerns over the direction and evolution of leadership theory, Rost (2000) offered a new, post-industrial definition, “*Leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect mutual purposes*” (p. 102, emphasis is original). His bold definition highlights many key aspects that make leadership a clear and unique phenomenon, and in particular, differentiates leadership from the industrial, management-oriented models promoted through most of the Twentieth Century.

Leadership is an Influence Relationship

If there is one thing that stands out clearly from the literature, it is that leadership is an influence process. Influence is the power of leadership; it is what makes things happen, but it is power that can be derived from many sources (Burns, 1978; Covey, 1992; Ford, 2006). Most people tend to think of leadership in terms of positional authority – the boss, the president, the leader – but there are numerous examples of people in positions of power who fail to lead, as well as people without position who lead very effectively (Covey, 1992; Ford, 2006, Kouzes and Posner, 2002; Senge, 1990). Cohen and Bradford (1990) note that what moves someone from boss or dictator to leader, or from nobody to leader, is not so much position as the relational influence one is able to build with others. Relationship seems to be the key to influence and thus to leadership itself. Positional authority usually flows uni-directionally from the top-down and has an element of coercion or threat of punishment behind it, whereas influence is a multidirectional relationship in which the leader is often influenced by the followers as he or she influences them (Cohen & Bradford, 1990; Ford, 2006; Rost, 2000). Although a leader may also have the positional authority to punish or reward, relational influence

requires a leader to operate first from relationship and to use positional power sparingly (Gardner, 1990).

Although leadership, according to Rost's (2000) definition, is based on relationship and not positional authority, those relationships are not equal. Leaders will have more influence because they are the ones committing more resources to the relationship and often have more skill utilizing those resources (Bennis, 1989; Sergiovanni, 1990). The key point here is that the inequality does not rest in a position or even in a specific individual, and, in fact, can shift between individuals in the relationship over time. Leaders can become followers and followers can become leaders, but followers do not have to become leaders. Likewise, as Rost points out, it is possible that there will be only one leader in a given leadership relationship, but generally speaking there is an ebb and flow of leaders. Furthermore, an individual might be the primary leader in one group while at the same time a follower in any number of other groups (Cohen & Bradford, 1990; Ford, 2006). This is quite distinct from many leadership models that support the notion that once a leader, always a leader.

Leadership Intends Real Changes

The most unique aspect of Rost's (2000) leadership definition is his emphasis on the intention of leadership to bring about changes. In most of the leadership literature up through the 1990's, leadership was closely linked with accomplishment: great leaders do great things (Northouse, 2007). Leadership must go beyond mere accomplishment of task to a focus and concern of community and a greater good. In his 1978 book, *Leadership*, James Burns began to push beyond the accomplishment orientation of leadership theory.

The function of leadership is to engage followers, not merely to activate them, to commingle needs and aspirations and goals in a common enterprise, and in the process make better citizens of both leaders and followers. (p. 461)

It is not enough simply to influence the actions of others; real leadership *intends*, and is focused toward, communal change (Burns, 1978; Ford, 2006; Rost, 2000). Harrison (1990) points out that good managers influence action all the time, ensuring the effective accomplishment of tasks and goals. However, none of this means that leadership has taken place. Maintaining or even growing the status quo may require excellent management, but it does not call out actual leadership. Leadership, by nature of Rost's definition, has change at its heart. The stock market is full of steady, successful companies that methodically and effectively accomplish goals without rising to meet the challenges of the times. Contrast that to the bold leadership of Lee Iacocca and Chrysler in the 1980's who *together* were able to turn the tides of a failing company by creating corporate/communal change (Harrison, 1990).

Leadership, in the postindustrial understanding, is not defined by success, but by its intent or focus (Harrison, 1984; Nesbit & Aburdene, 2000; Rost, 2000) . Most of the industrial models of leadership are product oriented. Leadership is only leadership when it is effective and has accomplished the intended goal (Northouse, 2007). As such, this leaves no real room for ineffective leadership, because by definition ineffective leadership is something else. Rost's (2000) postindustrial model of leadership offers a process orientation; leadership occurs as long as the intent for change is real and active. Leadership that fails to bring about its desired change may be ineffective, or simply

unfortunate, but it is still leadership. The leader and followers are able then to analyze what may have prevented the change from happening, but still within the relationship that is known as leadership (Foster, 1989; Harrison, 1984; Rost, 2000).

Leadership Reflects Mutual Purposes

As mentioned above, the industrial leadership models were focused primarily on accomplishment of goals. However, as Rost (2000) asserts, by tying leadership to goals, leadership is locked into an industrial, organizational management mindset. Goals tend to be stated in quantitative terms, are short-term, and specific, whereas purposes tend to be stated in qualitative terms, are long-range, more holistic, and integrated (Foster, 1989; Gardner, 1990). Although leaders will certainly set key goals and objectives, the focus remains on fulfilling purpose. As Foster (1989) illuminates, it is a subtle but significant shift from what the group does to who the group is, from the organization's effectiveness to the group's culture. Furthermore, the purposes are mutual, held collectively by the group, and not decreed by the leader. This does not mean that every member agrees to each purpose equally – they are not unanimous--but as a collective set of purposes there is something for everyone.

Linking Models for a Stronger Theory

Servant Leadership as a Postindustrial Model

Servant leadership is associated conceptually with transformational leadership and, at least as a formal leadership theory, found its birth in the work of Robert Greenleaf (1970). Servant leadership is a model of leading others that is focused on serving those who are led. It is less about dictating or telling, and more about conversation, creation and collaboration. It is less about telling people where to go than it is helping people find

the best way possible (Kouzes & Posner, 2002; Laub, 1998; Spears, 2002). As Greenleaf (1970) explained, “It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead” (p. 13). Others indicate that servant leadership is a style that shifts focus from control, dictates and scrutiny to self-innovation, character and individual conviction. Servant leadership is not an act or an action; it is a way of interaction through service that influences change (Covey, 1992; Ford, 2006, Kouzes & Posner, 2002; Senge, 1994).

Despite the attention servant leadership has received in the past 30 years, as a practice, servant leadership has a history as old as history itself. Plato extolled the ideas of servant leadership in the virtues of the philosopher king, educated to rule with order and reason yet righteous in character (Cornford, 1951). The sixth century B.C. philosopher and father of Taoism, Lao-Tzu described leadership as complete selflessness. Heider (1985) quotes Lao-Tzu, “Enlightened leadership is service, not selfishness. The leader grows more and lasts longer by placing the well-being of all above the well-being of self alone” (p. 42). Additionally, Christianity promotes a model of servant leadership exhibited and encouraged by Jesus. In the Gospels, Jesus corrects his disciples after a dispute erupts over who will be the greatest in heaven.

But Jesus called them to him and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. It will not be so among you; but whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be your slave; just as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.” Matthew 20:25-28

In his book, *Jesus on Leadership*, C. Gene Wilkes (1998) points out that Jesus does not diminish the thought of becoming great, but redefines what it means to be great--one is great or becomes great by serving others. At the same time, John Maxwell (2004) clarifies that one does not serve to ensure greatness--you do not give to get--but that people serve because it is the right thing to do. By doing the right thing, people often have a level of greatness thrust upon them.

