BOARDS OF TRUSTEES' AND SENIOR-LEVEL ADMINISTRATORS' EXPERIENCE

WITH PRESIDENTIAL TURNOVER IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM: A CASE

STUDY

by

Kismet Kimberly Matthews

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

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APPROVED BY:

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative single-instrument case study was to explore how leadership styles and funding knowledge impact presidential turnover as experienced by trustees and senior-level administrators using a rural member college of the North Carolina Community College System as the setting. The central question of this study was, how do trustees and senior-level administrators describe their experience with presidential turnover involving the factors of leadership style, institutional funding, and presidential fit? The theories guiding this study were Hersey and Blanchard's situational leadership theory and Duignan and Macpherson's educative leadership theory as these theories explain leadership styles which are appropriate for successful leadership practices. A single-instrument qualitative case study method was used to research the leadership styles and funding knowledge as experienced by trustees and senior-level administrators. Data collection included individual face-to-face semi-structured interviews, an anonymous deductive questionnaire, and review of Board of Trustee minutes from the research site. Using the methodologies of Creswell and Yin, data was collected and triangulated to capture meaning units based on responses to the participant interviews, responses of an online anonymous deductive questionnaire, and review of board of trustee minute documents. Results from this study indicated that presidents who are able to adapt to a variety of situations and are competent to learn the necessary information can be successful within the institution.

Keywords: Presidential turnover, trustees, senior-level administrator, presidential fit, presidential leadership style, budgetary knowledge

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Dedication

  This research is dedicated to my Mother, Juanita K. Matthews, my late Father, Robert F. Matthews, Sr., and my late Grandfather Col. Dr. Joseph C. Matthews, Jr. who started me on this journey before I knew the journey existed. Finally, I give honor to God, my personal savior, whom without his infinite grace and wisdom I would not have been able to travel this road.

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List of Abbreviations

Academic Year (AY)

American Council on Education (ACE)

American Association of Community Colleges (AACC)

Association of Governing Boards (AGB)

Board of Trustees (BOT)

Career and College Promise (CCP)

Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

Continuing Education (CE)

Full Time Equivalent (FTE)

Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS)

North Carolina Association of Community College Presidents (NCACCP)

North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS)

North Carolina General Assembly (NCGA)

North Carolina State University (NCSU)

Southern Association of Colleges Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)

Student Government Association (SGA)

Saint Thomas University (STU)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

The purpose of this qualitative single-instrument case study is to explore how leadership styles and funding knowledge impact presidential turnover as experienced by trustees and senior-level administrators using a rural member college of the North Carolina Community College System as the setting. The research explores if presidential leadership styles and institutional budgetary knowledge are components of presidential turnover from the experiences of the trustees and the senior-level administrator.

The organization of this chapter includes the background, presidential turnover, relevance of setting, social context, theoretical concepts of the study, the relation of the study to me along with problem and purpose statement, the significance of the study along with the list of research questions, definitions of terminology and a summary of the chapter. This type of information will advance knowledge of the problem and provide a solid foundation for the study.

Background

Presidential turnover is a problem occurring nationwide and specifically in North Carolina. Community Colleges began with the purpose to provide citizens with necessary workforce training and vocational training to facilitate a productive life. With the amount of turnover occurring, communities have the potential to be affected if a new community college leader is employed that does not have the institutional or historical knowledge needed for the area served by the community college.

Community college leadership styles have no parallel leadership style outside of the university setting (Harris & Ellis, 2018). Governing board relinquish full administrative control to the president and that individual's personal style of leadership directly impacts the

institutional atmosphere of the community college (Gluckman, 2017; Harris & Ellis, 2018). The American Association of Community Colleges (Cooney & Borland, 2018) listed the following as attributes of highly qualified presidential applicants: demonstration of tangible outcomes, applicant has researched the institution, familiarity of governance and legislative policy, student achievement oriented, embraces intrapersonal relationships and management skills sets, understands institutional infrastructures and strategic planning, and uses data to assist with decision making. Other qualifications typically include a terminal degree and specific years of experience in a senior-level position. Gluckman (2018) described how individuals applying for a president's position are unaware of institutional culture, institutional needs, organizational structure, or the needs of the students. The shortfall in qualified presidential applicants and the amount of turnover has resulted in a theory of presidential turnover.

