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Rustin B. Lloyd
Southeastern University - Lakeland

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FROM BIBLE COLLEGE TO UNIVERSITY:
FACTORS RELATED TO INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE DURING THE LEADERSHIP OF
THREE UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS FROM 1979 TO THE PRESENT

By

RUSTIN B. LLOYD

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in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree Doctor of Education
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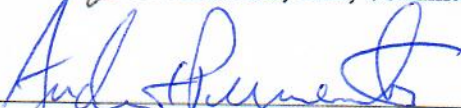
Dissertation Approved:




Janet Deck, EdD, Dissertation Chair



James A. Anderson, PhD, Committee Member



Andrew Permenter, DMin, Committee Member



James A. Anderson, PhD, Dean, College of Education

DEDICATION

To my family and friends who constantly encouraged me on my educational journey.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my Chair, Dr. Janet Deck, who encouraged me that I had a topic worth pursuing. Dr. Deck's gentle prompting helped me to make progress as I was losing hope that this research project would ever get done. I would like to also thank my committee members, Dr. Permenter and Dr. Anderson, for their helpful feedback and the time spent reading the various drafts of this dissertation. Finally, I would like to thank the leaders who participated in this study. Not only did they drive change in the organization, but their reflections will help others understand how to produce effective change.

Abstract

Higher education is known for its slow rate of change, but as the 21st century continues institutions of higher education (IHEs) are feeling the pressure to adapt. In addition to the pressures faced by higher education at large, Christian IHEs faces increasing secularization. This qualitative case study examined the underlying history and rationale for transition and change during the administrations of three presidents. Using organization change theory, three administrators were interviewed to determine the factors that influenced change at a Christian IHE from 1979 to 2019. The institutional changes in Christian higher education provided rich areas for research on leadership and organizational change, growth, and development. Results indicated that religious identity, institutional identity, academic growth, student population and demographic growth, governance and leadership, and finances were all factors that influenced change.

Keywords: Christian, evangelical, Pentecostal, organizational change, institution of higher education, religious identity, institutional identity, academic growth, student population, governance and leadership, finances

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I. INTRODUCTION

Institutions of higher education (IHEs) were infamous for their slow rate of change (Murray, 2008). As globalization continued to influence industries, higher education institutions were wrestling with appropriate ways to respond to the correlating pressures (Huber, 2016; Samier, 2015). The ballooning costs of college tuition and fees, textbooks, housing and food, along with the federal and state governments' desire for high levels of participation of their citizens in higher education and parents' questions about the ultimate value have all worked together to place enormous pressures on both small and large universities. A direct and positive outcome of these pressures have influenced IHEs' to consider socio-economic status more thoughtfully and to provide different ways for disadvantaged students to earn a college education (Declercq & Verboven, 2015). Administrators of IHEs were encouraged to be entrepreneurial in their vision for the future of their institutions (Hittenberger, 2007) and to build the capacity of the institutions to change quickly.

In addition to all the external pressures mentioned above at secular universities, Christian colleges and universities have encountered and responded to increased secularization (Glanzer, Alleman, & Ream, 2017; Marsden, 1996). In response to critiques by accrediting agencies and the general public as well as increased secularization of American society, many Christian colleges have faced and addressed accusations of a lack of intellectual rigor sometimes found within the evangelical subculture (Galli et al., 2018; Noll, 1995). In the main, most of the

critiques centered around students' adhering to a denominational or confessional ethos without sufficient emphasis on critical thinking and exploration of alternative ideas and theories (Glanzer et al., 2017) and in many cases, lack of faculty and student diversity on Christian college campuses (Longman, 2017).

In 1979, a small Bible college located in the southeastern region of the United States hired a new president. Over the next 40 years, the Bible college experienced several organizational transitions. The proposed qualitative case study will examine the underlying history and rationale for transition and change during the administrations of three presidents.

Background of the Study

In the midst of the Great Depression, churches in the United States, and in particular the rural South, searched for solutions to the desperation experienced by Americans. Many evangelists traveled the South and witnessed the sheer magnitude of impoverished and uneducated southerners who grasped for salvation in what seemed to be a hopeless situation. Churches and evangelists did what they could; while some evangelicals turned to the government, others turned to revival (Greene, 2017).

Recognizing the need to do more, evangelist Guy Shields set out to establish a Bible school that would serve the southeastern states. In 1935 during a camp meeting, the *Alabama Shield of Faith Institute* was founded in New Brockton, Alabama (van der Laan, 2010). Due to the state of the U.S. economy in the 1930s, the new school had financial constraints, but revival and the desire to train students in the Bible kept the school going. The 1937 school catalog identified the school as a Bible-training school: "South-Eastern Bible Institute [name changed in 1936] is a Bible training school, for prospective ministers, missionaries, and Christian workers,

whose aim is to develop in each student three paramount necessities for successful Christian living, or service, i.e. Spirituality, Knowledge, and Vision” (van der Laan, 2010, p. 14).

Between 1935 and 1956 the school relocated to several different locations and experienced multiple name changes until settling in Lakeland, Florida under the name South-Eastern Bible College. In 1977, the college was renamed Southeastern College of the Assemblies of God due to confusion with a school by the same name in Alabama. At the time of the name change, college administrators made it abundantly clear that the mission of the college remained unchanged. According to the Fall 1977 issue of the *Southeasterner*, “It is to be thoroughly understood that there has been no change in the philosophies of the college” (van der Laan, 2010, p. 90).

In 1986, under the leadership of President James Hennesy, Southeastern College of the Assemblies of God (Southeastern) earned regional accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). The accreditation marked a major academic milestone for the college. Although still considered a Bible college, Southeastern was required to build up the academic credentials of its faculty; more than 40% of the faculty were required to hold doctoral degrees. In addition, the library was required to expand its resources (van der Laan, 2010, p. 94).

After the retirement of Dr. Hennesy, Dr. Mark Rutland was hired as the new president of Southeastern in 1999. Enrollment grew from around 1,000 to over 3,000 during his tenure; new faculty and staff were hired; facilities were upgraded to create a coherent architectural presence and sufficient housing for the growing student body; and landscapes resembling a tropical paradise were created on campus (van der Laan, 2010). In addition, new undergraduate majors and graduate programs were developed. Dr. Rutland had a vision for Southeastern to transition to a liberal arts college, and ultimately, to a university. In 2001, Southeastern College went

through the SACS reaffirmation process (the process by which the accreditor requires a report verifying that the school has achieved and maintained the required components required for accreditation) and was approved. Subsequently, the college began to make the transition to a university; in 2005, Southeastern College of the Assemblies of God became Southeastern University. This transition led to substantial changes in the organizational structure of the university to include four colleges and deans responsible for their administration: College of Education, College of Business and Legal Studies, College of Arts & Sciences, and College of Christian Ministries and Religion.

In 2011, Dr. Kent Ingle became president of Southeastern University (van der Laan, 2010). Under his leadership, the university experienced unprecedented growth in student enrollment, facilities, athletics, and programming. The student population grew from around 2,500 in 2011 to more than 8,700 in 2019 (Reeves, Lloyd, & Permenter, 2019). Much of the student growth was influenced by the introduction of the School of Unrestricted Education, which included online education, dual enrollment, and extension sites across the United States (Reeves, et al, 2019). The addition of a university football team, as well as other athletics, also fueled growth of both facilities and enrollment. In 2013, the university added its first doctoral program, the Doctor of Education, followed by the addition of a Doctor of Ministry in 2017, and a Doctor in Strategic Leadership and PhD in Organizational Leadership in 2018.

The institutional changes in the history of Southeastern University (SEU) provided rich areas for research on leadership and organizational change, growth, and development. This study focused on the leadership initiatives of SEU's presidents during the institutional transitions and the factors that influenced the changes. The researcher interviewed three SEU administrators who served during periods of rapid change from 1979 to 2019.

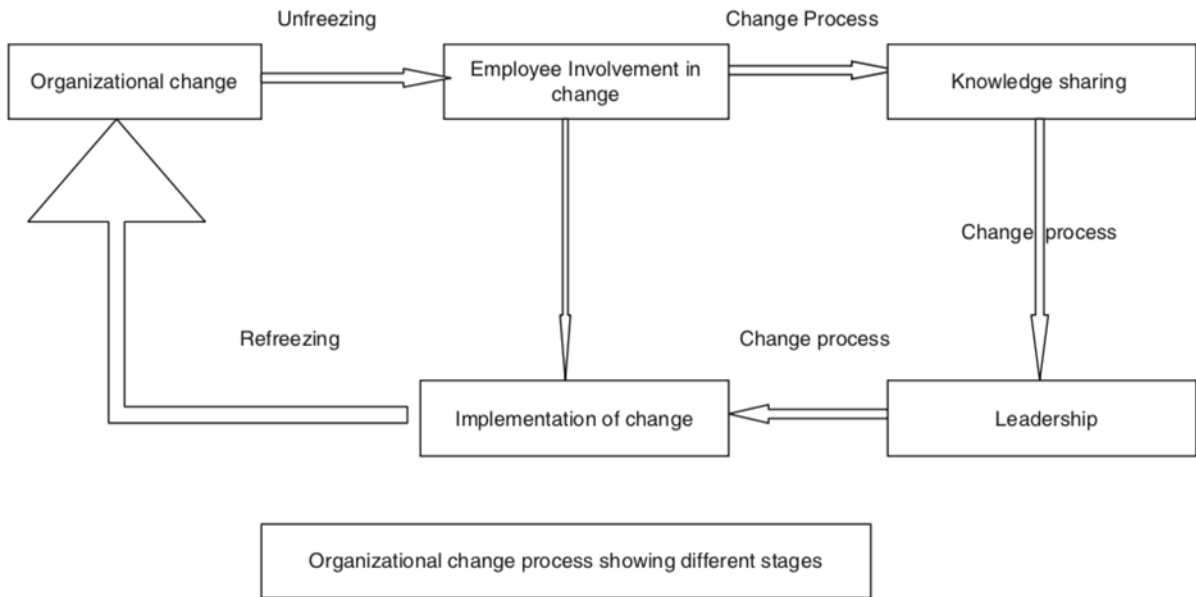
Conceptual Framework

The theoretical underpinnings of this case study relied on organizational change theory. “Organizational change explains the movement of an organization from the known (current state) state to the unknown (desired future state) state” (Hussain et al., 2018, p. 123). The foundations of change theory were found in the work of Kurt Lewin’s classic model for change, which includes three steps: unfreezing, change, and refreezing (Lewin, 1951). Lewin argued that successful change can be planned, but it required an unfreezing in order for the status quo to change. “As this approach refers to episodic organizational change and allows conceptual thinking about the main driving forces of change, it seems to be an adequate theoretical point of departure (Seyfried & Ansmann, 2018, p. 1062). Lewin (1951) concluded that the model is dependent on creating the perception that change is needed. Leaders need to create a motivation for change to occur. The change is then identified, and unfreezing phase begins. During the unfreezing phase, organizational leaders need to create an awareness that the status quo prevents the organization from reaching its goals.

Figure 1 depicts the process of the change model developed by Lewin (1951). Typically, leaders first identify a need for organizational change, although the need may arise from other sectors of an institution. The organization then begins the process of unfreezing and creating employee involvement. As the change process takes place, knowledge sharing between employees and leadership is emphasized. Communication and knowledge sharing are essential in order to create organizational cohesiveness and buy-in of the change. According to Lewin, without proper communication, education, and time, employee resistance to change will increase. Once knowledge sharing is complete, the leadership can begin the change process in concert with employees. After implementing the change, the refreezing phase takes place to

consolidate the change and one can measure the impact of change as part of a continuous improvement process.

Figure 1. Lewin’s model of organizational change. (Hussain et al., 2018)



In addition to Lewin’s (1951) foundational work, John Kotter’s (2012) eight-stage process of creating change is helpful to describe the process of change within an organization. Leaders must play the role of change agents in the unfreezing process. “The transformational leadership style affects the organizational change process. In this type of leadership style, the leaders coordinate with employees, share their knowledge, [and] give opportunity in making decisions in organizational level” (Hussain et al., 2018, p. 126). Given that leaders drive change within Lewin’s (1951) model, Kotter (2012) provides an eight-stage framework for leaders to follow when creating change. The eight stages are

- establishing a sense of urgency;
- creating a guiding coalition;
- developing a vision and strategy;

- communicating the change vision;
- empowering broad-based action;
- generating short-term wins;
- consolidating gains and producing more change and;
- anchoring new approaches in the culture.

Kotter (2012) highlighted globalization as the inciting incident that sparks change in an organization. Most institutions of higher education were in the process of responding to globalization, which influences cost, technology, and delivery of education to students. Both Lewin's (1951) and Kotter's (2012) models of change and the influence of leadership provide strong theoretical bases for the qualitative study of change at a Christian university.

Significance of the Study

Many scholars have overlooked the influence of evangelical institutions of higher education on academia and vice versa. The oversight is likely a result of anti-intellectualism that runs in many fundamentalist and evangelical circles (Galli et al., 2018; Noll, 1994). The formation and development of evangelical Bible colleges and their transition to universities should be examined further. This study adds to the body of literature on organizational change, informs Christian IHEs on organizational change processes, discusses the influence of leadership on change, reports the factors that motivated change, and conveys the results of a major academic transition and its challenges

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to analyze the influence of the internal and external factors related to institutional change during the leadership of three university presidents from 1979 to the present.

Overview of Methodology

Research Design

The research design of this study was a non-experimental, qualitative case study of the factors that influenced change during three administrations at a Christian IHE from 1979 to 2019. The proposed study was a single instrumental case study that used the case organization as an example of the factors that influence organizational change in Christian colleges and universities.

Archived accreditation documents and school catalogs from the target university were examined qualitatively by the researcher to determine the changes from 1979 to 2019 that laid the groundwork for the transitions at the university led by three different administrations. The researcher then conducted semi-structured interviews of the presidents at the target university who were present during the change process.

Research Questions

Q1: What were the factors that influenced institutional change during the leadership of three university presidents from 1979 to 2019?

Q2: What were the outcomes of those changes?

Data Collection

Data collection in the first phase of the study consisted of procurement of primary sources of accreditation documents and school catalogs of the target institution from the Office of Institutional Research. Primary sources included documentation from the target institution from 1979 to 2019 and included a review of the school's mission, vision, and stated values; a review of academic programs, faculty members, students, and a wide variety of organizational records related to curricula, student learning, financial resources, governance, and facilities. The

review of archival data assisted the researcher in preparing for the interviews and provided context for the overall study.

In the second phase of the study, semi-structured interviews of administrators who were present during the transition period were conducted by the researcher. The following leaders at the target university were interviewed:

- Mrs. Margie Hennesy, Southeastern College of the Assemblies of God Director of College Relations, 1979-1999;
- Dr. Mark Rutland, Southeastern College/Southeastern University President, 1999-2009; and
- Dr. Kent Ingle, Southeastern University President, 2011-Present.