Spears (2002) and others note that the characteristics of listening, awareness, empathy, persuasion, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community all express a servant's heart. (Bennis & Nanus, 1998; Covey, 1992; Ford, 2006; Kouzes and Posner, 2002; Senge, 1990; Spears, 1995; Tichy, 1997). In a similar fashion, Laub (1999) delineated six key characteristics of a servant leader: (1) values people, (2) develops people, (3) builds community, (4) displays authenticity, (5) provides leadership, and (6) shares leadership. Laub used these elements to develop his Servant Organizational Leadership Assessment. Servant leadership is first and foremost about serving others, but as a living paradox it is about serving through and by leading.

In his 1998 book, *Upside Down: The paradox of servant leadership*, Stacy Rinehart warned about the confusion often associated with the servant leadership model. He explains that many people focus on the term leadership, using service simply as a means to the end. Service is offered simply to prime the pump, to motivate--if not manipulate--others to follow and do what the leader wants. "In *servant* leadership," he explains, "serving is the expression of leadership, regardless of how people follow" (p. 41, emphasis is original). Leadership becomes the means to the end of serving. However, that does not mean the servant leader becomes a servant only and that the served becomes

master. As Ford (2006) points out, Jesus may have washed his disciples' feet in an act of servant leadership, but he did not do so at their command or for the purpose of ensuring clean feet. The act of service was rendered towards a higher purpose of leadership, to model the way, to encourage and to instruct.

Again, Rost's (2000) postindustrial definition of leadership states, "leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect mutual purposes" (p. 102). Comparing this definition to Laub's (1999) six key characteristics of a servant leader, one can appreciate that servant leadership is highly relational (values people, builds community), influence based (develops people, displays authenticity) intends real changes (provides leadership), and reflects mutual purposes (shares leadership). Although servant leadership has its roots in ancient history, as a leadership model it has a lot to offer the post-industrial world described by Rost (2000).

Much of the literature reviewed as part of this study calls for a greater consideration and discussion of the notion of leadership and its role in the ever-changing world. Rost's (2000) call for a post-industrial model echoes that of Campbell (1977), Tichy (1997), Northouse (2007) and others. With its common principles and ideals, servant leadership is an ideal model to consider as leadership theorists continue to pursue a refined and refocused vision as they move into the twenty-first century. Rethinking servant leadership in a post-industrial light provides a fresh and much needed perspective to a discussion that seems to be spiraling in on itself (Rost, 2000; Russell & Stone, 2002; Spears, 2002).

The Leadership Challenge as a Postindustrial Model

Although Kouzes and Posner's (2002) Leadership Challenge model fits into the behavioral and contingency theories historically, its application is certainly broad enough to work in the postindustrial construct suggested by Rost (2000), Northouse (2007) and Sergiovanni (1990). Kouzes and Posner's research goal was to investigate what leaders do when they are operating at their best. When collecting data they kept an open mind regarding the definition of leadership, and instead looked at a wide range of leadership experiences as defined by the followers, those who believed they were being led. Kouzes and Posner identified five practices demonstrated by exemplary leaders and ten corresponding commitments (see Table 1).

Table 1
The Five Practices and Ten Commitments of Exemplary Leaders

Practice	Commitment
Model the Way	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Find your voice by clarifying your personal values.• Set the example by aligning actions with shared values.
Inspire a Shared Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Envision the future by imagining exciting and ennobling possibilities.• Enlist others in a common vision by appealing to shared aspirations.
Challenge the Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Search for opportunities by seeking innovative way to change, grow, and improve.• Experiment and take risks by constantly generating small wins and learning from mistakes.
Enable Others to Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Foster collaboration by promoting cooperative goals and building trust.• Strengthen others by sharing power and discretion.
Encourage the Heart	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recognize contributions by showing appreciation for individual excellence.• Celebrate the values and victories by creating a spirit of community.

From *Five Practices of Exemplary Student Leadership* (p. 10) by J.M. Kouzes and B.Z. Posner (2006), San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

It is interesting to note that these practices and commitments are not based on any given definition of leadership; in fact Kouzes and Posner do not even offer a definition of leadership in their books. Their presupposition is that whatever leadership may be, if an individual engages in these five practices one will be viewed by others as a leader. When comparing Rost's (2000) postindustrial definition, one sees that the *Leadership Challenge* model, like servant leadership, is highly relational (Encourage the Heart), influence based (Model the Way, Enable Others to Act) intends real changes (Challenge the Process), and reflects mutual purposes (Inspire a Shared Vision). As such, the *Leadership Challenge* is also an ideal model to consider as leadership theorists continue to pursue a refined and refocused vision as they move into the twenty-first century.

Bringing It All Together

Many leadership theorists at the end of the Twentieth Century have called for a renewed discussion and debate on the purpose, focus and definition of leadership (Dungan, 2006; Gardner, 1990; Northhouse, 2007; Rost, 2000). The industrial models have been found lacking, and even Rost (2000) admits his own definition is only a catalyst to spur on the debate; a fresh building block as the discussion takes shape over the twenty-first century. As the pieces of what has gone before are shuffled, reexamined and realigned, a new understanding of what leadership is, and could be, is sure to emerge.

As has just been discussed, two of the industrial models in particular are quite complimentary to fresh, emerging vision of leadership: Kouzes and Posner's (2002) *Leadership Challenge* and Greenleaf's (1977) servant leadership model. Furthermore, these two models are quite compatible with one another. As discussed in the introduction, both models promote leadership that is relational, empowering of others and focused on

mutual, shared purpose. With the clarifying emphasis that is found in Rost's (2000) definition of leadership, the three theories make up the three legs of the stool that is leadership. Adding to the comments of the university staff shared in the introduction, by merging these three theories one creates a development model that lifts up Christian doctrine gives individuals the concrete tools they need to follow that doctrine successfully and actually clarifies what it is they are doing.

Summary

The research literature on leadership describes a wide variety of leadership models and theories. In many ways the field of leadership is still fairly new and developing, with the bulk of the research occurring within the last 50 years. This literature review has discussed some of the more significant leadership models and developments as a means of tracing the progress of leadership theory. As part of that growth, critics of the mainstream leadership theories think the development has been overly influenced by an industrial, management-laden approach (Gardner, 1990; Harrison, 1984; Northouse, 2007; Rost, 2000). These critics call for more research on the phenomena of leadership, greater discussion on the definition of leadership and more relationally-driven, postindustrial models.

Although the servant leadership model has been taught and modeled throughout history, it has certainly receiving increased attention over the past 30 years. In response to Greenleaf's groundbreaking work, Larry Spear's (1996) identified ten primary characteristics of servant leaders. As research followed, others were able to differentiate between servant leadership and other developing models. Assessment instruments such as Laub's OLA (1999) and Kouzes and Posner's LPI (2002) have enabled further studies to

aid in the development of the model. Although the Leadership Challenge is not specifically a servant leadership model, the two models are very compatible with one another, and together make an excellent model for consideration in the postindustrial era.