The amount of turnover occurring resulted in the research of needed knowledge and skill sets needed for community college presidents, as well as factors of employment and presidential fit (Boggs, 2003; Gnage & Drumm, 2010; Hammons & Keller, 1990; McNair et al., 2011; Plinkske & Packard, 2010; Vaughan & Weisman, 2003). Despite the research on community college presidents, the literature lacks an empirical understanding of presidential leadership and turnover through the lens of trustee and senior-level administrators. Moreover, the research indicated that performance and fit issues result in changes in executive leadership (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978; Tushman & Rosenkopf, 1996; Wiersema & Bantel, 1993). Many reasons exist for presidential turnover and the literature review will explore presidential leadership style, fit, and budgetary control as factors of turnover. Significantly, current research neglects an extremely critical component, the trustees and senior-level administrators experience with presidential turnover stemming from presidential leadership style, fit, and budgetary control.

Literature which addresses the president's role in funding for the colleges was available (Phelan, 2014; Szucs, 2018; Thornton & Friedel, 2015; Tysseling et al., 2011); however, there was limited data discussing trustee and senior-level administrators' experiences collaborating with the president and their role in college funding (American Association of Community Colleges [AACC], 2013a, 2018; Carpenter, 2018; Forthun & Freeman, 2017; Gardner, 2019). Extraordinarily, a very small amount of research relating to institutional funding exists within the existing research of presidents and leadership styles. This study helps understand presidential turnover from the experiences of the trustees and senior-level administrators. This knowledge will support my role to the board and information could be used in the next presidential search, as well as searches at other community colleges.

Historical

Beginning in the 1950's, presidential turnover and factors of turnover became a significant topic of research, resulting in several studies in the modern higher education history (Bensimon et al., 1989; Birnbaum, 1989, 1992; Boyne et al., 2001; Cohen & March, 1974; Fisher, 1984; Fisher et al., 1988; Kauffman, 1980; Kenser & Sebora, 1994; Levin, 1992; Martin & Samels, 2004; Neck, 1996; Padilla, 2001; Smerek, 2013; Wiersema & Bantel, 1993). Additional studies have shown that a great deal of the turnover resulted from baby boomers retiring from the workforce (Aspen Institute & Achieving the Dream, 2013; Harris & Ellis, 2018; Kiley, 2013; Nevarez & Wood, 2010; Skinner, 2010; Tekniepe, 2014; Weisman & Vaughan, 2006). Reasons for turnover in colleges includes retirements, terminations, resignations, and other reasons (Cohen & March, 1986). North Carolina reports indicate that the presidential turnover occurring within the state funded community colleges are the result of transfer, retirement, death, and resignations (North Carolina Association of Community College

Presidents [NCACCP], 2020; North Carolina Community College System [NCCCS], 2020a). Studies from the 21st century estimated that up to 45% of community college presidents nationwide will have been retired by 2007 and later studies estimated that 79% of community college presidents nationwide will have retired by 2012 (AACC, 2001; Shults, 2001; Weisman & Vaughan, 2002).

Community colleges face challenges including presidential turnover and funding, and presidential turnover is at an unprecedented level in recent higher educational history (Gluckman, 2018; Greenblatt, 2016; Harris & Ellis, 2018; Higher Ed Publications, 2018; McNaughtan, 2017; Noyes, 2019; Selingo, 2016; Skinner, 2010). North Carolina community colleges (NCACCP, 2020; NCCCS, 2020a) are experiencing a high rate of presidential turnover which is consistent with the leadership turnover occurring nationwide (Barton, 2019; Gluckman, 2017; Greenblatt, 2016; Harris & Ellis, 2018; Higher Ed Publications, 2018; McNaughtan, 2017; Noyes, 2019; Selingo, 2016; Skinner, 2010). The significance of presidential turnover has been a topic of discussion for many years. Beginning with Joliet Junior College in 1901, the nation's first community college, and as a result of human nature, the educational system has had inevitable turnover since then (Boyne et al., 2001; Kenser & Sebora, 1994; Neck, 1996; Padilla, 2001; Wiersema & Bantel, 1993).

Social

Community colleges in the United States play an integral role in community relations, student interests, and economic development (Beck, 2017; Grossman, 2014; Richards, 2016). Presidents are responsible for the administration and control of the services provided by the college and how the services are implemented and attended by employees and administrators (Grossman, 2014; McMaster, 2012; Richards, 2016). Presidents must be able to lead and

empower employees toward success (Grossman, 2014; Hersey & Blanchard, 1996; McMaster, 2012; Richards, 2016). According to research, communities should be concerned with the amount of turnover occurring at institutions of higher education because of the role of the college in local economy (Beck, 2017; Grossman, 2014; McMaster, 2012; Richards, 2016). The amount of presidential turnover has the possibility to negatively impact the college by short falling the momentum of strategic planning and the necessary missions to guide institutions (Beck, 2017; Grossman, 2014; McMaster, 2012; Richards, 2016). Coupled with the challenge of presidential turnover, trustees and senior-level administrators face additional leadership issues and budgetary funding issues (AACC, 2013a; Floyd et al., 2010; Rumelt, 1994).