After approval by Southeastern University's Institutional Review Board, the researcher conducted the semi-structured interviews, which assisted the researcher in ascertaining the target school's vision, leadership, and the social, historical, and organizational contexts of each presidency. The interview questions (see Appendix A) were designed to assist the researcher to categorize the factors that motivated change during each presidency during the prescribed period. The interview questions were validated by the dissertation committee prior to conducting the interviews. The interviews were audio-recorded, and the recordings were transcribed.

Procedures

Archival document analysis. The researcher examined the historic archival documents related to accreditation and school catalogs during the defined time period of the study (1979-2019) in order to ascertain patterns of development and transitions over time at the institution and to prepare the researcher for the interviews.

Interview analysis. The interviews were coded into themes for interpretation. As Creswell (2013) suggested, the researcher formed a description using the data from the interviews and related the data to themes found in both the interviews and in the organizational change model. The researcher followed several steps during the data analysis.

First, the researcher validated the transcripts with each interviewee. Then the researcher reviewed the interview data by reading the transcripts multiple times to provide notes on emerging ideas.

Writing notes or memos in the margins of field notes or transcripts or under images helps in this initial process of exploring a database. Scanning the text allows the researcher to build a sense of the data as a whole without getting caught up in the details of coding.

(Creswell, 2013, p. 184)

Once the researcher gained an understanding of emerging ideas, the process of describing and coding from the interviews continued. Coding is essential to creating a description of the data related to themes in the theoretical model and organizational change literature.

The process of coding is central to qualitative research and involves making sense of the text collected from interviews, observations, and documents. Coding involves aggregating the text or visual data into small categories of information, seeking evidence for the code from different databases being used in a study, and then assigning a label to the code. (Creswell, 2013, p. 189)

Coding each of the transcripts assisted the researcher in determining both individual themes and group themes.

Limitations

The analysis for this study was based on a small sample size at one Christian Institution of Higher Education. The study contained data that was subjective and possibly influenced by the effects of time. One of the intended participants passed away before an interview was conducted. As a result, two of the participants were presidents of the organization, and one a high-level administrator, and wife, of the intended participant. In addition, the perspective of organization change was that of solely the leaders; staff and faculty were not included in the collection or analysis of data.

Definition of Key Terms

Evangelicalism is not similar to other Christian “isms” such as Catholicism or Pentecostalism because it does not have many well-defined boundaries. “All discussions of evangelicalism, therefore, are always both descriptions of the way things really are as well as efforts within our own minds to provide some order for a multifaceted, complex set of impulses and organizations” (Noll, 1994, p. 3). One of the best-known definitions of evangelicalism centers on *conversionism*, *activism*, *biblicism*, and *crucicentrism*; these four elements were part of a *quadrilateral* that created the foundation for evangelicalism (Bebbington, 1989; Rosell, 2008, p. 26). In other words, evangelicalism is centered on actively transforming the lives of others using the teachings of the Bible and stressing the importance of Christ’s crucifixion. Evangelicalism is not just a term used to identify doctrinal distinctives, “it can also mean a self-conscious interdenominational movement, with leaders, publications, and institutions with which people from many subgroups identify” (Marsden, 2006, p. 5).

Pentecostals, since their budding movement in the late 19th century, have been on the margins of society, and in many ways, have been marginalized in their own evangelical circles for being too radical in their faith (Rosell, 2008, pp. 93–94).

These spiritual adventurers went by a variety of names- including premillennialists, holiness folk, and, from the lips of outsiders, holy rollers. But we might call them all radical evangelicals, for they commonly insisted that the only true gospel was the ‘four-fold’ gospel of personal salvation, Holy Ghost baptism, divine healing, and the Lord's soon return” (Wacker, 2003, p. 73).

Organizational change is the fluctuation of an organization from the present state to a desired future state (Hussain et al., 2018, p. 123)

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to analyze the influence of the internal and external factors related to institutional change during the leadership of three university presidents from 1979-present. This study added to the body of literature on organizational change, informed Christian IHEs on organizational change processes, discussed the influence of leadership on change, reported the factors that motivated change, and conveyed the results of a major academic transition and its challenges. The researcher sought to answer two questions: What were the factors that influenced institutional change during the leadership of three university presidents from 1979 to 2019? and what were the outcomes of those changes?

Chapter 1 provided an overview of the study. Chapter 2 examines the literature as it related to organizational change and leadership, American evangelical education, and leadership and change in Christian higher education. Chapter 3 describes the case study methodology used in the study including participants, role of the researcher, and data collection measures taken to

conduct a valid, reliable, and ethical study. Chapter 4 discusses the results as they related to the research questions and emerging themes. Chapter 5 allows for discussion of the results as well as findings related to the literature, limitations of the study, and implications and recommendations for future research.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to ascertain the factors that produced organizational change at an evangelical IHE from 1979 to 2019 and what the outcome of those changes were. The researcher interviewed three leaders at the IHE over the 40-year period. Given the nature of the study, the literature review is divided into three major sections: organizational change and leadership, American evangelical education, and leadership and change in Christian higher education.

The section organizational change and leadership focused on several factors that play a role in organizational change and on the role of leaders in that change. First, the literature connected to lifelong learning and leadership was reviewed to understand what lifelong learning is, why it is essential to leadership, and the role educators play in fostering lifelong learning. Next, a review was conducted on levels of organizational change ranging from the individual, group, and systems level of organizational change. Then, organizational models were reviewed to understand how organizational change is integrated. The impact of organizational change on employees and how leaders navigate the implementation of change on internal constituents was explored when reviewing psychological contracts and organizational change. The final subsection reviewed the ideas of strategic leadership when leading organizational change.

The section on American evangelical education sheds light on theological, cultural, and political elements that influenced the formation, separation, and expansion of evangelical higher

education. First, the historical background of evangelical intellectual life in the United States was traced to provide context. The last half of the literature review focused more narrowly on evangelical higher education in the United States. The section on American evangelical education provided the context for the themes found in this study and helps the reader better understand the organizational change that was identified in this case study.

The final section explored leadership and change within Christian higher education. Organizational climate, as it relates to commitment within Christian IHE was examined. The impact of globalization and the role of Christian higher education as well as elements that create change in Christian IHEs were reviewed. Then, leadership changes in Christian higher education, positive leadership, and institutional vision were dissected. Finally, how leaders should navigate uncertainty, accreditation, and faith communities with the context of evangelical higher education were reviewed.

Organizational Change and Leadership

Lifelong Learning and Leadership

The scholarly debate on lifelong learning has been developing for a number of years. Wilbur Cohen, former dean of the College of Education at the University of Michigan, issued a challenge to IHEs: universities and college need to be more flexible to meet the needs of lifelong learners (Cohen, 1975). Over 40 years later, scholars are still calling for more to be done to reach lifelong learners. What is lifelong learning, why is it essential to leadership, and what role do educators play in fostering lifelong learning?

Cohen (1975) suggested that a person who learns by doing, who continually processes, and who learns by experience is a valuable member of an organization. In short, lifelong learning requires an insatiable curiosity and the desire to change. Kotter (2012) reinforced

Cohen's proclamation when he connected lifelong learning with complete drive, but he also provided more specific characteristics of lifelong learners such as risk taking, humble self-reflection, solicitation of opinions, careful listening, and openness to new ideas. These five habits support the idea of lifelong learning, but Kotter also explained what happens when the habits are put in practice.

Kotter (2012) stated that lifelong learners "develop the capacity to handle a complex and changing business environment. They grow to become unusually competent in advancing organizational transformation. They learn to be leaders" (A Prototype of the Twenty-First-Century Executive section, para. 6). The consistency between Kotter (2012) and Cohen (1975) demonstrates that, even though dated, Cohen (1975) connected with the concept of lifelong learning that is still being wrestled with in the 21st century.

Kotter (2012) provided a simplistic historical trend to assist in the understanding of why lifelong learning is essential to 21st century leadership when he described the change in organizational structures for both white- and blue-collar workers. No longer can workers stay in one job or one role for their entire careers. Changes in technology, workflow, and marketplaces are forcing workers to adapt. Kotter (2012) postulated that if people are not dedicated to lifelong learning, they will not be able to adapt to rapid changes within their organizations. Individuals who do not embrace lifelong learning often fear change.

Workers see jobs seeming to disappear all around them. Individuals hear stories about people who have been downsized or reengineered out of work. Employees worry about health insurance and the cost of college for their children. So, they do not think about growth or don't think about personal renewal. They do not think about developing

whatever leadership potential they have. Instead workers cling defensively to what they currently have. (Kotter, 2012, That Necessary Leap into the Future section, para. 1)

If people are to be encouraged to embrace the future and lifelong learning, it must be asked what role educators have in developing the desire for lifelong learning in students.

Tucker (2016) explored the importance of helping students develop the desire for lifelong learning. With the advent of the internet and, with it, search engines like Google, it has become increasingly unrealistic to expect students to be passive learners. Tucker (2016) called for educators to create a way for students to find and understand all the information that is available to them. Educating students on how to interpret the diversity of information around them will aid in the creation of lifelong learners, but some wonder if the commodification of education creates a hostile space toward lifelong learning. Although Tucker (2016) wrote on the positive use of technology and online education to assist in creating lifelong learners, Winslow (2017) warned about the dangers of technology and online education. The Winslow (2017) addressed numerous issues including how the commodification of higher education is hurting universities because they are not creating lifelong learners who adapt to different workspace environments. Ultimately both Tucker (2016) and Winslow (2017) agreed that educators should encourage lifelong learning at all levels of education so that students do not limit their learning to a commodified framework.

The conversation around lifelong learning is not a new one. Over 40 years ago, educators warned about the changing society, but many, like Cohen, remained hopeful that the creation of lifelong learners would meet the challenge of a rapidly changing society. Lifelong learning dismisses the traditional view of leadership as a gift; instead, it is a skill that requires the drive to learn.

Understanding the role of lifelong learning at the individual level is only the start to understanding leadership's role in organizational change. Although organizational change must involve the individual, one must take into account all levels of an organization to ensure that lasting, transformational change occurs. The next section evaluates the levels of change within an organization from the individual, group, and system perspective.

Levels of Organizational Change

Burke (2017) elaborated on three levels of organizational change. The first level of organizational change is the individual level. Change at the individual level is often met with resistance. The next level of change is the group level. Burke (2017) argued that there are many benefits, but also challenges, of change at the group level. The last level of change is system-level change. Change rarely begins at the systems level but rather occurs after change in the individual and at the group level. It is critical to understand how each level operates if one wants to understand the process of organizational change.

Burke (2017) wrote that it is vital for leaders to understand individual change to help the organization successfully adapt. Burke (2017) wrote that individuals who resist change do so out of fear of the "loss of the known" (p. 110) or the perceived loss of value. Therefore, when discussing the placement of personnel within an organization, one should consider the resistance that might be encountered as a result of the organizational change. Burke (2017) argued that resistance is not a bad thing, but one must be careful not to over-generalize as not everyone reacts with resistance. Oreg (2003) agreed that people react to change in different ways such as routine seeking, emotional reaction, cognitive rigidity, and short-term focus. Having an individual in the right position, at the right time, can reduce the resistance discussed by Burke (2017) and Oreg (2003). Oreg (2003) mentioned that most studies tended to focus on situational

antecedents, but other research was beginning to address how factors such as a “lack of defensive rigidity” (p. 680) help in fostering adaptability to change. Having the people in particular positions during a time of transition can help minimize individual differences that cause resistance to change in the organization.

In addition to writing about change at the individual level, Burke (2017) also wrote on why understanding group change within an organization is important: groups of specialists who can create something greater than the individual are becoming more common. Burke (2017) wrote that work groups foster social relationships that contribute to how individuals view the reality of corporate culture. Beckhard (1972) provided several reasons why team building is essential for an organization: team building helps to set goals, offers an opportunity to understand processes, and allows for a chance to examine interpersonal relationships. Although there are positive aspects of team building, it is not without challenges such as suboptimization and turnover (Kanter, 1982).

The last level of organizational change is system-level change. Burke (2017) argued that change rarely begins at the system level because changes more often take place at the individual and group level and work their way to large system change. Lewin’s (1951) three-phase model helps explain organization change at the systems level. Although Burke (2017) made it clear that Lewin's (1951) model is simple, he also explained how it set the foundation for more elaborate models. Another informative aspect of system change discussed by Burke (2017) was the system responses to organizational change: revolution becomes, at best, evolution, insufficient sense of urgency, this too shall pass, diversionary tactics, and lack of followership. Burke (2017) also reviewed ways of coping with system level change and argued that many of the methods used to cope with reactions at the individual and group level also applied at the system level.

Organizational change occurs at three levels. Individual change can be met with resistance, which can be reduced if the right people in the right positions. Next, group change occurs for various reasons, and Tuckman's (1965) process assisted in understanding why change occurs at the group level. Finally, system-level change often occurs after changes at both the individual and group level. Understanding changes at all three levels is key to understanding how organizational change occurs as a whole. Once a strong understanding of how organizational change occurs at various levels within an organization, implementation of change can occur. The core of change management is the ability to apply theory to practice. The next section discusses the integration or application of organizational change, specifically through organizational models.

Integrating Organizational Change

Burke (2017) called for the reader to shift attention from how to think about organizational change to how to think about implementing change within the organization. By understanding integrating models, one should be able to apply methods of change. It is essential to know why one should use an organizational model. Burke (2017) offered five reasons why organizational models are important.

First, organizational models can help categorize. An example of the importance of categorization at an IHE can be found in the role of assessment coordinator within a given academic department. Assessment coordinators are responsible for collecting data from majors that demonstrate the level of learning that occurs within the program (Miller, Lloyd, & Permenter, 2013). Many data points are collected and used to connect learning to specific program learning outcomes (PLOs). PLOs and rubrics help to categorize the vast amount of data that is collected.

Next, Burke (2017) stated organizational models can help enhance understanding. Again, program assessment is a great example. Once data are categorized, program faculty should be able to understand where students are succeeding, and where they are struggling in the learning processes. Closely related to enhancing understanding is how organizational models can help interpret data about the organization. Program-level assessment is part of the more extensive assessment process at an IHE. For example, the assessment committee at an IHE submitted an institutional effectiveness report on academic programs to its regional accreditor that provided analysis of student learning at the university (Rose, 2017).

In addition to categorization, increased understanding, and interpretation, organizational models can provide a standard shorthand language (Burke, 2017). Instead of making statements such as “How do we know what students learn in a course matches what they should learn in the program and in turn supports continued institutional accreditation?” Writers can say, “The ILOs align with PLOs and were submitted to SACSCOC.” As Burke (2017) concluded, a model helps employees communicate better.

Finally, Burke (2017) wrote that organizational models can help guide change within the organization. An example of how models provide change can be seen in the academic program review (APR). The APR is a two-year process in which an academic program identifies and evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of the program and then develops an Academic Plan that will guide the program for five years (Miller, et al., 2013).