Organization of the Remainder of the Study

The following chapter discusses the study's methodological approach that includes the development of Kouzes and Posner's Leadership Practices Inventory survey and how the survey and performance data were collected. Chapter 4 presents the data results and the statistical analysis used for interpretation. Chapter 5 delivers a discussion of the findings, conclusions and further research opportunities based on the analysis.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methodology that was used to explore the impact of the leadership development model employed by a private Christian university in the Midwest. The impact was investigated by determining and comparing the regularity with which a cross-section of students self-reported exhibiting the five specific servant leadership practices of the chosen leadership model. The chapter begins with the design of the study, and then discusses the study's population and sample, the instrumentation used, the survey administration, the variables, the data collection procedures, and finally the data analysis procedures. The research questions and associated hypotheses were used to form the foundation of the methodology chosen in this section.

Design of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of an institution-wide leadership development model on students at a private Christian university in the Midwest. The study assessed and compared participants' self-reported practice of five specific leadership behaviors as a means to explore the efficacy of the development model employed by the university. Since the study sought to describe the self-reported practices of key leadership behaviors of three groups, as well as to compare between groups within the study population, the researcher selected a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design (Creswell, 2005).

Study Population and Sample

In order to investigate the efficacy of the leadership development model employed by the university under study, it was decided to survey a cross-section of the total student population. The population for this study included three groups: first-year students from 2009 and 2010, graduating seniors from 2010 and 2011, and alumni who graduated between 2001 and 2008. The groups were selected in order to compare students who had not yet been exposed to the leadership development model (first-year students), those who had completed the leadership development model (graduating seniors), and those who had completed the leadership development model and had time to implement the model in their careers (alumni).

The first-year and graduate groups included those students who were enrolled in classes on campus and who voluntarily participated in the Leadership Practices Inventory administered by the university in 2009 and 2010. The data from these years were used because they were relatively new and an upgrade of the universities' data system ensured they were accurate. The alumni group included the full database of students who attended classes on campus and graduated between 2001 and 2008. These years were selected because the university initiated its leadership emphasis in 2001 and the time frame allowed alumni to find and get settled in jobs following graduation. The opportunity to participate and freedom to decline determined the final size and makeup of the total sample. The total population size of each group and corresponding response rate is shown in Table 2.

Table 2
University Student Population by Research Group

Student Classification	Population Size	Respondents	Response Rate
First-Year Students (2009 and 2010)	748	612	82%
Seniors (2009 and 2010)	764	500	65%
Alumni (2001-2008)	3,206	498	16%
Total =	4,718	1,610	34%

Data Collection and Instrumentation

The data for this study was collected from two primary sources: existing data and new data gathered through a survey instrument.

Existing Data - Leadership Practices Inventory

The university being studied administers the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) to all first-year students and graduating seniors. The university agreed to make the data from the surveys of 2009 and 2010 first-year students and seniors available to the researcher. The Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) was created by Kouzes and Posner (2002) and consists of a series of statements describing various leadership practices. Participants rank each statement on a five-point Likert-scale. A higher value represents frequent practice of the particular behavior. The response categories included: (1) rarely or seldom; (2) once in a while; (3) sometimes; (4) often; and (5) very frequently (Kouzes & Posner, 2006). The internal reliability of the LPI has been demonstrated to be adequate in previous studies. All five leadership practices have internal reliability scores between .70 and .85.

Reliability and Validity

There is considerable empirical support for the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership framework and the Leadership Practices Inventory tool. Reliability refers to

the extent scores from an instrument remain stable on repeated administrations of the instrument and that the tool is free from measurement error (Creswell, 2005). Creswell explains that internal reliability above .60 is considered good. Reliability of the LPI, which was used with the first-year students and senior groups, was tested by Posner (2010) through analysis of internal reliability using the data of over 280,000 surveys. The LPI reliability scores are consistently between .80 and .91, with test-retest reliability scores routinely above .90 (Posner, 2010). Kouzes and Posner (2003) also list numerous studies by other researchers with similar reliability results.

Validity implies that researchers are able to draw meaningful inference from scores about a sample or population (Creswell, 2005). In other words, it addresses whether or not an instrument truly measures what it purports to measure and whether the scores have meaning or utility. The validity of the LPI has been empirically assessed through correlation with other leadership measures such as satisfaction, reputation, and productivity. Posner (2010) created a ten item questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale regarding subordinates' feelings of team spirit, organizational pride, motivation, productivity, trust, appreciation and effectiveness. Internal reliability for the Positive Workplace Attitude scale was 0.92. The correlations shown in Table 3 between Positive Workplace Attitude and the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership were all statistically significant.

Table 3
Correlations of Positive Workplace Attitude (PWA) with Five Leadership Practices

	Model	Inspire	Challenge	Enable	Encourage
PWA	.32	.29	.29	.31	.29

From Posner, B. (2010). Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) Data Analysis, p. 6.

Kouzes and Posner (2002) created three approximately equal-sized groups using the Positive Workplace Attitude (PWA) scale, representing weak, moderate and strong PWA scores. Data in Table 4 illustrate that constituents reported higher levels of satisfaction the more their leaders engaged in each of The Five Practices of Exemplary Leaders (Posner, 2010).

Table 4
*Analysis of Variance on Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership (LPI)
 by Positive Workplace Attitude (PWA) Across Weak, Moderate and Strong Categories*

Leadership Practice	Weak PWA		Moderate PWA		Strong PWA	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Model the Way	42.2	9.8	47.2	7.7	51.4	7.1
Inspire a Shared Vision	38.7	11.6	44.2	9.7	49.2	9.2
Challenge the Process	40.1	10.4	45.1	8.6	49.5	8.1
Enable Others to Act	45.3	9.7	49.8	7.1	53.3	6.3
Encourage the Heart	40.9	11.5	46.3	9.4	51.0	8.5
Combined Scores	207.0	46.7	232.6	36.9	254.5	34.5

From Posner, B. (2010). *Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) Data Analysis*, p. 7-8.

The LPI in Research

Although the majority of research using the LPI has been in the areas of business and healthcare, a few studies have been conducted using the LPI to assess leadership growth among college students engaged in an on-campus leadership program. Curt Brungardt (1997) researched changes in students' attitudes and behaviors as a result of participating in the Leadership Certificate Program at Fort Hays State University. The LPI was administered in a pre-post test format on the first and last days of the program. Brungardt found a significant difference in four of the five practices (Modeling,

Inspiring, Challenging and Enabling) on the last day compared to the first day. Kris Binard (1997) researched curricular and co-curricular leadership programs at the Community College of Denver. Binard also found a significant increase in scores between students at the beginning of the program compared to students at the end of the program. No other studies using just the LPI to assess development of students enrolled in campus-based leadership programs were found. However, the LPI, in whole or parts, has been used in conjunction with other tools for such studies with similar findings. K. H. Jensen (1998) found that leadership practice does increase as students advance through the Excellence in Leadership Program at Grand Valley State University. Jensen focused only on the six LPI questions relating to the leadership practice of Modeling the Way. The survey was given to first-year students, sophomores, juniors and seniors. Scores were compared by year in school.