A recent North Carolina study revealed that 44 of 58 community colleges are or have experienced presidential turnover since 2015 (NCACCP, 2020). At each State Board of Community College regular board meetings, the North Carolina Association of Community College Presidents shares a college presidential vacancy report. The October 2020 report showed retired, moved, and other as reasons for presidential vacancies, as well as length of time in a position (NCACCP, 2020). The October report indicated that two colleges are actively searching for new leadership and since 2014, 30 presidents have retired, nine have moved, and five listed other as a reason for the vacancy; additionally, eight colleges have employed a president during 2020 (NCACCP, 2020). Craft and Guy's (2019) research revealed that the governing bodies must collaborate with the president to embody their vision, both fiscally and academically. Earlier studies showed that leadership characteristics and styles, as well as the ability to work cohesively with the governing board, may play a role in presidential turnover (Eitzen & Yetman, 1972; Meyer, 1978). According to Craft and Guy (2019), the Board has the responsibility to ensure the president is responsible for the success of educational programs and other services

that is provided to the institution's service area. Presidents must have an altruistic leadership style to accomplish these goals. Fiduciary responsibility plays a significant role in meeting the needs of the institution (Craft & Guy, 2019). Craft and Guy (2019) stated that the most successful tenures are ones wherein the board and the president worked as a team to produce quality programming and funding to meet these needs. New and novice presidents are required to strategically guide academics while incorporating personal leadership styles and skills to face the growing challenges of modern institutions (Smith, 2018). Historically, presidential leadership styles heavily relied on networking, fundraising, and relationship building (Craft & Guy, 2019). However, the amount of presidential turnover in higher education occurring is resulting in a leadership crisis (AACC, 2012a, 2018; Aspen Institute & Achieving the Dream, 2013; Barton, 2019; Boggs, 2003; Clinger, 2016; Eddy, 2010; Kolomitz, 2016; McNaughtan, 2016, 2017, 2018; NCCCS, 2019, 2020a; Reid, 2018; Shults, 2001; Vaughan & Weisman, 2003). The presidential turnover occurring in the higher educational arena is causing a shortage of highly qualified presidential applicants (Fain, 2008). Scholars estimated that the number of community colleges nationwide who will experience turnover by 2025, will be over 880 institutions, or 50% to 80% of community colleges (AACC, 2018; Hockaday & Puyear, 2015; Phillippe, 2016). Between the years of 2010 and 2012, 10% of the nation's colleges experienced presidential turnover (Jones & Jackson, 2014); tenure is now half of what it was in the past (Tekle, 2012). Scholars called this amount of turnover occurring in the community colleges a leadership crisis, because as more turnover occurs, less candidates in the qualified pool are available to fill the positions (Aspen Institute & Achieving the Dream, 2013; Boggs, 2003; Kolomitz, 2016; Nevarez & Wood, 2010; Osbourne, 2020; Shults, 2001; Trent, 2016; Vaughan & Weisman, 2003).

Important to the research topic are the governing boards, who are the deciders of which

leadership style is needed for the position when determining how to approach the employment of a new president (Brown & Hayford, 2019; Dettmar & Glick, 2019; Padilla, 2001). The nature of the positions requires governing boards to have a chief executive officer who embraces a moralistic leadership (Craft & Guy, 2019; Hambrick & Fukutomi, 1991). This moral leadership is necessary, in order for a community college president and other college leaders to exercise appropriate decision-making skills, moral compasses must be pointed in the correct direction to serve the students and institution in an ethical and objective fashion (Craft & Guy, 2019; Duignan & Macpherson, 1992; Pfeffer & Moore, 1980). Studying other research on issues in higher education, brought a realization that this issue should be addressed. Quigley's (2013) research indicated that education is becoming stagnate between being ineffective and being a great producer; understanding the role that presidential turnover has in the effectiveness of an institution is crucial to the success of students.

Theoretical

During the acclimation transitory period of an employment of a college president, stakeholders form the initial impression of choice and effectiveness of the individual in the position (Gumus et al., 2018). McCaffery (2018) showed that effective leadership, and their ability to effectively lead an educational system and school environment, stems from within the leader. Community college leadership is like no other style of management (Harris & Ellis, 2018). Because of the uniqueness of the management position, individual leadership styles must be considered when employing a new president (Bolman & Deal, 2008). This leadership style is another aspect of presidential turnover (Birnbaum, 1992; Fain, 2006; Grossman, 2014; Hagberg & Heifetz, 2003; Hersey & Blanchard, 1996; McMaster, 2012; Richards, 2016; Rosse, 1987; Roueche et al., 1989). There are many theories guiding

leadership research. Hotchkiss' (1995) research on organizational performance found that organizational context is a factor in presidential leadership. The theory of management focused on the factors leading to the turnover (Hotchkiss, 1995). The theory of corporate boards and forced CEO turnover focused on characteristics of the president such as age and years of service and other determinates of turnover (Chemmanur & Fedaseyeu, 2018; Jackofsky & Peters, 1983; Rosse, 1987).