Understanding how to think about organizational change is critical; however, thinking about organizational change does not do much if one also does not consider how to implement change within the organization. Burke (2017) explained that organizational models are important because it allows for categorization, increased understanding, interpretation, a shared

language, and guidance for change. With thousands of parts within an organization, it becomes necessary to decide which parts are most important. Ultimately, organizational models can provide an efficient way to implement organizational change.

Once the application of organizational change theory is applied at the organizational/system level, leaders must continue to keep in mind each of the three levels of organizational change. Not only does the implementation of change occur at system level, but that change also impacts the individual and group levels of an organization. Effective leaders understand how to apply theory to practice at each level. The next section discusses the role of psychological contracts in organizational change and how change can impact culture of the organization as a whole but also as individuals.

Psychological Contracts and Organizational Change

Organizations are made up of many complex processes that consistently progress, and the leader is obligated to help guide the changes that continue to produce progress (Komives, Lucas, & McMahon, 2007). Organizational change occurs for various reasons, but it is imperative that leaders recognize the need for change and prepare employees to adapt to the change. The transition between what was and what will be may be met with resistance by employees if leadership fails to honor psychological contracts. In order to better understand organizational change, and the importance of psychological contracts, understanding basic elements of organizational cultural change as well as the different aspects within psychological contracts is vital.

Burke (2014) described three elements that form an organization's culture: artifacts, espoused beliefs and values, and basic underlying assumptions. Artifacts are the first element people encounter upon being introduced to the organization's culture. Values and beliefs become

apparent next, and, with more time and observation, the underlying assumptions appear (Burke, 2014). Along with the organizational vision one can find organizational values and educational philosophies organized by subject areas. If schools go through a transition such as a declining enrollment, a search for a new president, or an installment of a new president, an audit whether formal or informal is conducted where questions should be asked about why certain things were done the way they were (e.g. Why was the school not marketing? Why was a new location had not considered? etc.). The answer often is that it is just the way it has always been done, providing an example of the underlying assumptions within the organization, "...basic underlying assumptions—those unspoken rules, mostly below the conscious level of organizational members, that guide behavior" (Burke, 2014, p. 258). A new leader may know that something must be changed for the school to grow; however, the leader must take the time to understand underlying assumptions and psychological contracts of the employees and students.

Psychological contracts are "reciprocal obligations and mutual commitments, both stated and implied, that define their [employees and organizations] relationship" (Strebel, 1996). Strebel (1996) explained that common elements of psychological contracts fall into three categories: formal, psychological, and social.

The formal dimension is often clear, for example, employee contracts. Schein (2010) wrote that if the formal dimension of a psychological contract is broken, it could form an environment that creates "survival anxiety" (p. 304) resulting from "fear of loss of power or position, temporary incompetence, punishment of incompetence, loss of personal identity, or loss of group membership" (p. 304). Changing the employment contract, and other changes within the formal dimension, created a sense of fear and survival among many of the employees; leading to changes in the psychological dimension.

The psychological dimension is more implicit between the employer and the employee. If change is not clearly communicated before it is implemented, it could result in a lack of trust in leadership (Strebel, 1996). Once a psychological contract is violated, it takes a completely new leader to rebuild that trust (Beer & Nohria, 2000). The social dimension of the contract is often how employees interpret the culture. Strebel (1996) stated that the social dimension is often connected with how the mission and values of the organization are lived out in the day-to-day operation of the organization.

Organizations are constantly adapting to change. Leaders need to understand the various levels of culture within an organization before they start making changes (Burke, 2014). If the leader does not clearly communicate and prepare employees for change, it is likely that the leader will violate one or more of the dimensions within the psychological contract between the employer and the employee (Strebel, 1996). As the literature has demonstrated, organization change is complex and multifaceted. Strategic leadership is necessary to navigate all aspects of organization change, and to ensure that any attempt at organizational change is successful and sustainable. The next section discusses the role of strategic leadership in organizational change.

Strategic Leadership

“Strategic leadership is the ability to anticipate, envision, maintain flexibility, and empowers others to create strategic change as necessary” (Hickman, 2016, p. 501). Kotter (2012) aligned with Hickman (2016) when he wrote that leaders need to create the vision for the future and ensure that people are inspired to follow the vision that is before them. Burke (2017) explored the personality of a leader regarding politics, power, and being an agent of change; he wondered if “high emotional intelligence [and] self-awareness” (p. 371) are vital in leading change.

Strategic leadership involves creating a vision and motivating followers to achieve the organization's vision while at the same time continuing to build the skills of the followers (Hickman, 2016). Developing and understanding people are key factors in forming strategic leadership; however, it is not only understanding others, but also understanding an individual's own biases. Part of the self-awareness described by Burke (2017) is also discussed by Hickman (2016) when he referred to team heterogeneity. The complexity of internal and external sources necessitates a diverse management team. A transformational leader should have a heterogeneous team if the leader hopes to create and foster lasting organizational change. Again, strategic leadership is not just about the leader, but about those influenced by the leader. Kotter (2012) argued that leaders need to fight complacency and to teach others how to lead with a sense of urgency, "Sources of complacency are rarely attacked adequately because urgency is not an issue for people who have been asked all their lives merely to maintain the current system like a softly humming Swiss watch" (Kotter, 2012, Management versus Leadership section, para. 5). A historical example of the concept of the heterogeneous team, revolutionary change, and teaching others to lead is found in Abraham Lincoln's cabinet at the start of the American Civil War. Unlike many presidents who filled cabinet positions with friends with homogeneous views, Lincoln's cabinet was populated by his political rivals who were often in opposition to one another. Lincoln brilliantly used the contention within the team to make complex decisions during the Civil War (Goodwin, 2006).

Burke (2018), Hickman (2016), and Kotter (2012) tended to agree with one another on the concept of strategic leadership. Hickman (2016) provided the most meticulous overview but Kotter (2012) and Burke (2018) offered up various helpful additions to what it means to be a strategic leader that brings transformation to an organization.

The first half of this review has provided the foundation for organization change. The literature provided a board perspective on various change management theories, and how theory and practices converge. To better understand the context of organizational change at a historically Pentecostal institution of higher education, the next section will provide an overview of that organizational frame of reference.

American Evangelical Education

To understand organizational change in the context of evangelical higher education, one must examine the intellectual, theological, political, and social influences that connect to change in evangelical life of the mind. First, the roots of evangelical life and change were explored in revivalism, and secularism. Then a history of Christian higher education was examined. Finally, several works from presidents of evangelical colleges were reviewed to provide their perspectives on Christian higher education.

Intellectual Life

Timothy Smith (2004) is widely recognized as the first evangelical historian to make it into the world of secular research universities. Smith first published *Revivalism & Social Reform* in 1957. His work explored how revivalism brought forth social reform in the years before the Civil War. By doing so, Smith (2004) was one of the first historians to question the dominant narrative, which declared the cause of the revivals in early America was the result of economic and social tensions. Instead Smith (2004) proclaimed that the revivals provided an avenue for the common man to pursue change.

Although this work does not seem directly connected to the topic at hand, it does prove helpful in understanding the historical connection between evangelicals and change, a driving force in evangelical intellectual life. The Great Withdraw of fundamentalists in the 1930s and

1940s led many historians to think that the idea of transforming and engaging culture is something that “new” evangelicalism brought about. Smith’s (2004) work allows historians to place the emergence of New Evangelicalism in the 1960s and 70s within a larger context.

Wolfe (2000), the director of the Boisi Center for Religion and American Public Life, at Boston College, added a perspective on evangelical intellectual life. Wolfe provided a brief history of fundamentalism and the rise of New Evangelicalism, but the value of this work was demonstrated when he wrote on the more recent developments. Wolfe (2000) wrote on how evangelical institutions such as Wheaton, Fuller, and Calvin were leading the way in evangelical thought on science, psychology, and sociology. Wolfe (2000) even compared postmodernism to fundamentalism in several regards, such as the democratic spirit and suspicion of authority. Wolfe as an outspoken atheist, sociologist, and political scientist, added a different perspective than the majority of the works in this literature review. Wolfe’s work took an intellectual look at evangelical culture specifically, and evangelical higher education in particular.

Mark Noll’s work on the intellectual life of evangelicals created more of a debate within than outside of evangelical subculture. Noll (1994) first discussed the impact of revivalism. He wrote on how revivalism opened the door for the common man to create change; however, Noll (1994) declared that the emphasis on the individual and the anti-establishmentarianism fostered anti-intellectualism among evangelicals. Noll (1994) also criticized the fundamentalist theology of dispensationalism for contributing to anti-intellectualism among evangelicals because it caused everything to be seen through the lens of the Second Coming of Christ.

As a work on evangelical intellectual life, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* proved helpful when writing on American evangelical higher education. Noll (1994) wrote not only on fundamentalist theology but also on its lasting impact on evangelical thought. Just as helpful

was Noll's analysis of Christian colleges. He pointed to two problems that face Christian colleges in regard to evangelical intellectual life. First, television personalities such as Pat Robinson and Jerry Falwell tried to change Christian higher education without academic credentials. The second problem was the dualistic mindset of sacred vs. secular. Noll's book provided a much-needed intellectual history of American evangelicalism.

The first part of Marsden's (1996) work on evangelical intellectualism was an intellectual history on Christian scholarship in America. The second part of Marsden (1996) was twofold. First, the book was a call for Christians academics to contribute to the scholarly discussion within academia. Second, the book was a defense on why Christian scholarship should not be looked down upon. Considering that George Marsden is one of the most outspoken and most known evangelical scholars in American higher education today, it is appropriate to understand his perspective on evangelical higher education. Marsden called for the acceptance and participation among Christian scholars, not just within evangelical higher education, but also in the world of academia as a whole, indicating that scholarship might not be the main goal of most Christian colleges and universities. To better understand the desire for change, one must look at the formation and development of evangelical higher education.

Evangelical Higher Education

Dochuk (2011) did not specifically look at the formation of Christian colleges as his main topic; rather, what he examined included how evangelical business leaders founded Christian colleges such as Pepperdine, John Brown, and Harding College as a response to the change they perceived in American culture and politics. More than any other author in this review, Dochuk (2011) uncovered the political motivations of the evangelical movement to form distinctly evangelical colleges.

The neo-evangelical movement was caused by a number of things, but most importantly for this research was a commitment to the sanctity of the local community, which, according to Dochuk (2011), gave southerners, and in-turn southern evangelicals, a sense of guardianship over their society. As they moved west, this feeling of guardianship grew stronger and southern evangelicals felt more at odds with the liberal society, which caused them to set up separate systems of schools. Duchuk (2011) argued that scholars needed to understand the evangelicals' focus on changing the moral geography of American culture. The focus on moral geography makes evangelicals active in a number of areas that scholars have not explored such as education.

Marsden (1996) explored the slow secularization of American universities. Marsden (1996) wrote on the impact of liberal Christianity and the idea of cultivating Christian character without the sectarian nature of denominational ties. Marsden (1996) discussed the replacement of Christian ethics and theology courses with classes on moral philosophy and, later on, psychology courses. Marsden (1996) effectively showed the movement toward secularism with the continued development of positivism and the scientific method. Many evangelicals latched on to the interpretation of the world with the logic "all truth is God's truth," but this backfired with the introduction of Darwinism. Marsden discussed the influence of progressive thinkers such as John Dewey and the philosophy of relativism. As professionalization of the professoriate continued to gain momentum, so did the development of academic freedom. Many evangelicals thought academic freedom would help their cause, but instead, academic freedom pushed religion further away.

Marsden's (1996) work on the secularization within American universities gave context to the establishment of distinctly evangelical universities. The disestablishment of religion from

the academic life of once prominent evangelical colleges was one of the factors that led to the formation of a separate network of Christian colleges and universities. Two more influential factors for many conservative evangelicals was the acceptance of liberal Protestantism as the main element to cultivate Christian character in American universities, and the widespread acceptance of Darwinian evolution as opposed to evangelical biblicism of the creation story.

Marsden (1995) provided the only institutional history of the rise of New Evangelicalism in this review. He used Fuller Theological Seminary as a base in which to explore the tension between fundamentalism and New Evangelicalism. Marsden (1995) clearly delineated the differences in theology within the very fragmented subgroups of American evangelicalism. By writing on the challenges that faced the founding members of Fuller during the late 1950s to the 1970s, Marsden (1995) was able to use Fuller as a microcosm for evangelical subculture at this time.

Marsden (1995) proved helpful when studying American evangelical higher education in numerous ways. First, Marsden (1995) introduced the reader to major players within the New Evangelical movement such as C. F. Henry and Harold Ockenga. Although Marsden (1995) did not spend much time on the life of these influential people, he effectively showed the impact they had on the movement as a whole. Second, Marsden (1995) showed how one can use the history of an IHE to show larger national trends within the evangelical movement. Finally, and perhaps most important of all, Marsden's work discussed theological disagreements between fundamentalists and neo evangelicals. Although Dochuk (2011) wrote on the political convictions that led to the formation of evangelical higher education in the mid-twentieth century, Marsden (1995) wrote on the theological convictions that led evangelical leaders to form universities. When writing on American evangelical higher education, it is imperative to address

not only the political, but also the theological motivations behind the desire to form such institutions.

Ringenburg's (2006) provided the most comprehensive analysis of evangelical higher education in this review. Although the time period for his work spans from Colonial America to the United States in the 1990s, the second half of his work on evangelical colleges since 1945 proved the most helpful in providing context for this study. Ringenburg (2006) wrote in a clear concise manner providing a firm foundation for future scholars to explore Christian higher education more deeply. He discussed the emergence of modern education in general, and the impact it had on evangelical colleges in particular. Similar to Marsden's *Soul of the American University*, Ringenburg (2006) wrote on the secularization of American higher education, but he went further than Marsden by discussing the evangelical response to secularization.

The lasting impact of secularization is what sets Ringenburg's work apart from the others in this review. Many of the Bible colleges formed during the Bible college movement of the late 19th and early 20th centuries started to succumb to secularization, and as a result, Christian colleges started to form a stronger, somewhat unified, identity. Ringenburg (2006) introduced the reader to the networks and organizations that Christian colleges began to join such as the Christian College Coalition, and later, the Council of Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU). These organizations helped in the quality and growth of evangelical higher education. Ringenburg (2006) wrote a great general history of evangelical higher education and provided a firm foundation for many deeper studies.

Penning and Smidt (2002) explored the changing perceptions among evangelical college students. In some ways this work has similar to themes found in other books throughout this review. For instance, it addressed secularization theory, the effects of modernism, the defining

of the evangelical movement of the past, and the political involvement at Christian colleges. What makes this work different from others in this review, however, that although it addressed the aforementioned themes, it did so from the perspective of evangelical students by examining their beliefs on religion, morals, politics, and social tolerance.

Penning and Smidt (2002) brought the topic of evangelical higher education into the present. The authors compiled data for the book by surveying college students at nine of the top evangelical schools in America. They also used other national polls from Gallup and *Christianity Today* as measures. Compiling information of contemporary evangelical youth in this way allowed the authors to explore areas that scholars had not yet been able to analyze, such as moral boundaries, social theologies, and political activities. This work allowed for scholars to see how historical trends impact contemporary society.