The LPI is an Effective Tool

The literature reveals that the LPI has demonstrated strong internal reliability and validity. As such, any change in LPI scores over time would suggest the result of some intervention that caused the scores to increase or decrease. The strong validity of the instrument would support the argument that the given intervention either strengthened or weakened the respondents' tendencies to engage in the various leadership behaviors. The LPI was created by Kouzes and Posner (2002) to work in tandem with the Leadership Challenge model to test the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership.

The Five Practices of Exemplary Leaders are those behaviors in which leaders tend to engage when they are operating at their best (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). As such, leaders wanting to grow in their ability to lead more effectively should focus on

developing their ability to engage in these behaviors more regularly. The Leadership Practices Inventory enables individuals to assess the regularity with which they engage in these key leadership practices. This information enables the would-be student of leadership to focus on areas of weakness and develop a growth strategy. The Leadership Challenge as a development model helps individuals to understand the Five Practices more fully, to consider how others engage in each of these behaviors, and to challenge themselves to make specific commitments to practice these behaviors more regularly and effectively. Although The Leadership Challenge is not a specific leadership development course, it lays out the key principles that should be included in any development plan. These key principles of The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership are at the heart of the servant leadership development strategy of the university being studied.

Administration of Survey

The data from the first-year students group were gathered in October of 2009 and 2010 as part of a university-wide project, and that from the senior group was collected near the end of the academic year in 2010 and 2011. Although all students were afforded the opportunity to participate, students were free to abstain from answering the questions. LPI surveys and scoring sheets were distributed to students in core freshman and senior classes and students were given the opportunity to complete the 30 item questionnaire. The aggregate data was accessed for this study through the Office of Academic Affairs with the permission of the President's Council.

New Data - Abbreviated Leadership Practices Survey

Data for the alumni group was gathered through an online survey conducted by the researcher. Participants were recruited from the full population of students who

attended classes on campus and graduated between 2001 and 2008. In order to ensure a satisfactory response rate a ten item survey, two items for each leadership practice, was drawn from the full Leadership Practices Inventory. Using a Likert-scale, participants were asked to rank how frequently they engaged in the described behavior. Behaviors were ranked according to the following five-point response categories: (1) rarely or seldom; (2) once in a while; (3) sometimes; (4) often; and (5) very frequently. A copy of the abbreviated LPI is included in Appendix B.

Survey Development

As mentioned above, the abbreviated survey was drawn from the full Leadership Practices Inventory of 30 statements by selecting two corresponding statements for each of the five leadership practices. To ensure that the questions selected best articulated and encompassed the meaning of each practice, the researcher consulted with five university faculty who taught within the leadership model and were well acquainted with Kouzes and Posner's (2002) Leadership Challenge and the LPI.

The statements of the full LPI were separated by their correlating leadership practice, six statements for each of the five practices. Each faculty expert was asked to rank the statements for each practice in order of most essential to least essential. The rank order was weighted on a Likert-scale of 5) most essential to 0) least essential. The scores were then averaged and the statements with the two highest mean scores were used for the abbreviated LPI survey. When data from the abbreviated LPI was analyzed, a Cronbach Alpha was also run to test the instrument's reliability.

Administration of Surveys

As mentioned earlier the 2001-2008 alumni were invited to participate in the abbreviated survey based on the standard LPI. The survey was loaded on an online survey system (surveymonkey.com). Participants were recruited through an email invitation that stated the purpose of the study, all necessary informed consent information and an invitation to participate in the survey by going to the online survey site. Email addresses of potential participants were pulled from the database of the target university's alumni office. The invitation email was sent out to possible participants directly from the alumni office so as to protect the anonymity of the participants as well as to protect their personal information. At no time did the researcher have access to students' names, email addresses or any other personal information.

Individuals who wished to participate in the survey were directed to the online site, where they again were able to read the informed consent and signify that by continuing with the survey they had read, understood and agreed to the terms of the informed consent. The informed consent form gave the name, email address and phone number of the primary researcher, in case any of the participants had questions or wanted to discuss the project further. The survey was available to participants for two weeks. After the deadline passed, the survey and data were pulled from the online site and stored locally for analysis.

Research Questions, Hypotheses and Variables

Comparison between a Cross-Section of First-Year Students and Seniors

The first research question asked what differences occur in the self-reported participation in each of the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership between a cross-

section of 2009 and 2010 first-year students and 2010 and 2011 graduating seniors who attended a university with a leadership development emphasis. To answer the first research question, the individual scores from the LPI for each group of students were collected from the university and averaged for the group to identify the level of leadership practiced in each of the two groups. The mean scores for each practice were then compared between groups to determine if there were any significant differences. An Independent Samples t-Test was used to compare the scores and test for significance.

The results from the LPI questionnaire and survey address the following hypothesis:

H1: The level of self-reported participation in each of the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership will be significantly higher for seniors compared to first-year students who attended a university with a leadership development emphasis.

As described in Chapter 2, The Leadership Challenge development model is built on the premise that leadership is a set of specific behaviors which are practiced regularly. The more individuals practice these behaviors, the more they are viewed by others as gifted leaders. In essence, the goal of The Leadership Challenge development model is to help individuals understand the Five Practices more fully and to challenge them to make specific commitments to practice these traits more regularly. Success of the development model is seen through an increased commitment to practice the essential leadership behaviors. Therefore, an institution effectively following The Leadership Challenge model should see higher mean scores of the LPI from students who have had greater exposure to the model.

Comparison between a Cross-Section of Seniors and Alumni

The second research question asked what differences occur in self-reported participation in each of the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership between a cross-section of 2010 and 2011 seniors and 2001-2008 alumni who attended a university with a leadership development emphasis. To answer the second research question, the mean scores from the abbreviated survey for the two groups of students were compared to determine whether any significant difference in self-reported practice existed between groups.

The results from the LPI questionnaire and survey address the following hypothesis:

H2: The level of self-reported participation in each of the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership will be significantly higher for alumni compared to seniors who attended a university with a leadership development emphasis.

Servant Leadership Variables

Five independent variables were collected for each group of participants. The variables collected were the self-reported levels of engagement of each of the five key leadership practices evaluated in the LPI. Table 5 represents those variables (leadership practices) and corresponding survey statements that comprise the individual leadership practice scores (Kouzes & Posner, 2006).

Table 5
Leadership Variables with Corresponding LPI Survey Items

Variable	LPI Survey Items	Abbreviated Survey Items (Original Item Number)
Model the Way	1, 6, 11, 16, 21, 26	1 (1), 6 (11)
Inspire a Shared Vision	2, 7, 12, 17, 22, 27	2 (2), 7 (12)
Challenge the Process	3, 8, 13, 18, 23, 28	3 (8), 8 (18)
Enable Others to Act	4, 9, 14, 19, 24, 29	4 (9), 9 (24)
Encourage the Heart	5, 10, 15, 20, 15, 30	5 (10), 10 (20)

Data Analysis Procedures

In order to ensure an accurate comparison of mean scores between groups, the mean scores for the first-year and senior groups were calculated using the same items asked of the alumni group in the abbreviated LPI. This allowed for a ten-item to ten-item comparison between all three groups. The mean score for each individual leadership practice was calculated for each group of students. The constructs were evaluated for reliability and correlations. Using a two-tailed Independent Samples t-Test, the mean scores for each leadership practice was compared between groups to determine whether any significant difference in self-reported practice exists between groups on the various practices. Each test at the sub-construct level was given a type I error rate of .05.