The next few works examined the influence of presidents of Christian colleges and the changing perceptions of evangelical higher education. Lindsay (2007), a sociologist and current president of Gordon College, interviewed over 150 influential evangelicals to show how evangelicals have joined the leadership in academia, entertainment, business, and politics to produce organizational change demonstrating that evangelical influence goes beyond the often-cited monolith known as the Religious Right. Lindsay (2007) used a method he called leapfrog where he used his interviewees to put him in contact with other prominent evangelicals. Using the method, the author interviewed leaders from a wide variety of backgrounds. Lindsay concluded that evangelicals have a growing influence not because of a rise in adherents, but because of how they have used influence to introduce the evangelical movement to the wider public.

Litfin (2004) was the president of Wheaton College, a Christian college known for its evangelical convictions and intellectual rigor. Litfin (2004) wrote a book for those within evangelical higher education. The goal of his work was to address weaknesses that can be found in Christian higher education and to challenge those within Christian higher education to address them. Some of the many weaknesses addressed in the work by Litfin included understanding academic models of education by understanding evangelical identity more clearly, to strengthen the foundation of Christian thought, and to reconcile institutional commitment with individual freedom.

Litfin's (2004) work contributed to the study of evangelical higher education in several ways. Coming from a professed evangelical, the work showed how evangelical higher education has been flawed in the past. The work also informed the reader of the trends that have been taking place in evangelical higher education for the last several decades. Finally, the work examined evangelical colleges not from the perspective of a scholar, but from a leader of higher education within the evangelical subculture, which helped to give the reader a different perspective on the topic.

Charles Pollard (2011), president of John Brown University, shared his thoughts on some of the tenets of Christian colleges. Pollard (2011) wrote on how a sense of community is central to the soul of the Christian college. The themes in Pollard work centered around helping students find identity and build character. Essentially Pollard tracked student experiences as they progressed through the college years. His approach on building the identity and character of students is similar to George Marsden's history of the secularization of American universities, and the debate on how to form morality and character of students as universities went from sectarian colleges to liberal protestant establishments and ultimately to a secular institution.

Pollard (2011) provided the reader a snapshot of the student life perspective at a Christian college. The work engaged the reader from an evangelical perspective, which in turn, gave a first-hand look on how evangelicals see the ideal Christian college.

American evangelical education, often seen as homogeneous, is filled with intricacies of intellectual life that is often ignored when examining the evangelical subculture; in turn, it helps to provide context for evangelical higher education that is vital when discussing organizational change within evangelical institutions. The next section includes literature as it relates to leadership and change in Christian higher education.

Leadership and Change in Christian Higher Education

In his study, Thomas (2008) explored organizational climate and commitment within Christian higher education. Findings of the study included 957 employees from four evangelical universities indicating a negative correlation between organizational climate and staff members. Thomas (2008) noted that although there is nothing inherently positive or negative about organizational climate, the climate is vital to organizational outcomes. Another factor that Thomas (2008) highlighted, but self-admittedly did not fully address, was that the employee's role (faculty vs. administrator) played a role in perspective on organizational climate. What the findings suggested implicitly was as an organizational climate changes, so does commitment. As it relates to this study, leaders must be aware of the organizational climate as they seek to drive change.

In their article, Broer, Hoogland, and van der Stoep (2017) examined how a modern globalized world would necessitate a change in approach for Christian higher education. The authors investigated trends that presented challenges to Christian higher education by focusing on three Christian universities in the Netherlands—stressing that the challenges would be

recognizable at other Christian universities across the world. First, the authors focused on *glocalization* and *collividualization* in light of the limits of modernity. Glocalization was a term coined to describe increased globalization alongside an increase in localization.

Collividualization described the trend in Western society in which individuals are bound by individual choices over tradition, but the choices displayed collective patterns. In short, glocalization and collividualization demonstrated the weakening nation state with the strengthening of technology. Local challenges are solved on the local level, but on the foundation of a worldwide infrastructure. The authors suggested that Christian schools would need to shift education to create relational professionals that can bridge the gap between professionalism and spirituality in a more globalized environment that requires more flexibility in rapid change; however, the authors emphasized that while Christian higher education must adapt, it must adhere to moral traditions to create global professionals who are driven by Christian ethos.

In their article, Reynolds and Wallace (2016) examined three elements that would change Christian IHEs. The authors analyzed the changes by understanding the differences between disruptive change and technical change, and how the changes relate to social concerns faced by faith-based IHE. Reynolds and Wallace (2016) argued that leaders in Christian higher education need to understand these elements in light of the differences between disruptive and technical change if they are to be successful. The authors suggested that Christian identity and institutional identity will impact postmodern society. The authors indicated that in the midst of change, Christian higher education needs to be built on a firm foundation with leaders and board members actively and clearly promoting the mission of the school to external parties. Reynolds and Wallace (2016) also postulated that the changing of the role of traditional faculty will impact

student learning and institutional effectiveness. The authors stated that the challenge for leaders is how best to engage in academic operations with the change in faculty roles. A final predicted change was student demographics in a post-traditional higher educational environment. Citing the National Center for Educational Statistics, Reynolds and Wallace (2016) stated that historically underrepresented students are now the majority of applicants to colleges and universities. The authors predicted a change in business and educational models to adapt to student demands for accessibility, affordability, and accountability. Adapting to the future landscape of Christian higher education the authors called for flexible and dynamic leadership at all levels of the organization that will create collaborations and innovative models of learning.

Barton (2019) conducted an ethnographic case study on Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tennessee, to examine best practices of succession planning within Christian higher education. The author selected Lipscomb because of the president's intentional desire to develop leaders as a strategy for succession planning. The study focused on two different leadership programs, one called Connect and the other Bridges. The Connect program engaged 24 faculty and staff over the course of a year with other organizations within and around Nashville. The Bridge program involved 12 to 15 university employees in a number of national and international experiences to deepen leadership skills and to broaden their knowledge of higher education. Barton conducted two campus visits (including a seven-day immersion on campus) and interviewed 16 participants in both programs. Nine themes emerged from the data analysis:

- developing future leaders was a clear priority for the president;
- historical and religious cultural norms were influential;
- the purpose of two Lipscomb programs were clearly understood by participants;
- exposure to other leaders was viewed to be highly valuable;

- participants associated deep value with their engagement in the two Libscomb programs;
- intentional and ongoing efforts by the president to Connect Campus leaders within the Nashville community was important;
- clarity around ongoing plans for participants was challenging;
- the board and trustees prioritized succession planning efforts;
- intentionally developing leaders who understand the changing landscape of higher education is critical

Barton (2019) created a sense of urgency when he wrote on the unprecedented number of leadership changes within American higher education. Further, he was concerned by the lack of succession planning at Christian IHEs, especially considering over 20% of colleges and universities in America are religiously affiliated, yet hardly any studies have been conducted. The study highlighted four different strategies that should be implemented in succession planning:

- raise the strategic priority;
- identify and evaluate the depth of leadership bench;
- reevaluate hiring, promotion, and diversity policies;
- provide creative learning options

Barton (2019) called for presidents and senior leaders of Christian IHEs to intentionally develop future leaders capable of handling challenges that are unique to faith based IHEs.

In his article, Dahlvig (2018) argued that Christian higher education has an opportunity to set itself apart from nonsectarian institutions by using positive leadership to create a countermovement to help the common good for society. Historically, higher education instilled the value of personal success to help create a civil society, but Dahlvig (2018) suggested that

personal success has overshadowed the drive to assist in societal common good. Leadership in Christian higher education could create a positive work environment centered on shared service that would set Christian organizations apart and allow them to flourish in the changing landscape of higher education. Dahlvig (2018) outlined positive leadership strategies that were essential to the change process including: connecting to the global economy, engage change as a result of increased public investment and sense of accountability, understand increased student diversity will drive change, and increased globalization will necessitate change.

Abelman and Dalessandro (2009) wrote a comparative study of ACCU, ELCA, and CCCU IHE focusing on institutional vision. The schools examined were Catholic, mainline Protestant, and evangelical in nature. The study used a stratified random sample to identify two ACCU, 20 ELCA, and four CCCU institutions. Using mission and vision statements from the various organizations' websites and text analysis software, the authors found that most schools integrated religious identity and values into the organizational vision; however, leaders within the organization were less successful in articulating those values into institutional vision.

Although significant styles varied across the different religious institution types, well thought out and articulate vision statements were isolated. The authors concluded that mission and vision statements can be better utilized by Christian IHE in guiding and governing the organization.

Rine and Guthrie (2016) explored how leaders in evangelical higher education were navigating the uncertainty brought about by questions concerning cost, quality, and federal regulation following the Great Recession. They used data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) to examine access, affordability, student outcomes, and financial sustainability. Rine and Guthrie (2016) stated that although approaches to these four areas would vary by leader, access to data would be key for everyone. The data from IPEDS

demonstrated that evangelical higher education is diversifying student population at a faster rate than other schools in the private sector. The authors provided an example from the data that showed an increase of 16.1% of Asian students and 39.2% of Hispanic students as opposed to 7.6% and 26.3% respectively at non-evangelical schools. Using the College Board's Trends in College Pricing report, they also found that students are just as likely to get institutional aid. According to the report, the amount of aid is less than other private schools; however, tuition and fees tend to be lower at evangelical schools. The authors measured student outcomes by two factors: graduation rate and student loans. When compared to other private schools, evangelical colleges/universities graduated students at the same rate but had lower student debt. According to the study, the greatest area of concern was financial sustainability. Most evangelical IHE are tuition driven. As such, enrollment becomes a driving factor but at the same time, adherence to increased federal mandates hurt many evangelical colleges/ universities. Although many factors suggested that evangelical colleges/universities are similar to other private institutions of higher education, to navigate the future of evangelical higher education, leaders must be data-informed, with an institutional vision that is clear and shared. Institutional audits must be completed and shared with the various stakeholders within the organization.

Henck (2011) called for leaders in Christian higher education to understand the balance between two entities: higher education accreditation and faith communities. The author stressed that college leaders have a complex task to address both the accreditor and the faith tradition. Henck (2011) examined the culture within higher education institutions and then looked at the historical role universities have played in shaping societal values. Next the author explored cultural characteristics of Christian colleges and universities. Using John Kotter's (2012) *Leading Change*, Henck framed the call for change in higher education, but Henck (2011) wrote

on the need for preserving institutional values in a time of change. Henck (2011) stated that leaders in Christian higher education must understand organizational culture, its values, and the various stakeholders while navigating changes in expectations from society and accreditors.

Summary

Given the nature of the study, the literature review was divided into three major sections: organizational change and leadership, American evangelical education, leadership and change in Christian higher education. Organizational change and leadership examined several broad factors. Lifelong learning is essential to leadership and educators should foster lifelong learning. A leader must understand the various levels of organizational change whether it be individual, group, or entire systems. Institutions have different organizational models, and a leader should review the models to integrate organizational change correctly. Organizational change and how it is implemented affects internal and external constituents. The final subsection reviewed the ideas of strategic leadership when leading organizational change.

The section on American evangelical education explored the intricacies of evangelical theological, social, and political thought as they relate to the formation, separation, and expansion of evangelical higher education. The subsection on American evangelical education provided the context for the themes found in this study and helps the reader better understand the organizational change that occurred in this case study.

The final section explored leadership and change within Christian higher education. Organizational climate as it related to commitment within Christian IHE was examined. The influence of globalization and the role of Christian higher education as well as elements that create change in Christian IHEs were reviewed. Then leadership changes in Christian higher education, positive leadership, and institutional vision were dissected. Finally, how leaders

should navigate uncertainty, accreditation, and faith communities within the context of evangelical higher education was examined.

III. METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine the underlying history and rationale for transition and change during the administrations of three presidents at an evangelical Pentecostal IHE. A central component of the research was to identify a case institution to analyze the type of changes that occur, and to use the case as a microcosm of the larger evangelical higher education subculture between the period of 1979 to 2019. The primary purpose of a case study is to “develop an in-depth understanding of a single case or explore an issue or problem using the case as a specific illustration” (Creswell, 2013, p. 96). The intent of this case study was to explore a specific institution to understand what elements correlate to change and how said elements reflect the larger subculture

Research Design

The researcher examined several qualitative methods as presented in Creswell (2013) to determine the most suitable approach for this study. At first, ethnography seemed to be the right approach. An ethnographic study focuses on a culture-sharing group in which the researcher is immersed in the daily lives of the participants to observe their shared language and behaviors. “Ethnographies focus on developing a complex, complete description of the culture of a group, a culture-sharing group. The ethnography may be of the entire group or a subset of a group” (Creswell, 2013, p. 91). However, considering the historic nature of this study, the fundamental principles of ethnographies could not be achieved; thus, the case study approach was adopted.

A qualitative case study examines a “bound case” (Creswell, 2013, p. 98) by focusing on an individual, organization, or activity. More specifically, there are three types of case studies: the collective case study, the intrinsic case study, and the single instrument case study. Yin (2009) argued that a collective case study uses replication across multiple cases to help highlight to issue being studied. According to Creswell (2013), an intrinsic case study examines the case itself because of the iconoclastic characteristics it displays. For this study, the researcher used a single instrument case study to analyze a single issue (organization change) in the light of a single case (a Christian institution of higher education}. Stake (1995) described a single instrument case study as “a research question, a puzzlement, a need for general understanding, and feel that we may get insight into the question by studying a particular case” (p. 3). In the case of this study, the bound case was organization change over a period of 40 years at a Christian institution of higher education.

Participants

Considering the research questions, three participants in positions of leadership were selected for this study. In the course of waiting for Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, the first intended participant passed away. As a result, the researcher invited the wife of the intended participant to be interviewed as she held a significant position of leadership during her husband’s administration, which lasted 20 years. The second participant led the organization for ten years. The third participant is the current president and has led the organization for eight years as of the time of this writing. All three participants agreed and provided informed consent (Appendix B), which clearly informed them of their rights and outlined the purpose of the study.

Context of the Study

Data collection for the leaders in this study took place in various forms. One interview was conducted over the phone, another over FaceTime, and the final interview took place in person. All interviews focused on the same case with each leader representing a different time period in the case's history.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher has been employed at the case institution for five years. He serves as chair of a department and as an assistant professor. The researcher's position of leadership and intimate knowledge of organizational history and processes allowed for unique access to leaders and institutional material. Creswell (2013) indicated that case studies historically suffer from a failure of rigor stating, "certainly evidence of poor quality [*sic*] case study research exist [*sic*], and it is with providing illustrative examples that we can continue to curtail such practices" (p. 102). The researcher's place within the case organization proved useful in providing "illustrative examples" (Creswell, 2013, p. 102).

Measures for Ethical Protection

As with any human subject research, the imperative calls for the researcher to elevate the protection of human participants over the research being conducted. With this in mind, the study protocol was submitted and approved by Southeastern University's Institutional Research Board. In addition, all participants were provided and agreed to an informed consent (Appendix B). There was no known risk to this study. Participants understood that the interviews were audio recorded. The recordings were then transcribed and sent to each participant for validation. Only the researcher, chair, and methodologist had access to the raw data, and the data were stored in a

password protected document on a password protected computer that only the researcher had access to.