Organization of the Remainder of the Study

The following chapter presents the data results and the statistical analysis used for interpretation. Chapter 5 delivers a discussion of the findings, conclusions and further research opportunities based on the analysis.

CHAPTER IV

DATA RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of an institution-wide leadership development model on students at a private Christian university in the Midwest. This quantitative study examined the self-reported leadership practices of first-year students, seniors and alumni from the university being studied and compared changes in said practice between groups. The data of this study were analyzed to explore the efficacy of the leadership development model employed by the university. This study sought to answer the following two research questions:

R1: What differences occur in self-reported participation in each of the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership between a cross-section of 2009 and 2010 first-year students and 2010 and 2011 graduating seniors who attended a university with a leadership development emphasis?

R2: What differences occur in self-reported participation in each of the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership between a cross-section of 2010 and 2011 seniors and 2001-2008 alumni who attended a university with a leadership development emphasis?

This chapter will present a brief description of sample characteristics along with the findings regarding the stated research questions and hypotheses.

Sample Characteristics

To answer the research questions, this study compared the self-reported leadership practices of a cross-section of first-year students, seniors and alumni of a given

university to judge the impact of the institution’s leadership development activities. The research population, therefore, consisted of a cross-section of the student body and alumni of the university under study. The first sample was drawn from the 748 first-year students in 2009 and 2010. Six hundred and twelve (612) first-year students chose to participate in the project and returned the survey. The second sample was drawn from the 764 graduating seniors in 2010 and 2011. Five hundred (500) seniors chose to participate in the project and returned the survey. The third sample was drawn from the 3,206 students who graduated from the university between 2001 and 2008. Emails were sent by the university to the 3,206 alumni, inviting them to participate in the survey. Five hundred and three (503) individuals responded to the invitation by going to the survey site and 498 completed surveys. Table 6 illustrates the population and sample size for each student group studied.

Table 6
Population, Sample and Response Rate

Groups by Student Classification	Population <i>N</i>	Respondents <i>n</i>	Response Rate
First-year Students	748	612	82%
Graduating Seniors	764	500	65%
Alumni	3,206	498	16%
Total =	4,718	1,610	34%

In addition to the 16% sample rate among 2001-2008 alumni, each graduation year was fairly represented with the smallest percentage of respondents from 2001 at 8% and the largest percentage from of 2006 at 17% (see Table 7).

Table 7
Number of Alumni Respondents by Year of Graduation

Year Graduated	Respondents <i>n</i>	Percentage of total response
2001	41	8%
2002	50	10%
2003	50	10%
2004	60	12%
2005	63	13%
2006	86	17%
2007	74	15%
2008	74	15%

Instrument Creation and Reliability

As mentioned in Chapter 3, to ensure the abbreviated LPI questions best articulated and encompassed the meaning of each practice, the researcher consulted with five university faculty who taught within the leadership model and were well acquainted with Kouzes and Posner's (2002) Leadership Challenge and the LPI. The faculty ranked each group of items on a Likert-scale of 5) most essential to 0) least essential. The scores were then averaged and the statements with the two highest mean scores were used for the abbreviated LPI survey. The mean scores for each LPI item is listed in Table 8 under its corresponding leadership practice.

Table 8
Ranking of LPI Items by Leadership Practice

Model the Way		Inspire a Shared Vision		Challenge the Process		Enable Others to Act		Encourage the Heart	
Item	Mean	Item	Mean	Item	Mean	Item	Mean	Item	Mean
1	4.4	2	4.2	3	3.8	4	2.4	5	2.2
6	1.8	7	3.0	8	4.2	9	4.4	10	3.0
11	4.0	12	4.4	13	1.2	14	0.8	15	2.4
16	3.6	17	0.4	18	4.0	19	1.8	20	3.2
21	0.2	22	2.4	23	0.6	24	4.6	25	2.0
26	0.8	27	0.6	28	1.2	29	1.0	30	2.2

The abbreviated LPI created for and used with the group of 2001-2008 alumni, was tested by the researcher through analysis of internal reliability. The reliability scores for the abbreviated LPI, which was created for and used during this study, ranged between .71 and .81. Table 9 represents the reliability of the full LPI as tested by Posner (2010), the full LPI as administered by the university, and the abbreviated LPI as modified and administered as part of this research study. The comparison is offered to illustrate the consistency and strength of the abbreviated LPI used in this study.

Table 9
Reliability (Cronbach's Alpha) Coefficients for the LPI and Abbreviated LPI

Leadership Practice	LPI N = 282,867	LPI Respondents N = 1,112	Abbreviated LPI Respondents N = 1610
Model the Way	.84	.78	.73
Inspire a Shared Vision	.91	.87	.75
Challenge the Process	.86	.79	.73
Enable Others to Act	.86	.82	.71
Encourage the Heart	.91	.88	.81

Results and Analysis

In order to determine if the null hypothesis could be rejected the individual scores for each specific leadership practice was averaged for each member of each group. Then the group mean was determined for each leadership practice. Using an Independent Samples t-Test, the mean scores for each leadership practice was compared between groups to determine whether any significant difference in self-reported commitment and practice existed. Each test at the subconstruct level was given a type I error rate of .05.

Results Associated with Cross-Section of First-Year Students and Seniors

Research Question 1: What differences occur in self-reported participation in each of the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership between a cross-section of 2009 and 2010 first-year students and 2010 and 2011 graduating seniors who attended a university with a leadership development emphasis?

Hypothesis 1: The level of self-reported participation in each of the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership will be significantly higher for seniors compared to first-year students who attended a university with a leadership development emphasis.

A two-tailed, independent-samples t-test was conducted on each of the leadership elements to compare how often each group self-reported engaging in each practice. As Table 10 illustrates, this study found that seniors reported engaging in all five key leadership practices significantly more often than first-year students. As such, the null hypothesis can be rejected, because the difference is most likely not due to chance.

Table 10
Comparison of Mean Scores for Cross-Section of First-Year Students and Seniors

Leadership Practice	Student Group				<i>t</i>	Cohen's <i>d</i>
	First-Year Students		Seniors			
	M	SD	M	SD		
Model the Way	3.4	0.6	3.7	0.7	t(1110) = -6.6*	0.6
Inspire a Shared Vision	3.4	0.7	3.7	0.6	t(1110) = -9.1*	0.5
Challenge the Process	3.1	0.6	3.7	0.7	t(1110) = -15.7*	0.9
Enable Others to Act	3.8	0.5	4.0	0.6	t(1110) = -4.8*	0.4
Encourage the Heart	3.5	0.7	3.9	0.7	t(1110) = -9.5*	0.6

* $p < .05$

Furthermore, a rank order comparison of the means from high to low for each group revealed that the five practices ranked in the same order for both the first-year students and senior groups. In order from highest mean to lowest the elements ranked: Enabling Others, Encouraging the Heart, Modeling the Way, Inspiring a Shared Vision, and Challenging the Process (see Table 11).

Table 11
Rank Order Comparison of the Means for First-Year Students and Seniors

First-Year Students		Seniors	
Leadership Practice	M	Leadership Practice	M
Enable Others to Act	3.8	Enable Others to Act	4.0
Encourage the Heart	3.5	Encourage the Heart	3.9
Model the Way	3.4	Model the Way	3.7
Inspire a Shared Vision	3.4	Inspire a Shared Vision	3.7
Challenge the Process	3.1	Challenge the Process	3.7

Results Associated with Cross-Section of Seniors and Alumni

Research Question 2: What differences occur in self-reported participation in each of the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership between a cross-section of 2010 and 2011 seniors and 2001-2008 alumni who attended a university with a leadership development emphasis?

Hypothesis 2: The level of self-reported participation in each of the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership will be significantly higher for alumni compared to seniors who attended a university with a leadership development emphasis.

A two-tailed, independent-samples t-test was conducted on each of the leadership elements to compare how often each group engaged in each practice. This study found that alumni engaged in all five key leadership practices significantly more often than seniors. This difference between means is shown in Table 12 below.

Table 12
Comparison of Mean Scores for Cross-Section of Seniors and Alumni

Leadership Practice	Student Group				<i>t</i>	Cohen's <i>d</i>
	Seniors		Alumni			
	M	SD	M	SD		
Model the Way	3.7	0.7	4.6	0.5	t(996) = -23.6*	1.6
Inspire a Shared Vision	3.7	0.6	4.1	0.7	t(996) = -9.9*	0.6
Challenge the Process	3.7	0.7	4.1	0.7	t(996) = -9.0*	0.6
Enable Others to Act	4.0	0.7	4.4	0.5	t(996) = -11.7*	1.2
Encourage the Heart	3.9	0.7	4.4	0.6	t(996) = -11.7*	0.9

**p* < .05

Furthermore, a rank order comparison of the means from high to low revealed that the five practices ranked in the same order for both the senior and alumni groups, except for Modeling the Way (see Table 13).

Table 13
Rank Order Comparison of the Means for Seniors and Alumni

Seniors		Alumni	
Leadership Practice	M	Leadership Practice	M
Enable Others to Act	4.0	Model the Way	4.6
Encourage the Heart	3.9	Enable Others to Act	4.4
Model the Way	3.7	Encourage the Heart	4.4
Challenge the Process	3.7	Challenge the Process	4.1
Inspire a Shared Vision	3.7	Inspire a Shared Vision	4.1

Modeling the Way moved from a third place ranking among the seniors to the first place ranking among the alumni. For seniors, in order from highest mean to lowest, the elements ranked: Enabling Others, Encouraging the Heart, Modeling the Way, Challenging the Process, and Inspiring a Shared Vision. Whereas for alumni, in order from highest mean to lowest, the elements ranked: Modeling the Way, Enabling Others, Encouraging the Heart, Challenging the Process, and Inspiring a Shared Vision.

Organization of the Remainder of the Study

This paper discussed the focus, scope and theoretical back ground of the given research topic, namely the efficacy of the leadership development model employed in a given Midwestern university. Chapter 2 considered and examined the relevant literature on leadership, discussed some of the weakness of current theory and a new theoretical base for leadership consideration. Chapter 3 discussed the study's methodological

approach that includes the development of Kouzes and Posner's Leadership Practices Inventory survey and how the survey and performance data were collected. The following chapter will provide a discussion of the findings, conclusions and further research opportunities based on the analysis.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This chapter discusses the results and implications of the research to determine whether the leadership development model employed by the university under study is positively affecting students toward the goals of that model. The chapter includes a discussion of the results, conclusions from the data, recommendations for future research, and closing remarks.

Discussion

The purpose of this research was to investigate the impact of an institution-wide leadership development model on students at a private Christian university in the Midwest. A cross-section of students--first-year students, seniors and alumni--had the opportunity to indicate how often they engaged in five key leadership practices. Differences between groups were analyzed as a means to explore the impact of the leadership development model employed by the university. The research was based on the premise that a significant and positive difference in groups who had greater exposure to the model would imply a positive impact of the leadership model (Binard, 1997; Brungardt, 1997; Jensen, 1998; Kouzes & Posner, 2002). In both cross-sectional comparisons, between first-year students and seniors and again between seniors and alumni, there were significant differences in the regularity with which participants reported engaging in all five of the key leadership behaviors. These findings are

consistent with the literature (Binard, 1997; Brungardt, 1997; Dugan, 2006; Jensen, 1998; Kouzes & Posner, 2002).

In each case, the mean scores between the first-year and senior groups were significantly different. Although the differences were significant, the Cohen's *d* indicates the effect size fell in the medium range (0.4 to 0.6), except in the case of Challenging the Process, which had a large effect size (0.9) (Creswell, 2005). Similarly, the mean scores between the senior and alumni groups were also significantly different, but in this case the Cohen's *d* ranged from 0.6 to 1.6, indicated that the effect size was medium to large. As such, not only are the differences between groups significant, implying they are not caused by chance, but the effect size reveals that the differences are fairly strong.

In addition to the significant difference in mean scores between groups, further analysis revealed that the first-year students' group rated within an average range of leadership strength, while the seniors and alumni groups both rated within the high range. Kouzes and Posner (2003) state that a score of 3.8 or higher indicates a strong level of leadership. A comparison of the individual practice means showed that while the first-year students group rated high in only one practice, Enabling Others (mean = 3.8); the senior group rated strong in two practices, Enabling Others (mean = 4.0), and Encouraging the Heart (mean = 3.9); and the graduate group rated high in all five practices (means ranged from 4.1 to 4.6). Again, these findings are consistent with the literature and other research on the LPI and what one would expect to see as a result of the Leadership Challenge development model (Binard, 1997; Brungardt, 1997; Kouzes & Posner, 2002)

As has been mentioned earlier in this paper, service to others through developing people, sharing leadership and enabling others to act are hallmarks of servant leadership which are emphasized in the university's development model (Ford, 2006; Greenleaf, 1977; Kouzes & Posner, 2002; Laub, 1998; Maxwell, 2004; Miller, 1995; Spears, 2002). As part of their servant leadership experiences, students are given ample opportunity and significant encouragement to participate in various volunteer projects, including global mission trips to help the less fortunate. Coursework regularly includes and encourages group projects over individual accomplishments. As a Christian institution, the university studied places a high priority on spiritual growth through study, community involvement and service to others. As such, students are given multiple opportunities to build relationships and enable others around them (personal communication, October 12, 2011). The first-year students' mean score for enabling others to act was 3.8, the graduating classes, who would have had four years of classes and experiences in the leadership development model, had a mean score of 4.0, and the group of alumni who had finished their course work, finished the leadership model and had a number of years in the work place, scored a mean of 4.4. This pattern of greater engagement in key leadership behaviors, as reported by each group, is consistent with the literature and the specific claims of the leadership model under study (Binard, 1997; Brungardt, 1997; Jensen, 1998; Kouzes & Posner, 2002). Furthermore, this pattern held true for each of the five leadership practices. The groups that had the longest exposure to the leadership model and time to incorporate the model into their lives reported the highest level of engagement in each behavior.