Research Questions

With guidance from Stake (1995) and Yin (2009) recommendations on case study methodology, the following questions were addressed:

1. What were the factors that influenced institutional change during the leadership of three university presidents from 1979 to 2019?
2. What were the outcomes of those changes?

Data Collection

Instruments Used in Data Collection

The researcher asked ten open-ended questions that encouraged unrehearsed responses from the participants. Several modes of recording were used including a professional microphone, GarageBand recording software, Screencast-O-Matic screen recording software, and Otter automated transcription app. The interviews lasted between 20 and 45 minutes.

Methods to Address Validity and Reliability

Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) described data collection via interview as “attempts to understand the world from the subjects’ point of view, to unfold the meaning of their experience, [and] to uncover their lived world” (p. 3). As such, it is imperative that the interview process follows appropriate, prescribed steps. Figure 2 highlights the steps Creswell (2013) recommends for preparing and conducting interviews.

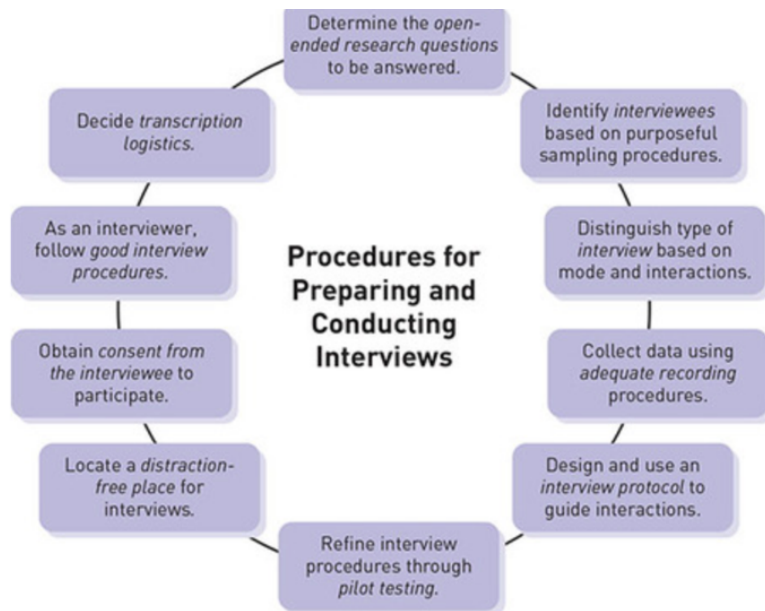


Figure 2. Flow chart demonstrating procedures for preparing and conducting interviews. (Creswell, 2013, p. 166).

In conjunction with the methodologist, the researcher created the research questions and interview questions (Appendix A) that aligned with the stated goal of a single instrument case study. To supplement the interviews, the researcher also utilized institutional documents. Marshall and Rossman (2015) suggested that many hurdles including public access and location of the material are involved in using documents in a research study; however, as stated previously, the researcher is an employee of the case institution, thus allowing unique access to organizational material.

Regarding problems connected to document collection, Creswell (2013) reviewed issues that could arise during the interview process. One issue described by Creswell that was encountered in this study was the availability of the interviewees—as past and present leaders, the participants lead busy lives. For example, one participant had very limited availability and the researcher was given a one-hour notice of the participant’s availability when the participant was able to meet with the researcher. Another issue described by Creswell (2013) is the

reliability of technology (e.g., audio equipment, cell phone, or wireless reception, etc.). As a precaution, the researcher took advantage of several modes of recording including a professional recording microphone, screen casting, and a live transcription app called Otter. The live transcription app also preempted another possible challenge—time-intensive transcription. Another challenge in the interview process identified by Creswell is asking the right questions in the most appropriate order. To address this challenge, the researcher worked closely with the methodologist to ensure that the questions were not leading and that the questions were ordered in a way that remained cognizant and respectful of the participants' time. Once the interviews were transcribed, each transcript was sent to the interviewees for validation.

Procedures

Thomas (2016) outlined recommended procedures for implementing an organized case study. With Thomas's (2016) recommendations in mind, the researcher, in conjunction with the committee chair, developed a topic with a line of inquiry highlighting appropriate research questions and interview protocol (Appendix A). Alongside the construction of topic, research questions, and interview protocols, the researcher ensured that the characteristics of a case study, as expounded by Creswell (2013) and Thomas (2016), were adhered to as the proposal was developed. Once the proposal was defended and approved, the research protocol was submitted to the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Shortly after receiving approval from the IRB, one of the intended participants passed away forcing the change in intended subjects and allowing the researcher to complete an Adverse Event form for approval by the IRB.

Approval was granted by the IRB and the researcher sent out the invitation and informed consent via email to the three intended participants. All intended participants accepted the invitation, and the researcher set up date, time, and mode of interview. One interview took place

in person, one over the phone, and one over FaceTime audio. At the start of each interview, the researcher thanked the participants for their willingness to take part in the study and also provided a reminder on the purpose of the study.

Within a few days of the interviews, the researcher transcribed audio files and read each transcript while listening to the audio to ensure accuracy. Once the transcripts were finalized, the researcher sent each transcript to the corresponding participants for validation. At the end of the process, the files were password protected and saved to secure cloud storage on a password protected computer.

Data Analysis

Thomas (2016) argued that the researchers' analytical frame is essential, but just as important is how the researcher conducts the analysis. The constant comparative method was used to develop themes from the data. The basic premise behind the method consists of reading transcripts over and over (i.e., constant) and comparing different aspects— such as words and phrases (i.e., comparative). With guidance from Thomas (2016), the researcher conducted the following steps:

- examined the data by reading the interview transcripts;
- made a copy of the transcripts and save it as 'RAW';
- renamed working files as 'WORKING';
- underlined and highlighted words or phrases that seem to be important (i.e., coding);
- kept in mind the context of the interviews and made a list of similar factors. Thomas (2016) calls these factors "temporary constructs" (p. 205);
- read through the data a second time, using the list of temporary constructs;

- came up with “second-order constructs” (Thomas, 2016, p .205), summarizing important themes that align with the data;
- reread once more, refining second-order constructs to help organize data;
- finalized themes;
- mapped themes to find interconnections; and
- selected quotations that clearly demonstrate the themes.

Following the stated steps allowed the researcher to extract various themes that were interconnected throughout all interviews and helped to warrant the use of the case study approach. As Thomas (2016) stated, “A case study is a container, a wrapper, for a situation or a set of circumstances and it may contain a range of phenomena to be analysed [*sic*]” (p.203).

Summary

A case study is used when an issue has particular needs to be solved within a bound case (Creswell, 2013). Chapter 3 focused on the methodology in this study. Following the suggestions of Stake (1995) and Yin (2009), the researcher developed the purpose of the case study. The role of the researcher at the target case proved helpful in providing illustrative examples that reinforced rigor in the study. Next, the researcher developed a topic, selected a sample population, conducted interviews, and completed and validated transcriptions. The researcher ensured that ethical practices were followed, and that the data were valid. Chapter 4 will provide a detailed analysis of the data, and the researcher will provide codes and evidence for themes.

IV. RESULTS

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to ascertain various factors that led to organizational change at an evangelical IHE during the administration of three presidents from 1979 to 2019. The study examined the perceptions of three leaders regarding the elements that incited change as well as the outcome of the change. The goal of the study was to interview the leaders about their experience during their tenure at the organization and formulate findings in a cohesive and reasonable fashion.

The researcher interviewed three leaders at the IHE. Two of the participants were presidents and one held a significant position of leadership at the IHE. All participants witnessed significant organizational change during their tenure and recalled the strengths and challenge of leading the institution through change. The researcher gained approval from the university's IRB (May 2019). Due to an adverse event, the researcher submitted a study modification request and received approval (July 2019). Participants were contacted and interviewed by the researcher and methodologist in October 2019.

Methods of Data Collection

Thomas (2016) reviewed three types of interviews: structured interview, unstructured interview, and semi-structured interview. For the purpose of this small-scale case study, the researcher opted to conduct a semi-structured interview. Semi-structured interviews give "... a reminder of what you want to cover. It reminds you not just of the issues but also of potential

questions, possible follow-up questions and ‘probes,’ which may encourage the interviewee to say more on these follow-ups” (Thomas, 2016, p. 190). The researcher constructed an interview guide (Appendix A) consisting of 10 questions but allowed for the interviewee to guide the discussion. All participants reviewed and confirmed the consent form (Appendix B). The researcher recorded the interview and produced transcripts that were then sent to participants for validation. The transcripts and recordings were stored on a password protected computer and a password protected drive. Files will be deleted after five years.

Data analysis was guided by Thomas (2016) using the constant comparative method as outlined in the Chapter 3. Codes were assigned to significant words or phrases that related to the research questions. The first cycle of coding was done using the highlighting tool in Microsoft Word. During the first coding cycle, 59 codes were identified as reported in Table 1.

Table 1

First Cycle of Descriptive Coding

| Code | Description | Code | Description | Code | Description |
|------|--------------------------------|------|----------------------------------|------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | Students | 23 | Recruit/Recruitment | 44 | Christian college |
| 2 | University | 24 | Moves of the Spirit | 45 | Nondenominational |
| 3 | College | 25 | Education | 46 | Preach |
| 4 | Board | 26 | Diverse | 47 | Brand |
| 5 | Grow/growth | 27 | Hispanics | 48 | Expansion |
| 6 | Financial/Money/Revenue/Budget | 28 | Christ Centered | 49 | African American |
| 7 | Enrollment | 29 | Professor/Faculty | 50 | Academic audit |
| 8 | Lead/Leadership | 30 | Model | 51 | Praying |
| 9 | Pastoring/ministry | 31 | Scripture | 52 | Spiritual atmosphere |
| 10 | School | 32 | Marketing | 55 | Consecrated to God |
| 11 | Governance | 33 | Spirit-filled | 56 | Personal relationship with Christ |
| 12 | Academic | 34 | Evangelical | 57 | Spirituality |
| 13 | Tuition | 35 | Team | 58 | Innovation |
| 14 | Liberal arts | 36 | Community | 59 | <i>Strategic plan</i> |
| 15 | Bible College | 37 | Systems analysis | | |
| 16 | Assembly of God | 38 | Executive team | | |
| 17 | Turnaround | 39 | Acceleration | | |
| 18 | Deferred maintenance | 40 | Presence of God | | |
| 19 | Degree | 41 | Led by God | | |
| 20 | Experience | 42 | Christian/Pentecostal University | | |
| 21 | Accreditation | 43 | Christian School | | |
| 22 | <i>Majors</i> | | | | |

After the first cycle of coding was completed, the researcher read each transcript again to define second-order constructs that summarized important themes in the data (Thomas, 2016). Using the highlighting tool in Microsoft Word, the researcher used different colors to identify possible second-order constructs. Table 2, Table 3, and Table 4 display the second-order constructs by each participant. Six second-order constructs were formulated from Participant A's transcript.

Table 2

Participant A Codes and Second-Order Constructs

| <i>Second-Order Constructs</i> | <i>Identity</i> | <i>Leadership</i> | <i>Growth</i> | <i>Finances</i> | <i>Diversity</i> | <i>Academics</i> |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------|----------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <i>Codes</i> | Students | Turnaround | Grow/Growth | Financial | African American | Academic |
| | College | Systems analysis | Marketing | Money | Hispanics | Accreditation |
| | University | Board | Recruit | Deferred maintenance | | Professor |
| | School | Executive team | Acceleration | Budget | | Degree |
| | Christian School | | Brand | Tuition | | Academic audit |
| | Liberal arts | | Expansion | | | |
| | Bible College | | Enrollment | | | |
| | Assembly of God | | | | | |
| | Spirit-filled | | | | | |
| | Christian college | | | | | |
| | Nondenominational | | | | | |
| | Community | | | | | |
| | Preach | | | | | |

Five second-order constructs were formulated from the codes in Participant B’s transcript demonstrating similarity to Participant A.

Table 3

Participant B Codes and Second-Order Constructs

| <i>Second-Order Constructs</i> | <i>Identity</i> | <i>Academics</i> | <i>Leadership</i> | <i>Diversity</i> | <i>Finances</i> |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| <i>Codes</i> | Pastoring/ministry | Academics | Model | Diverse | Finances |
| | Praying | Accreditation | Board | Recruitment | |
| | Moves of the Spirit | Majors | | Hispanic | |
| | Presence of God | Students | | | |
| | Led by God | Faculty | | | |
| | Scripture | Experience | | | |
| | Spiritual atmosphere | | | | |
| | Encounter with God | | | | |
| | Bible College | | | | |
| | Evangelistic approach | | | | |

Four second-order constructs were formulated from codes in Participant C’s transcript solidifying a strong interconnectedness between the data.

Table 4

Participant C Codes and Second-Order Constructs

| <i>Second-Order Constructs</i> | <i>Identity</i> | <i>Growth</i> | <i>Leadership</i> | <i>Diversity</i> |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| <i>Codes</i> | Christian Worldview | Growth | Lead | Diversify |
| | University | Innovation | Turnaround | |
| | Bible Institute | Enrollment Driven | Team | |
| | Bible College | Financial | Leadership | |
| | Liberal arts | Revenue | Governance | |
| | Consecrated to God | | Board of Trustees | |
| | Christ Centered | | Strategic plan | |
| | Pentecostal University | | | |
| | Christian University | | | |
| | Personal relationship with Christ | | | |
| | Spirituality | | | |
| | Evangelical | | | |
| | Students | | | |
| | Ministry | | | |
| | Vocation | | | |
| | Education | | | |
| | Community | | | |

Once second-order constructs were created for each transcript, the researcher further analyzed the data to find the interconnections between interviews to refine the second-order constructs to ensure they “captured the essence” (Thomas, 2016, p. 205) of the data as shown in Figure 1. The original 59 codes were categorized into six second-order constructs that interconnect with each interview.

Table 5

Six Final Second-Order Constructs.

| Identity | Leadership | Growth | Academics | Finances | Diversity |
|-----------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------|-----------|
| Students | Board | Grow/Growth | Academic | Financial | Diverse |
| University | Lead/Leadership | Enrollment | Degree | /Money | Hispanics |
| College | Governance | Recruit/Recruitment | Accreditation | /Revenue | African |
| Pastor/Ministry | Turnaround | Marketing | Experience | /Budget | American |
| School | Model | Acceleration | Majors | Deferred | |
| Liberal Arts | Team | Brand | Education | Maintenance | |
| Bible College | System Analysis | Expansion | Professor/Faculty | Tuition | |
| Assembly of God | Executive Team | Innovation | Academic Audit | | |
| Moves of the Spirit | Innovation | | | | |
| Education | Strategic Plan | | | | |
| Christ Centered | | | | | |
| Scripture | | | | | |
| Spirit-filled | | | | | |
| Evangelical | | | | | |
| Community | | | | | |
| Presence of God | | | | | |
| Led by God | | | | | |
| Christian/Pentecostal | | | | | |
| University | | | | | |
| Christian School/ | | | | | |
| College | | | | | |
| Nondenominational | | | | | |
| Preach | | | | | |
| Pray | | | | | |
| Spiritual Atmosphere | | | | | |
| Encounter with God | | | | | |
| Bible Institute | | | | | |
| Consecrated to God | | | | | |
| Personal Relationship | | | | | |
| with Christ | | | | | |
| Spiritual | | | | | |

Analysis by Research Question

The researcher used recommended guidelines on case study methodology (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2009) to construct ten interview questions that were designed to answer the following research questions as part of semi-structured interviews:

1. What were the factors that influenced institutional change during the leadership of three university presidents from 1979 to 2019?
2. What were the outcomes of those changes?