A comparison of the rank ordering of the five practices between groups, in order of most often practiced to least often practiced, further complements the literature on the matter, especially the literature related to servant leadership. As mentioned above, the servant leadership model endorses leadership that lifts up, empowers and encourages others (Ford, 2006; Greenleaf, 1970; Spears, 1998). As Ford (2006) explains, servant leadership is not a function of positional authority, but of community and relational influence. All three groups reported greater participation in enabling others to act, encouraging the heart and modeling the way. Of these three practices, the first-year students and senior groups reported being most active in enabling others to act, while the alumni group reported modeling the way as the more prevalent. Again, these three practices are described as the most directly linked to the servant model and, as such, would be expected to play a significant role in a development model with a servant leadership focus (Ford, 2006; Greenleaf, 1977; Kouzes & Posner, 2002; Laub, 1998; Maxwell, 2004; Miller, 1995; Spears, 2002).

Demographic information collected from the 2001-2008 graduate participants indicated that 49% of respondents classified their current professional position as a staff member/employee versus the more traditionally perceived leadership positions of supervisor/manager (32%), executive (11%) or self-employed (5%). The fact that half the alumni group reported not holding traditional positions of leadership or authority, and yet ranked with the highest scores of self-reported leadership practice, is a powerful illustration of the literature's assertions that leadership is a function of relationship available to people at all levels of work and life (Covey, 1992; Drucker, 1954; Ford, 2006; Greenleaf, 1977; Greenwald, 2010; Kouzes & Posner, 2002; Laub, 1998; Maxwell,

2004; Miller, 1995; Spears, 2002). This group also reported being most involved in the leadership practice of modeling the way. Although those in recognized positions of leadership certainly have a responsibility to cast the vision and call those they lead forward to success, the servant leader, even when given authority, chooses to lead from alongside (Covey, 1992; Drucker, 1954; Ford, 2006; Greenleaf, 1970; Laub, 1999; Spears, 1998). Furthermore, leading by example is often the most effective means of leadership for those not in positions of authority, who have no choice but to lead from alongside (Covey, 1992; Drucker, 1954; Kouzes & Posner, 2002; Maxwell, 2004).

Conclusions

The Leadership Challenge development model, which is followed by the university under study, is based on two primary suppositions: leadership is an identifiable set of skills and practices that are available to everyone, regardless of position; and, these skills, as with any skill, can be learned, strengthened and enhanced (Greenleaf, 1977; Kouzes & Posner, 2002). As such, the model follows the premise that, as individuals learn and practice the key and necessary skills of leadership, they will grow in their leadership abilities and success. The more often and longer one practices these skills, the stronger a leader one becomes (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). The data obtained during this research project provide strong evidence to the effectiveness of this model. The group of seniors, who had been exposed to the specific practices of exemplary leadership and given opportunities to practice them through the leadership development model, reported a significantly higher level of leadership practice than did the group of first-year students who had yet to be introduced to the development model. Likewise, individuals, who had completed the development model and had additional years to put these principles into

practice in the real world of the market place, reported practicing key leadership behaviors at even greater levels than did the senior group. Not only was the difference between the cross-section of students significantly different, but scores moved from an average level of leadership to a strong level of leadership for groups that had greater experience with the model. As Kouzes and Posner (2002) suggest with the Leadership Challenge, the longer individuals focus on the model and engage in the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership, the more they will grow as leaders.

Not only do the significant differences in group scores indicate the effectiveness of the leadership model, a comparison of the rank ordering of the five practices between groups, in order of most often practiced to least often practiced, further complements the university's focus on servant leadership. The primary focus of student life is that of individual accomplishment: to learn and graduate. Students seeking to practice the tenets of servant leadership should find ample opportunity to encourage and enable other students in their own studies. Interestingly enough, the two leadership practices in which the first-year students and senior groups reported being most engaged were enabling others to act and encouraging the heart. Furthermore, as students leave the halls of academia for the world of business, where company success is more often the focus, the servant leader, regardless of position, has ample opportunity to lead by example. The leadership practice in which the alumni reported being most involved was modeling the way. These behaviors clearly echo the premise of the development model and the emphasis of servant leadership itself (Ford, 2006; Spears, 2006; Kouzes & Posner, 2002).

Furthermore, as the demographic information collected from the alumni participants indicated, leadership is not reserved for the select few that rise to the top of

the corporate ladder (Ford, 2006; Kouzes & Posner, 2002). Nearly half of the alumni group classified their current professional position as a staff member/employee versus the more traditionally perceived leadership positions of supervisor/manager, executive, or self-employed. This same group reported a very high engagement in leadership practices. Somewhere these individuals learned that their ability to lead was not determined by the position they held, a critical component of the leadership model utilized (Kouzes & Posner, 2002)

If the data from this cross-section of students is extrapolated as one group of students over a span of time, one can see the pattern of a very significant impact of growth and development. Naturally, further research is needed to determine and verify whether the model is the primary cause of the increase in reported leadership practice.

Recommendations for Further Research

As stated above, this study was conducted using a cross-section of students at one university campus. Therefore, caution must be used in generalizing the results to any other institution utilizing a similar leadership model or in suggesting a direct cause and effect relationship between the university's leadership development model and the increased scores. It is possible that other factors also had an influence on the participants' practice of leadership behaviors. For example, it is possible that the two first-year students' classes scored lower than the two senior classes simply because they were not as interested in leadership. They might, therefore, score equally low their senior year or even after graduation.

Additional research is necessary to provide a clearer understanding of the actual changes that take place as a result of the leadership model employed by the university.

Further research on this campus may be conducted utilizing a longitudinal study with a specific class of students, tracking their individual progress from their freshmen to senior years and then 3-5 years after their graduation. Such a study would give a clearer picture of the actual changes that took place over time and as a possible result of the leadership development model. An additional study may be conducted to consider other possible causes for any changes in leadership practice. Studying students at another university without a stated leadership development model would give insight into whether leadership changes were unique to this campus or possibly the result of maturation or education in general. Further research also should be extended to other institutions that have adopted a university-wide leadership development model, to see if these institutions experience similar changes as a result of their programs.

A qualitative project might be conducted to gain insight related to how students understand leadership development, to note their personal experiences as they engage in the leadership development model, and to gauge their perceptions of how and why their behavior changes over time. As Ford (2010) pointed out, leadership is a very personal experience, both for the leader and the follower. Including the personal narratives of those engaging in the leadership development process would add additional insight to the overall understanding of leadership.