Research Question 1

What were the factors that influenced institutional change during the leadership of three university presidents from 1979 to 2019?

All three participants emphasized various factors that led to change during their administration. Participant A focused on change of the identity of the institution as well as student population and campus growth. Participant B highlighted religious mission as a factor that drove change at the institution including academic growth. Participant C centered on leadership as a motivating factor for change. Although all participants had a slightly different focus, each mentioned identity, leadership, growth, academics, finances, and diversity as factors that influenced organizational change. The following are key excerpts from the transcript that show the focus of each participant as it relates to Research Question 1.

Upon taking a leadership position at the organization, Participant A felt that if the institution was going to survive, it had to grow. The participant viewed the organization as a business that sold credit hours and room and board. The participant hired a marketing firm that led to the school's first major campaign. The following is an excerpt from Participant A's interview demonstrating that growth was a factor for change:

Well, the first thing I did was throw myself down the stairs and see if I could wake up from the dream. But that didn't happen. So, I realized it was reality... I said, "What we've got to do is grow." It's simple. A college is a retail business. You sell two things: Credit hours, and room and board. If you sell enough of it, you earn the right to fulfill your vision. But if you don't, you can be fulfilling your vision the day you close the school. So, what I needed was more students paying more.

So, we began a heavy marketing campaign. I raised some private money from a source there in Lakeland, actually, who was willing to put up the money for me to hire an advertising firm. I brought them in. They did focus groups. They helped us design our first major marketing campaign, which that college had never done before.

Participant A also indicated that institutional identity was another factor that produced change. The institution was known as a religious Bible college and the participant wanted it to be defined and known as a university. The change first took place informally—the participant would call the school a university in conversation—attempting to slowly, but persistently change the mindset and language from college to university:

At the same time that we were trying to hack our way through this self-study, I began to drop in the conversation, just casually here and there, here and there, starting to use the word "university" instead of "college." I just did it. Whereas you might just say instead of Southeastern ... whereas, if you're thinking Calvary Assembly of God, and you just stopped using Assembly of God, and you just start saying Calvary Church. I didn't make a big deal of it. I just would occasionally, "At this university we're trying to do this," and that kind of thing. And we went to Tallahassee and secured the name Southeastern University.

Although Participant A focused on change of the identity of the institution as well as student population and campus growth, Participant B focused on the religious mission as a driving factor that influenced change at the institution. The participant highlighted the centrality of “Moves of the Spirit,” chapel, and prayer to the lived experience at the college. The following is an excerpt from the transcript that vividly demonstrates how Participant B perceived the importance of religious mission at the college, and the mission was populist in nature—driven by student involvement:

The highlights of our ministry there, which was almost 20 years, were the Moves of the Spirit in chapel, and weeks at a time when...when the presence of the Lord was so, so real on campus, and at that time, Southeastern did not have as varied majors as they do now. So, really, our most, most of our focus was on ministerial majors, missionaries, etc. But there were times when there were such, I remember one particular night of the, chapel started at chapel time went all that day, all that night, and it was just such a blessed move of the Spirit of God. And another time. Again, the chapel had gone for a period of hours, and without any prompting or anything the students one by one began to come forward and read or quote a scripture. The chapel was so quiet, you could have heard a pin drop in it, but they came forward and read the Scripture, and just sit down and then another one, without any encouragement, would come read another scripture that they felt was important, and then sit down, and it went on for hours like that. That was probably one of the most. Yeah, what are the most significant times that I remember in chapel...As I, as I've said, to us the most important thing was the spiritual atmosphere of the school.

Participant C, similar to Participant B, highlighted the importance of honoring the university's mission but focused on how leadership is a driving factor of upholding the mission

and producing organizational change. Participant C recounts the privilege to “lead transformation” and building a team that will “meet the challenge” of change. The participant recognized the role of leadership and teamwork in enacting change. The following is an excerpt from the transcript and demonstrates how Participant C highlights leadership as a driving factor for change:

Well, highlights have been just the privilege to lead change to lead transformation in a way that would allow this university to, first and foremost, honor its mission and its purpose to come alongside a generation of students that we know God is raising up to serve Him. And, and, and that is a mission we can never lose sight of. So, the privilege to make sure that you know we are good custodians of that is definitely a highlight for me. And, and I celebrate that privilege every day. Another highlight is to be able to build a team that would meet the needs that we would face the challenges that we would face that would have the experiences as well as the knowledge to step into certain areas that, you know, I knew I wouldn't be able to have the expertise in, but I knew they would. And in fact, to me, that's what makes a great leader understand that you don't have to be the smartest person in the room. You just have to be the one to know how to get the smartest person to handle a certain task or a certain project or so. So, to me, a great highlight is to build a team that meets the challenge that meets the need of the transformational process.

All three participants emphasized various factors that led to change during their administration. Participant A focused on change of the identity of the institution as well as student population and campus growth. Participant B highlighted religious mission as a factor that drove change at the institution including academic growth. Participant C centered on leadership as a motivating factor for change. Although all participants had a slightly different

focus, each mentioned identity, leadership, growth, academics, finances, and diversity as factors that influenced organizational change.

Research question 2

What were the outcomes of those changes?

Participant A had a focus on growth and identity as the factors that drove institutional change. The institution changed its name from college to university and began offering broader academic programs a student population growth. The university began building new dorms instead of fixing existing structures. Full occupancy allowed for the funding of more dorms, and student population continued to increase. Below is an excerpt from the transcript that demonstrates the outcomes of the changes that Participant A enacted:

We began to recruit students like crazy, and we began to do some maintenance, but I made the decision and convinced the board, and they went along with it, that I couldn't get much psychological and emotional bounce out of fixing old buildings. So, we built our first new dorm, and we filled it 100%. Every single bed we filled, so, we were able to charge more. If you want to sleep in the new dorm, you pay this. If you want to stay in one of the old dorms, you pay that. So, we gave upper-class students the privilege to transfer to the new dorm if they wanted to pay more. If they didn't, we filled it with new students. Well, it filled so fast, so we were able then to leapfrog that building based on that revenue. So, we were able to build all three of the new dorms, \$21 million worth of dorms.

And the enrollment kept pace. And, because the enrollment kept pace, at one point, we were operating at 98% occupancy...And we just barely stayed ahead of the train the whole time, because we were selling tickets at the front of the train, and adding

boxcars at the back of the train. Right? And it was extremely exciting and fast, the growth rate was incredible. And we were barely building fast enough to stay ahead of it. We weren't building deadweight buildings, we were building buildings that accelerated things, so self-amortizing.

Participant A also pointed to the change in institutional identity from a Bible college to a liberal arts college, and eventually a university, as another factor for change. At the inception participant's tenure, the college was no longer a Bible college in name, but many within the community still identified the college as a Bible college and some were resistant to the idea of a liberal arts education. Participant A was insistent that the school established a consistent identity:

So, it was not a Bible college when I went there, it was Southeastern College, not Southeastern Bible College. The problem was the mentality was still Bible college. The name had been changed. That had been gone through. But everybody in ... I was in the Assemblies of God at that time. Really, basically, I'd stayed in the Assemblies of God to go to Southeastern. So, there was so much cultural resistance to the term "the liberal arts school," and it just was ... I don't mean to be condescending, but they just didn't understand what liberal arts meant, that there's no such thing as a conservative arts college. So, they were just resistant to it. And we made the decision, and the board went along with it.

Well, we made the decision to start using the phrase, "a liberal arts university;" so, we made the decision. Southeastern University, a comprehensive liberal arts university, which is unapologetically Spirit-filled. We just decided to start doing that. And there was a certain amount of risk with it. But I convinced the board, and I 100% believe this, that

you cannot sell something that has a confused brand. And so, I said, “We can't go to Broken Elbow, Louisiana and tell them it's a Bible school, and then go to the North Side of Atlanta, and tell them we're kind of like Duke.” And I said, “We've got to figure out who we are.” And that's what we did, and we stuck with. It worked. It could have blown up in my face, but it worked.

Participant B focused on the religious mission as a driving force for change. The spiritual development of students was key to how the institution changed. Historically, the school catered to students going into traditional ministry roles; however, there was a deep desire to equip students to take part in a wider definition of Christian ministry. Majors were expanded to allow students to enter secular work environments such as entertainment, education, and counseling. The following is an excerpt from the transcript demonstrating the outcome of the changes in circular programming that produced change while being faithful to the mission of the institution:

Well, of course there was quite a number of majors that were added. Like television and like psychology and several other different things, but we tried, even with adding those different majors, to emphasize that the psychology was so that it could be used as ministry, and so forth. It was a ministerial college when we, when we went there you have to understand it was still Southeastern Bible College. And that was pretty much the philosophy for many, many, many years; that it was a ministerial school.

I think many doors were open to students whose ministry—they were not necessarily pulpit ministry or missionary ministry—but, you know, Christian psychologists, and of course TV, and there were a number of others, and of course education—Christian teachers in the schools, public schools, etc. So, I think that the word ministry took on a broader definition than just pulpit ministry or missionary

ministry. Everything, everything was pointed toward, whether it was in church or in the marketplace, or wherever, was ministry.

Participant C identified leadership as a factor for institutional change. The participant highlighted “Framework Leadership” as a model for change and elaborated on how it produced change within the organization. The participant mentioned the school could not rely on large endowments like other IHEs and, therefore, leading enrollment growth is paramount. With enrollment growth it becomes important for leaders to oversee proper governance needed in an expanding organization. As the organization expands, persistent attention to mission, culture, and finances is needed. The following excerpt from the transcript that demonstrates the outcome of leading organization change:

I would say the foundational changes, because you have to kind of have a foundation, would be our urgent framework and our visionary framework. Urgent framework in the sense that we have to focus on enrollment because we are an enrollment driven institution. We don't have we don't have a large endowment like a major state university or a major private university. So, we depend, and that's the way most faith-based universities are, they're enrollment driven, so that is an urgent issue that we must always focus, how are we creating streams of enrollment. I think we have to look at governance, because you have to have the right governance, to lead a university, and governance is always going to be unique, and if you're not, you're not navigating that governance as you grow. So, for example, you know, 1935 this started out as a Bible institute. Well, you have to have governance that understands that mission. Then as it began to grow into a Bible college, your governance is going to have to reflect that. As you grow into a liberal arts university it's going to have to reflect that. So, we are constantly making sure that

our governance reflects our growth and health, and without, without strong governance, it's very easy to lose, or what I would call, mission drift. Because honestly, your governance, starting with the board of trustees who are the custodians of the mission, have to be relevant to who you are, and what God's called you to do. And so, so that's a major change that we have implemented and continue to implement. Another issue is culture. Are we understanding the cultural issues, challenges, needs of our community? And making sure that we are always empowering, coming alongside, collaborating, working in a sense of unity together? We're constantly clarifying. We're constantly aligning. Those kinds of things are important, and culture is a major urgent piece that has to be always focused on. I think the other thing is financial stability, which for enrollment- driven universities is, is; it's always a difficult, first of all, university financial, university financial structure. I've never been able to figure out and not a lot of people can figure [laughter]. It is always a moving target because there's so many different systems that speak into it. You know, so it's a constant making sure that we're doing everything that we can to understand the financial current, or context if you will, how do we navigate that and make the right choices and decisions that will not only produce streams of enrollment, but will they produce streams of revenue to sustain us.

Themes

With guidance from Thomas (2016) and after carefully analyzing codes and second order constructs, the researcher identified six themes connected to organizational change at the IHE from 1979 to the present. The themes are connected to words, phrases, and ideas communicated by each of the three participants. Table 6 displays the prominent themes identified from a detailed analysis.

Table 6

Theme Descriptions

| Theme | Description |
|-------|---|
| 1 | Religious identity |
| 2 | Institutional identity |
| 3 | Academic Growth |
| 4 | Student population and demographic growth |
| 5 | Governance and leadership |
| 6 | Finances |

Theme 1: Religious Identify

All three participants clearly communicated the centrality of religious identity as a factor when leading organizational change. Considering the organization is sectarian in nature, it comes to no surprise that the theme of religious identity is prominent throughout all interviews. Participants used various descriptors that highlighted religious identity. Participant A used the terms *Spirit-filled* and *non-denominational*, which reflect a more Charismatic theological approach to the institution’s religious identity:

And what about the Spirit-filled Methodist family that they want their kids to go to a Christian college, but they're afraid to send them off to Duke, or SMU? So, we went after them. And we increased hugely our non-denominational market. You've got huge churches that are Spirit-filled churches. They're consistent with the basic culture of an Assembly of God college, but they're not Assemblies of God.

Participant B used language such as *Moves of the Spirit* and *Presence of the Lord* that reflect a more Pentecostal distinctive approach to religious identity: “the highlights of our

ministry there, which was almost 20 years, were the moves of the, of the Spirit in chapel, and weeks at a time when, when the presence of the Lord was so, so real on campus.” In addition, the religious identity communicated by Participant B reflected institutional identity, which will be discussed in the next theme. Participant C used religious language that demonstrates a more neo-evangelical approach to religious identity, such as *Christ-centered*, while at the same time continuing to highlight the Pentecostal heritage of the school:

Well, we want to definitely always be Christ-centered in everything we do. And, and we are a Pentecostal university. And if you want to become more Pentecostal, you become more Christ-centered. Because that’s what, you know, the Holy Spirit was sent to us to point us to Christ and to become Christ-like. So, that’s why we must always be Christ-centered in everything that we do.

Theme 2: Institutional Identity

Institutional identity was another consistent theme among the interviews. One participant indicated that the institution was more of a Bible college meant to train students for ministry while others viewed the institution as more of a liberal arts college or university. As addressed earlier, Participant A argued that the school was calling itself a college but maintained the mentality of a Bible college. The participant wanted the school to be identified as a university that was “unapologetically Spirit-filled.” Participant B understood the school to be a Bible college meant to train students to go into ministry. During the tenure of Participant B, the school did expand academic offerings, but the change was always in context of ministry. Participant C expanded a message that seems to bridge the institutional identity of Participant A and B and proclaimed a vision of helping students fulfill their calling by making an impact in a variety of fields, and that the institutional identity is in place to equip students:

These incredible students are going to be solutions to so many issues that we are facing in our nation and literally around the world. And God is calling them, whether that's in a ministry vocational calling, whether that's an education, business, you know, health care, whatever it is. These students are going to be salt and light and have influence that will affect the kingdom of God for eternity.

Participant C articulated a blending of the other two participants' perspectives on institutional identity in that, yes, the institution is a religious institution with students called by God, but it is also a diverse university with different perspectives:

But I think if you want to be healthy, you will diversify and you will be able to invest in ways that will bring different voices and different, you know, philosophies and different, I mean, that's to me what a university is all about, where we can all come together, learn, grow, reason together, so that we can walk out with the strongest Christian worldview that we can, we can have in our lives as we, as we navigate calling.

Theme 3: Academic Growth

As an IHE, the organization's academic growth is another common theme mentioned by the participants. Participant B spoke on the importance of the school receiving its first regional accreditation through the SACS. The SACS accreditation was a major turning point because it allowed the school to expand academic offerings beyond the traditional ministry and Bible programs. Participant B noted that the school was accredited by the American Association of Bible Colleges, which is now known as the Association for Biblical Higher Education.

Participant A started at the school when it was finishing reaffirmation with SACS, a process that occurs every 10 years. As mentioned earlier, Participant A had the desire to change the identity of the school from a Bible college to a liberal arts university. With that change came the

expansion of academics, including the addition of graduate programs. Under the tenure of Participant C, the school expanded academic offerings at every level including adding doctoral programs. The main focus of Participant C was expanding academic offerings geographically by implementing distance learning programs:

I think we've also been able to enhance the footprint of our student body, not just here on the Lakeland campus but literally create a footprint, now I guess around the world, because we're not only extension campuses and, but we launched last year, a couple overseas so you know we're, we're growing in that way and again, part of the philosophy of that is, is, you know, we have to take education to where people are and not expect them to come to us. And that's the world we live in, and we can do that in so many ways, because of technology and we just. And so, to be able to do that. I think we're being a good steward of, you know, education and people's lives.

Theme 4: Student Population and Demographic Growth

The primary constituents of an IHE are students. As such, all participants spoke about students. Participant B talked about how the campus began to see a more diverse student body, but that the school did not become as diverse as they desired. The participant speculated that one reason the school was not more diverse was because the school tended to reflect the demographics of evangelical churches at the time:

I was thinking primarily of racial diversity because when we first went there, if you will recall, there were very few students who were not Caucasian. And so, but by the time that we left, we were having more diversity. Not as much as we would have liked but still diversity. And I think that is a reflection of our churches, because in the 80s. You know a lot. Not many of them were like Trinity here now, where we have every kind of

person, but the churches were primarily White, Caucasian. And I think as the churches changed a bit, then that flowed over into the student body of Southeastern.

In alignment with academic growth, Participant A mentioned that more students began to consider attending the school as the academic options expanded. As the student population grew, it also became more diverse. Participant A recalled how a concerted effort was made to attract students from different racial, cultural, and theological backgrounds:

I felt there were whole markets that were not being touched, particularly, the campus when I got there was so thoroughly Assemblies of God, and thoroughly White. So, I felt that we could reach to Spirit-filled families that were not traditional Assembly of God people. And so, we started marketing. We would send representatives, or I would go myself, to COGIC [Church of God in Christ] conferences. And we went heavily after Hispanics. As we remodeled the campus, we went into a Mediterranean Spanish-Spanish-Tuscan-Italian kind of a motif, and we renamed everything in Spanish. I had the advantage that I speak enough Spanish to be dangerous, and I convinced the Southeastern Hispanic District of the Assemblies of God to do their summer youth conference every year on the campus. So, every year we have hundreds of Spanish-speaking high school kids on our campus. And we recruited heavily during those. So, our non-White, non-Assembly of God enrollment went up.

Participant C had a similar observation connected to student population growth and increased diversity. Participant C, however, convened a slightly broader view of diversity compared to the other participants and that flows into the themes of institutional identity and religious identity:

Well it's, it's grown significantly, and when you grow, you will also diversify. Well, I guess you may not always, but, but I think if you want to be healthy, you will diversify, and you will be able to invest in ways that will bring different voices and different, you know, philosophies and different, I mean that's to me what a university is all about where we can all come together, learn, grow reason together, so that we can walk out with the strongest Christian worldview that we can, we can have in our lives as we, as we navigate calling.

Theme 5: Governance and Leadership

As the school changed, so did its governance and leadership. Participant B defined leadership in terms of modeling. The participant stated that the board was looking for someone to model ministry. Participant B painted a picture where leadership of the school took place together, mentioning that many on the board became friends and that they led by example. Participant A tended to focus on a more top-down approach to leadership. The participant stated that the board was desperate and decided to take a risk by making the participant the president of the school. The participant indicated that what was needed was to find the right people for the right position and to begin building a team that would align with the vision set forth. The participant used words like “convince” when speaking of changes that needed to be approved by the board stating that there was not “opposition,” but there was a lot of “confusion.” Participant A spoke about coming alongside faculty, putting committees together, and conducting academic audits to ascertain the needs of faculty. Participant A stated that there was some “resistance” among the faculty when certain changes were made, commenting that “there were some that, I mean, anything, no matter any change you make, if you move the piano from one side of the platform to the next, two youth pastors quit,” but commented that most faculty “went along with

it and stayed with me.” Out of the three interviewees, Participant C focused the most on leadership and governance. As stated earlier in the chapter, the participant focused, on building a team and developing a framework for leadership. In addition, the participant highlighted governance in a way that touched the themes of student growth, religious identity, and institutional identity:

I think we have to look at governance, because you have to have the right governance, to lead a university and governance is always going to be unique, and if you're not, you're not navigating that governance as you grow so for example, you know, 1935 this started out as a Bible Institute. Well you have to have governance that understands that mission. Then as it began to grow into a Bible College, your governance is going to have to reflect that. As you grow into a liberal arts university it is going to have to reflect that. So, we are constantly making sure that our governance reflects our growth and health, and without, without strong governance. It's very easy to lose or what I would call mission drift. Because honestly, your governance, starting with the board of trustees who are the custodians of the mission, have to be relevant to who you are and what God's called you to do. And so, so that's a major change that we have implemented and continue to implement.

Theme 6: Finances

The final theme found in the results is that of finances. Although Participant B did not talk much about finance, when it was mentioned, the focus tended to be on the student rather than the organization. The participant would often make calls to a student's home church if it was found that the student was struggling to afford school. Participant B also made note that it was churches and “supporting districts” that would fund and help recruit students to attend the

school. Participant A focused the most on finances. The participant indicated that finances were in bad shape and that there was a lot of “deferred maintenance” that needed to be addressed stating, “So, when I got there, the discount rate was too high, the tuition was too low, and the buildings were a wreck. So, that's the trifecta.” Participant A knew what needed to change, later stating:

I mean, as I've already said to you, what I needed was quite simple: I needed more students paying more. So, the one advantage of the previous administration lowering the cost and raising the discount rate is that your ceiling for manipulation is high. So, I could raise the tuition a great deal before I outran the market.

Participant C provided context to explain why finances are an important factor when understanding change. The school did not have a large endowment to draw from like major research universities. The participant, like Participant A, understood the importance of enrollment connected to finances indicating that the school was enrollment-driven stating:

I think the other thing is financial stability, which for enrollment driven universities, it's always a difficult balance. First of all, university financial, university financial structure, I've never been able to figure out and not a lot of people can figure [laughter]. It is always a moving target because there's so many different systems that speak into it. You know, so it's a constant, making sure that we're doing everything that we can to understand the financial current or context, if you will, how do we navigate that and make the right choices and decisions that, will not only produce streams of enrollment, but will they produce streams of revenue to sustain us.

Summary

The results in this chapter were insights into the thoughts of three leaders at an IHE between the years 1979 and 2019. The experiences as recounted in the interviews provide perspective on the factors that produced organizational change within the IHE. Although all participants had a slightly different focus, each mentioned identity, leadership, growth, academics, finances, and diversity as factors that influenced organizational change. Six specific themes were discussed: religious identity, institutional identity, academic growth, student population and demographic growth, governance and leadership, and finances. Chapter Five will provide a discussion on the results of this case study as well as limitations of the study and recommendations for future research.

V. DISCUSSION

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to ascertain the factors that produced organizational change at an evangelical IHE from 1979 to 2019, and what the outcome of those changes were. The study interviewed three leaders who served at the IHE over the 40-year period. The two research questions that guided this study focused on the factors that motivated change during three administrations and the outcome of those changes. The discussion that follows includes the methods of data collection, interpretation of results, implications for future practice, and recommendations for future research.

Methods of Data Collection

Thomas (2016) reviewed three types of interviews: structured interview, unstructured interview, and semi-structured interview. For the purpose of this small-scale case study, the researcher opted to conduct a semi-structured interview. The researcher constructed an interview guide (Appendix A) consisting of 10 questions but allowed for the interviewee to guide the discussion. All participants reviewed and confirmed the consent form (Appendix B). The researcher recorded the interviews and produced transcripts that were then sent to participants for validation. The transcripts and recordings were stored on a password protected computer and in a password protected drive. Files will be deleted after five years. Chapter 3 provided details of the procedures used for this study.

Interpretation of Results

In this qualitative case study, the researcher examined the factors that produced change over a 40-year period during three administrations of a Christian IHE. The theoretical underpinnings of this case study relied on organizational change theory. As discussed in Chapter 1, both Lewin's (1951) and Kotter's (2012) models of change, and the influence of leadership, provide strong theoretical bases for the qualitative study of change at a Christian university. Chapter 2 highlighted organizational change and leadership, American evangelical education, and leadership and change in Christian higher education. Evidence from the participants responses connected to organizational change theory and the review of literature. Themes and their connection to the research questions, as well as discussion on how the evidence relates to the literature, is provided.

Research Question 1

What were the factors that influenced institutional change during the leadership of three university presidents from 1979 to 2019?

All three participants emphasized various factors that led to change during their administration. Participant A focused on the change of the identity of the institution as well as student population and campus growth. Participant B highlighted religious mission as a factor that drove change at the institution, including academic growth. Participant C centered on leadership as a motivating factor for change. While all participants had a slightly different focus, each mentioned identity, leadership, growth, academics, finances, and diversity as factors that influenced organizational change.

The identified factors line up with the American evangelical movement. Christianity and the United States have deeply influenced each other. The First Great Awakening influenced

colonists to question authority on the verge of the American Revolution. The Second Great Awakening democratized American Christianity and the revivalism that emerged continued the disestablishment of American Christianity as popular sovereignty was embraced. As part of the populist movement within evangelical Christianity, the clergy lost most of its power to disseminate theology among the masses: the people gained control of how they worshiped and understood God. The newfound power was also mixed with an increased sense of spirituality in everyday life, which further empowered the people. The gain in power led to what could be described as democratic hope—giving Christians who lived in the early United States a sense that they were moving toward a better world (Hatch, 1991).

Beginning in the late 19th and early 20th century, American Christianity experienced a split. Modernism was influencing the Church with scientific developments such as evolution. Modernist Christians wanted to embrace scientific development stating that it does not conflict with core Christian tenets. Evangelical Christians, however, rejected this and called for the adherence to the fundamentals of Christianity. The now famous Scopes trial furthered the fundamentalist-modernist divided. After the trial in 1925, fundamentalists retreated from society and formed their own subculture. The formation of the subculture was key to understanding the development of modern American Christian higher education. As discussed in the literature, most major Ivy League schools began as Christian colleges, but the influence of modernism led to secularization, which many evangelicals opposed at these institutions. From the mid-1920s to the early 1950s, evangelicals did not engage with mainstream American culture, choosing instead to form independent schools and Bible colleges that would help raise a generation on the fundamentals of Christianity. Anti-intellectualism emerged as a consequence of isolation from society. Evangelicals distrusted diverse perspectives that may call into question the perspicuity

of scripture. So instead of engaging society, evangelicals adhered closely to dispensational theology, declaring the world was going to get worse, and the depravity within the world was a sign of the Second Coming of Christ (Noll, 1994).

In the 1950s a new generation emerged that started to change the perception within American evangelicalism. People such as Billy Graham, Carl Henry, and Henry Ocengka started to embrace the idea of Christ the transformer of culture vs. Christ against culture (Niebuhr, 1951). The change in mindset helped to propel evangelicalism back into the mainstream of American society. With the banning of school prayer and legalization of abortion in the 1960s and 1970s, many evangelicals started to look for ways to influence and transform American society. By the 1980s and 1990s, evangelicals gained political influence with the rise of groups such as the Moral Majority and the Christian Collation.

The historical context of American evangelicalism sheds light on the factors that influenced organizational change at the case IHE from 1979 to 2019. Institutional identity and religious identity were paramount to influencing organizational change because those factors were ingrained within the American evangelical subculture. Wary of outside influence, the institution was hesitant to move from its Bible college roots. Leaders had to understand the school's identity and religious roots if successful change was going to occur. Students were at the core of the school's identity and, therefore, were a vital component when orchestrating change; after all, the leaders believed the students would transform the world for Christ. Leadership and governance would ensure that the school stayed true to the mission. Finances were an important factor because the school had been independent from society, including government funding. The school was dependent upon the Church and tuition for funding, so any organizational change would also need to take into account the impact on finances. These

factors influenced change at the organization because no longer were evangelicals simply forming their own communities, but they were engaging the society at large to transform the world for Christ.

Research Question 2

What were the outcomes of those changes?

Institutional and religious identity, academics, students, leadership and governance, and finances all experienced change from 1979 to 2019. Founded in 1935 during the Great Depression, the school was known as a Bible college that trained students on the fundamentals of scripture so that they could become ministers. As evangelicals reengaged in society, there was a desire to train students to work in other fields. Participant B talked about the broadening of what Christian ministry meant—training Christian entertainers, educators, and counselors. During the tenure of Participant B, the school earned regional accreditation with SACS. The accreditation marked a major milestone in academic credibility—the first time an outside organization endorsed the school. The SACS accreditation was evidence that the school was willing to move out of isolation and demonstrated trust outside of the religious subculture. Participant A continued to consider the institutional identity and religious identity while building academic offerings and rigor. The participant understood that the school needed to continue to exhibit academic credibility and wanted the school to distance itself from Bible college nomenclature while maintaining its religious identity. Participant A led the school through SACS reaffirmation and led the change in status from college to university. Again, the school’s religious identity was maintained. Participant A wanted the school to be known as a liberal arts university that was unapologetically Spirit-filled. The moto for the school embraced by leadership in 2011 was “Transforming minds, Engaging culture,” further demonstrating the evangelical commitment to

transforming the world for Christ; calling for students to embrace their divine design. Participant C continued to build the academics by adding the first doctoral programs in the school history and also expanding the school's impact by adding online and extension sites all over the United States. Interestingly, the first doctoral program was not in ministry or theology, but in education, demonstrating the commitment to produce students who could transform the world for Christ outside of the pulpit.