Implications for Teaching and Learning

This study provides strong evidence that not only can an interdisciplinary leadership development model be introduced on a campus-wide scale, but that it can be done with very positive results. As Greenwald (2010) observed, students are flocking to leadership development programs offered by universities and colleges because they

realize the importance of leadership in the emerging world order. Change comes at an alarming rate, risks in business and life abound, and careers usually entail multiple jobs in multiple fields. In the past, students graduated, found jobs and received most of the professional development they needed within the corporate structure. Those days are long gone. Today's students need to be equipped like never before to make their own opportunities. Colleges and universities can and must meet this challenge (Greenleaf, 1977; Rost, 2000).

Other institutions wishing to engage students in an effective model of leadership development have a clear pattern to following as outlined in this research. The Leadership Challenge (Kouzes & Posner, 2002) provides the practical tools needed to give the model clear focus, and the Leadership Practices Inventory (Kouzes & Posner, 2003) provides an effective tool to monitor growth in the model. Furthermore, the interdisciplinary approach adopted by the university under study, raises the bar beyond the traditional, narrower models of leadership development, meeting the demand set forth by Rost (2000).

The second significant implication from this research is that leadership can be learned and developed. Although as a discipline leadership is still maturing, the data reveal that the concepts and practices of leadership can be learned, honed and improved. Not only were there significant differences between the different groups of students, but the average mean scores moved from average leadership strength to high leadership strength the longer the group had been exposed to the model (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). The fact that the alumni group scores were the highest suggests that not only do students learn leadership while in the program, but they continue to learn and grow afterward. Just

as biologists, for example, continue to learn and develop in their field following graduation, leaders, it would seem, do the same.

In Rost's (2010) post-industrial understanding, leadership is not about rising to the top, but rather about rising to meet the challenges along the journey. It may have sufficed, in eras past, for education to concern itself with passing on knowledge and the ability to apply and grow beyond that knowledge base. As technological advancements continue to shrink the world and increase one's sphere of influence, leadership development becomes increasingly vital. It is not enough that institutions of higher education simply produce experts in the various schools of study; they must prepare their students to become leaders in their specific disciplines through service. Professors need to continue to push themselves and their students in new ways of applying the knowledge they are gaining to new problems, even outside their disciplines, to bring about the changes needed in the world today.

This introduces the third implication of the research, as leaders are being developed and sent out into the work place and the world in general, our communities, as well as our institutions of higher education, will begin to change. Leadership, by definition, intends real changes; as leaders are developed one should expect to see those changes come to fruition. This notion has great implications, not only for our communities as a whole, but for the institutions that are producing these leaders. It is only natural emerging leaders would start to see the need for change around them in their immediate surroundings. Soon these leaders start challenging the process, building consensus and promoting change (Kouzes and Posner; 2002, Rost 2000). As these leaders begin to make their way in the world, Greenleaf's (1977) vision of higher education

creating a greater, more just society will start to take root. Most importantly, these changes will not simply take place at the higher levels of society, but they will take place across the spectrum as leaders emerge in every field and every strata of community. As university presidents enable change at the organizational level and teachers innovate change in their classrooms, students will promote greater change in the environments around them. Slowly but surely the leadership vacuum decried by Greenleaf (1977), Dugan (2006) and others will be filled.

APPENDICES

Appendix A
Consent Form

INFORMED CONSENT

TITLE: *Leadership Development in Higher Education*
PROJECT DIRECTOR: *Michael Bommarito*
PHONE # *701-595-1549*
DEPARTMENT: *Education: Teaching and Learning*

Welcome and Introduction

You are being invited to take part in a research study about leadership development in higher education by completing a short survey. Before you decide to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take the time to read the following information carefully. Please ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear of if you need more information.

Purpose of the Study:

This study is being conducted by Michael Bommarito as part of his dissertation research toward a Doctor of Philosophy degree. The purpose of this study is to examine the leadership development trends of (the University) students and alumni.

Explanation:

You will complete a ten (10) item survey, which should take no more than ten (10) minutes to complete. The survey includes ten (10) statements describing certain behaviors. You will rank how often you engage in each set of behaviors on a five point scale: (1) Rarely or Seldom; (2) Once in a while; (3) Sometimes; (4) Often; (5) Very frequently.

You will also be asked for some demographic information (e.g., age, year graduated, current profession, highest educational level attained) so we can accurately describe the general traits of the group of alumni who participate in the survey.

Risks or discomforts:

No risks or discomforts are anticipated from taking part in this study. If you feel uncomfortable with a question, you can skip that question or withdraw from the study altogether. If you decide to quit at any time before you have finished the questionnaire, your answers will NOT be recorded.

Benefits:

Although there may be no direct benefit to you for your participation in this study, your participation will be contributing to the knowledge of leadership trends in higher

education. We hope that the information obtained from this study will help educators and administrators take a look at leadership development efforts in a new light and enable current programs to be strengthened as may be needed.

The University of North Dakota, the (the University) and the research team are receiving no payments from other agencies, organizations, or companies to conduct this research study.

Confidentiality:

Your participation and responses are completely confidential. No identifying information will be collected during the survey. The records of this study will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. In any report about this study that might be published, you will not be identified. If we write a report or article about this study, we will describe the study results in a summarized manner so that you cannot be identified.

Contact Information:

Should you have any questions about the research or any related matters, please contact the researcher at mbommarito@bis.midco.net or 701-595-1549. The student's advisor is Dr. Steven LeMire and can be reached at 701-777-3158.

Voluntary Participation:

Your participation in this study is voluntary; you are free to withdraw your participation from this study at any time. If you do not want to continue, you can simply leave the website. If you do not click on the "submit" button at the end of the survey, your answers and participation will not be recorded. You also may choose to skip any questions that you do not wish to answer. This will not affect the relationship you have with the researcher, or result in any penalty or loss of benefits.

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, or if you have any concerns or complaints about the research, you may contact the University of North Dakota Institutional Review Board at (701) 777-4279. Please call this number if you cannot reach research staff, or you wish to talk with someone else.

Your participation in the survey indicates that this research study has been explained to you, that your questions have been answered, and that you agree to take part in this study.

“By continuing with this survey I indicate that I have read and accept the above Informed Consent.”

Appendix B
Abbreviated LPI

Abbreviated Leadership Practices Summary

- A. In what year did you graduate from the (the University)?
- B. What was your major?
- C. What is your current age range?
- D. How would you classify your current employment position?
(Dropdown Options: Unemployed, Self-Employed, Employee/Staff, Management, Executive, Other: _____)
- E. How frequently do you typically engage in the following behaviors and actions?
Using the scale below, select the frequency that best applies.

(1) Rarely or Seldom; (2) Once in a while; (3) Sometimes;
(4) Often; (5) Very frequently.

1. I set a personal example of what I expect of others.
2. I talk about future trends that will influence how our work gets done.
3. I challenge people to try out new and innovative ways to do their work.
4. I actively listen to diverse points of view.
5. I make it a point to let people know about my confidence in their abilities.
6. I follow through on the promises and commitments that I make.
7. I appeal to others to share an exciting dream of the future.
8. I ask "What can we learn?" when things don't go as expected.

9. I give people a great deal of freedom and choice in deciding how to do their work.
10. I publicly recognize people who exemplify commitment to shared values.

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