Students were the central component to the school. As academic offerings increased, a rise in student population and diversity was evident. Participant B noted that as American evangelicalism was becoming more diverse, so was the student body. Moving away from a Bible college mentality and self-isolation, the school started to attract students who were religiously committed, but who also wanted to pursue a profession that went beyond traditional ministry roles. In short, in that the school had adapted to the changing role of American evangelicalism, it was also opening itself to a more diverse 21st century evangelicalism.

Leadership and governance also became more complex as the school changed. All three participants spoke about building a team. Participant B spoke about leading as a model couple reflecting a more church-based model of leadership, but the participant also mentioned working with the board to implement change. Participant A also spoke about building a team and having the right people in place that would be able to follow the vision set forth. The first two participants only had experience leading churches or mission organizations before leading the school. The experience was a reflection of the transitional period at the school and also within evangelicalism. The board wanted someone with ministry and religious credentials to lead the school. Participant C, while also having religious credentials and ministry experience, had experience in fields outside of ministry, including academics and television. The change in

experience between leaders demonstrated how the school adapted alongside American evangelicalism.

Finances also changed from 1979 to 2019. During the administration of Participant B, the school was largely supported by districts and churches within its own denomination. Participant B noted that when students needed help, the participant would call the student's supporting church to ensure the student could continue at the school—a reflection on how the school was still somewhat isolated and dependent on churches for operation. The SACS accreditation allowed for the expansion of academic programs leading to increase revenue streams from tuition. So, SACS accreditation became not only a major turning point in academics for the school, but also in terms of finances. However, the school became even more dependent on the federal government to operate. The new development exposed tensions that go deep into the history of American evangelicalism. The First Great Awakening called Christians to fight against repressive authority, the Second Great Awakening called for disestablishment and populism, and the Scopes trial marked the retreat and self-isolation of American evangelicals. Now, with their eyes on transforming the world for Christ, the school's financial future became dependent on federal funds and federal mandates that may conflict with the school's religious mission.

The Findings Related to the Literature

In the course of research, six themes emerged that were connected to organizational change at the institution over a 40-year period. The identified themes were (1) religious identity, (2) institutional identity, (3) academic growth, (4) student population and demographic growth, (5) governance and leadership, and (6) finances. Although each participant shared his or her own perspective, the themes provide a cohesive narrative on organizational change. Chapter 4

provided excerpts from each participant's interview that support the themes. The discussion that follows will attribute meanings for each theme as it relates to the literature.

Theme 1: Religious Identity

All participants vividly highlighted the importance of religious identity as a factor that drove change within the organization. Given that the organization is denominational, and historically Pentecostal, the importance of religious identity was expected. Each participant used slightly different descriptors connected to the theme of religious identity. Participant A used Spirit-filled and non-denominational reflecting a modern charismatic approach (Lindsay, 2007). Participant B used language such as Moves of the Spirit and the Presence of the Lord demonstrating a distinctly Pentecostal approach; however, a Pentecostalism that was influenced by the emerging charismatic movement of the 1960s and 1970s (Noll, 1994; Wacker, 2003). Of all the participants, Participant B saw the organization's religious identity as the driving force for institutional change. One reason for the strong connection to religious identity relates to the next theme of the institutional identity; during the administration of Participant B, the organization still was heavily influenced by its past as a Bible college. Participant C used the term Christ-centered highlighting a more neo-evangelical approach while maintaining the Pentecostal heritage of the organization (Rosell, 2008).

Theme 2: Institutional identity

Institutional identity is another consistent theme throughout the interviews. Institutional identity is also intertwined with the theme of religious identity. For example, Participant B viewed the school more as a Bible college, but the participant also highlighted an evolving definition of ministry (e.g., training Christian teachers, psychologists, etc.). Participant A mentioned that the school was a liberal arts college, but in mindset it was perceived as a Bible

college. The participant wanted to move away from the Bible college mentality and to identify the school as a liberal arts university. Participant C successfully bridged the disconnect in institutional identity by defining the organization as a university filled with diverse perspectives of students who are called by God to fulfill various vocations.

All three participants demonstrated the changes happening within evangelical education in America. Participants A and B articulated the tension and change that developed after 1945. Bible colleges in America began to adapt to the influx of students seeking higher education for the first time thanks, in part, to the GI Bill and the federal higher education bills passed in the 1960s and 1970s (Marden, 1996; Ringenburg, 2006). Participant C's vision of institutional identity was in response to increased globalization and calls for affordability and access, but still maintained a distinct religious identity in the face of secularization (Broer, et al., 2017; Reynolds & Wallace, 2016; Rine & Guthrie, 2016).

Theme 3: Academic Growth

As an IHE, academics, and in particular academic growth, was a common theme expressed by all participants. Participant B discussed academic growth in light of the university's religious identity. Academic offerings expanded with the achievement of regional accreditation through the SACS. With the SACS accreditation, academic programs began to expand to meet what Participant B described as the broadening of Christian ministry. Programs were added in communication and psychology with hopes of preparing Christians in various fields that were not distinctly Christian. Participant A built upon the expansion started by Participant B by securing university status and starting graduate programs. By the time Participant C arrived at the organization, higher education had been influenced by globalization and a call for greater access (Broer, et al., 2017). In response, Participant C began to grow

academic operations beyond the traditional campus by building online education and opening extension sites across the United States. Although not directly mentioned by the participants, the timeline of academic growth at the organization parallels the call within higher education to prepare students to be lifelong learners (Cohen, 1975). By expanding academic offerings, the participants, directly or indirectly, built a platform that assisted students in developing skills to be lifelong learners. By expanding into online education, Participant C addressed scholarship that said educators needed to create a way for students to find, and understand, all the information that is available to them (Tucker, 2016).

Theme 4: Student Population and Demographic Growth

Students are the primary constituents for IHE; as such, all three participants had a strong focus on students. Participant B mentioned that the student body within the organization became more diverse overtime but noted that the school did not become as diverse as desired. The participant offered one reason for the lack of diversity: The school tended to reflect the demographics of evangelical churches at the time. The participant's observation was astute and lines up with the literature. In the 1980s and 1990s American evangelicalism attained political recognition with the rise of what was called the religious right (Dochuk, 2011; Martin, 2005). The religious right was a conservative evangelical political movement that arose in light of evangelical concerns over the desire to transform the world for Christ; largely, but not entirely, the religious right tended to be less demographically diverse (Dochuk, 2011; Martin, 2005). However, with the organization's Pentecostal roots it is likely that it was more open to accepting and empowering marginalized groups than other Christian faith traditions (Rosell, 2008; Stephens, 2010; Wacker, 2003). Participants A and C reflected on student population growth and how diversity increased as more students considered the school as an option. Participant C

argued that if a university is to be healthy, it must diversify to bring in different voices. In short, what participant A observed rings true as the university grew to reflect a more diverse American evangelicalism. In addition to the expansion of diversity within the religious subculture, the literature also points to a faster diversification of the student body at evangelical schools after the Great Recession, brought about, in part, by access, affordability, student outcomes, and financial sustainability (Rine & Guthrie, 2016).

Theme 5: Governance and Leadership

Each participant brought with them a different style of leadership and perspective on governance. Participant B focused on being a model for students and faculty to look to for guidance. Participant B created a sense that leadership happened together, noting that many board members became friends with them and they led by example. One reason why the leadership style of the participant may have been effective is the nature of the organization at the time of Participant B's tenure. The organization was smaller and had the feel of a Bible College, such as addressing members of the community with the titles of Brother and Sister. Leading together, and by example, could aid in the building of community. The sense of community created by the leadership of Participant B likely strengthened the psychological contracts with members of the organization. The social dimension of the psychological contract is often connected with how the mission and values of the organization are lived out in the day-to-day operation of the organization (Strebel, 1996).

Participant A took a more top-down approach to leadership. The participant indicated that what was needed was to find the right people for the right position and to begin building a team that would align with the vision set forth. Participant A's response aligned with literature on strategic leadership, in that leaders need to create the vision for the future and ensure that

people are inspired to follow the vision that is before them (Hickman, 2016). A transformational leader should have a heterogeneous team if the leader hopes to create and foster lasting organizational change (Kotter, 2012). Participant A mentioned that some of the changes were met with resistance indicating a sense of violation of the psychological contract between members of the organization, which often happens when a new leader takes over, and requires an audit by the new leader (Burke, 2014). The participant spoke about coming alongside faculty, putting committees together, and conducting academic audits to ascertain the needs of faculty and staff (Thomas, 2008).

Of the three participants, Participant C focused the most on leadership and governance. The participant highlighted the need to operate from a framework that produced urgency, which aligns with Kotter's (2012) ideas for leading change. The framework leadership discussed by the participant was also validated in literature about integrating organizational change using models to help categorize, enhance understanding, produce a shared language, and guide change (Burke, 2017).

Theme 6: Finances

The final theme addressed by the participants were finances. Participant B did not have much to say about finances, but when finances were mentioned, the focus was on student finances over organizational finances. Participant B's focus on students over the functioning of the organization aligns with the preceding discussion on Participant B's statements. Participant A, of the three participants, focused the most on finances. The participant indicated that finances were not very strong, and that the school needed more students paying more. After conducting a financial and academic audit, the participant hired a marketing company and began recruiting students. Participant C provided the strongest overview concerning why financial stability

matters to an IHE that is tuition-driven. The participant discussed how diversity, accessibility, and globalization were all factors for financial stability, echoing concerns stated in the literature on leadership and change in Christian higher education (Broer, et al., 2017; Dahlvig, 2018; Rine & Guthrie, 2016).

Limitations

The analysis for this study was based on a small sample size at one Christian IHE. The study contained data that were subjective and possibly influenced by the effects of time. One of the intended participants passed away before an interview was conducted. As a result, two of the participants were presidents of the organization, and one a high-level administrator, and wife, of the intended participant. In addition, the perspective of organizational change was that of solely the leaders; staff and faculty were not included in the collection or analysis of data.

Implications for Future Practice

IHE have been known for their slow rate of change (Murray, 2008). Cost, globalization, access, and questions on the value of higher education are factors that have left higher education administrators wondering how to produce organizational change more quickly (Declercq & Verboven, 2015; Hittenberger, 2007; Huber, 2016; Samier, 2015). In addition to the external pressures faced by the broader higher education community, Christian IHEs have encountered increased secularization and accusations of a lack of academic rigor; more credence has been given to confessional or denominational ethos over academics (Galli et al., 2018; Noll, 1994). Concern has been raised over the lack of diversity among faculty and students at Christian colleges (Longman, 2017).

Although the literature has merit, the results of this study indicates that Christian IHEs have the ability to navigate the aforementioned concerns well and to produce the change needed

to keep the organization healthy. In addition, the themes that emerged minimize some of the concerns expressed in past studies. For example, the participants in this study highlighted adapting to the needs of cost and accessibility for students. The participants also expressed the institution identity, religious identity, and academics as being interconnected and working together as opposed to being adversarial. Finally, all participants emphasized a need for diversity within the organization.

Recommendations for Future Research

Although this study examined the perspective of three leaders at a Christian IHE who have served over a 40-year period, more research is needed. Comparing other schools within the CCCU may be worth to see if similar themes emerge. The CCCU is made up of Christian colleges and universities from different denominations and backgrounds, which may play a role in how their leaders understand and practice organizational change. Gaining the perspective of organizational change from other members of the organization, such as faculty and staff, may add more depth to the factors that influence organizational change in Christian higher education. Although the longitudinal approach to this study proved helpful in providing historical context and change overtime, additional research into the present and future of organizational change within Christian higher education is needed.

Summary

Religious identity, institutional identity, academic growth, student population and demographic growth, governance and leadership, and finances were factors that influenced institutional change during the leadership of three university presidents from 1979 to 2019. Although the governance and leadership style varied between administrations, the outcomes of organizational changes produced an organization with a strong religious and institutional identity

that has produced the growth of the student population and has increased diversity. Finances were a concern across all three administrations. The research in this study added to the existing body of literature on organizational change and leadership within evangelical higher education.

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Appendix A

Interview Guide

RQ: What were the factors that influenced institutional change during the leadership of three university presidents from 1979-2019? What were the outcomes of those changes?

Interview Questions

1. What motivated you to work at the Southeastern?
2. What are some of the highlights from your time at Southeastern?
3. What are some changes you implemented at Southeastern (e.g. athletics, programs, etc.) during your administration?
4. What long-term outcomes do you foresee from the changes you implemented?
5. Describe how Southeastern's student body changed under your administration?
6. How were you trained/equipped to lead a university when you first arrived at Southeastern?
7. What leadership development have you participated in while at Southeastern? How did this training influence your administration?
8. What else do you want to share about your leadership at Southeastern?

Appendix B

Informed Consent

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

Title: A Study of Organizational Change at an Historically Pentecostal Bible College

Investigator(s): Dr. Patty LeBlanc, Southeastern University; Rustin Lloyd, Southeastern University

Purpose In 1979, a small Bible college located in the southeastern region of the US hired a new president. Over the next 40 years, the Bible college experienced a number of mission-critical transitions in growth and in leadership. The proposed qualitative case study will examine the underlying history and rationale for transition and change during the administrations of two presidents by interviewing various members of the community.

What to Expect: The researcher will conduct semi-structured interviews. The interview questions seek to identify the strengths, weakness, opportunities, and challenges of change experienced in each of the two presidential tenures. The interviews will last no more than 1-hour. The interviews will be audio-recorded, and the recordings will be transcribed. After transcription, you will be asked to validate the interview transcript to determine whether or not it accurately describes your recollection and the validity of the interviews. The researcher will then code the interview transcripts to categorize the common themes related to institution strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges the university experienced during each president's tenure.

Risk: There are no known risks associated with this study that are greater than those ordinarily encountered in daily life.

Benefits: There are no direct benefits to you. However, you may gain an appreciation and clarification of organizational change and its influence on the institution.

Compensation: No compensation will be provided.

Your Rights: Your participation in this research is voluntary. There is no penalty for refusal to participate, and you are free to withdraw your consent and participation in this project at any time.

Confidentiality: The interview records of this study will be kept private. The dissertation and any written publications will discuss common themes among the two administrations. Each

interviewee and the institution will be given a pseudonym to be used in the written results of the study. Research records will be stored on a password-protected computer in a locked office and office and only researchers and individuals responsible for research oversight will have access to the records. Data will be destroyed five years after the study has been completed.

Contacts: You may contact any of the researchers at the following addresses and phone numbers, should you desire to discuss your participation in the study and/or request information about the results of the study- Dr. Patty LeBlanc: pbleblanc@seu.edu; Rustin Lloyd: rblloyd@seu.edu

If you have questions about your rights as a research volunteer, you may contact the IRB Office at irb@seu.edu.

CONSENT DOCUMENTATION: I have been fully informed about the procedures listed here. I am aware of what I will be asked to do and of the benefits of my participation. I also agree to the following statements: I affirm that I am 18 years of age or older. I have read and fully understand this consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy of this form will be given to me. I hereby give permission for my participation in this study.

Signature of Participant

Date

I certify that I have personally explained this document before requesting that the participant sign it.

Signature of Researcher

Date