In recent years, theories such as situational leadership and educative leadership have gained popularity with mentors of college leaders in the development and in the acquisition of updated and new skill sets (Harris & Ellis, 2018; Langdon & Ward, 2015). Situational leadership was developed in 1969 by Hersey and Blanchard. Situational leadership is based on the leader's ability to adapt to the organization's culture and situation (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969). Situational leadership became more refined by the 1970's and encompassed transformational and transactional leadership styles (Adserieas et al., 2017; Berkovich & Eval, 2019; Harris & Ellis, 2018; Hersey & Blanchard, 1996). Situational leadership originated at Ohio State University while Hersey and Blanchard were researching task and relationship behaviors that affect leadership traits (Hersey & Blanchard, 1996). Educative leadership was developed in 1992 by Duignan and Macpherson. Duignan and Macpherson (1992) defined educative leadership by determining what is morally construct. Since the development of the theory, research has shown that the emergence of educative leadership has helped leadership redefine morals, ethics, and importance (Duignan & Macpherson, 1992; Fullan, 2007; Langdon & Ward, 2015; Liebowitz & Porter, 2019).

The leadership style theories that guide research are important in order for the governing board to employ the right person to lead and grow the institution. Hersey and Blanchard's (1969,

1996) situational leadership theory and Duignan and Macpherson's (1992) educative leadership

theory discussed the traits of desirable leaders in a community college situation. The research has

the potential to educate incoming presidents, trustees, and senior-level administrators about

which traits of leadership are most desirable.

Understanding the situational leadership and educative theories are important to this

research. When Hersey and Blanchard (1969) published their research, it was with the belief

system that successful leaders are able to and will adapt situationally to the surroundings, making

this leadership style extremely flexible. Presidents who utilize this style will do so by

understanding the college's needs while shifting their unique styles to look at the whole picture

to lead. Hersey and Blanchard (1969) did not create the theory based on the individual, but how

the individual is able to use the situational context to lead the institution. Later research by

Hersey and Blanchard (1996) identified behavior used to establish the leader's relationship with

the institution. These behaviors were labeled as initiating structure and consideration, also known

as task and relationship behavior (Hersey & Blanchard, 1996). Hersey and Blanchard (1996)

noted that for any leadership change to occur that planned growth and intentional methods must

be used to create the needed trust and respect of the institution. The methods described by

Hersey and Blanchard are four styles of leadership which are: telling, selling, participating, and

delegating (Saint Thomas University [STU], 2019). I will explain these styles in Chapter Two.

The educative leadership theory (Duignan & Macpherson, 1992) was created in 1986 and

further developed to provide a new insight into what makes good leadership while developing a

new leadership theory through synthesizing experience and research to create new learning

materials for in-graduate school attendees and post-graduates (Duignan & Macpherson, 1992).

The understanding behind the theory is that wisdom is elusive to many leaders and educational

leadership requires an educative approach (Duignan, 1987; Macpherson, 1986; 1987a; 1987b).

The theory consists of eight principles. The first principle is the enterprise of the project;

secondly, leaders must not remain silent but, articulate any concerns or needs; third, work should

be stimulating and exciting; fourth, while not always desired, thorough review is necessary; fifth,

utilization of recent research and information; sixth, consistency in information; seventh, work

should create practical outcomes and finally, the ability to see the leader as a human (Duignan &

Macpherson, 1992). By using educative leadership theory as a basis of decision making,

individuals will be able to make assumptions and then fact find to make data-informed decisions

(Duignan & Macpherson, 1992). I will explain further in Chapter Two. This research may unearth

traits a president should embody through the lens of a trustee and senior-level administrator in the

community college setting. Through the research and findings, governing boards will benefit from

the results in regard to the experiences of governing boards of trustees and senior-level administrators

experiences with presidential turnover in the higher educational system.

<div align="center">**Situation to Self**</div>

Cognitive learning skills, new knowledge and understanding is based on stored

information (Barrett & Long, 2012). My goal, in conducting this single-instrument case study,

according to Yin (2002), is to use the participant experiences to understand presidential turnover

in the higher educational system looking at leadership style and institutional funding. As the

researcher who works in a president's office at an institution with high presidential turnover, the

ontological viewpoint is apparent and brought potential bias. As a member of the community

college community, and due to my subjective experiences with presidential turnover, I had

thorough conversations with colleagues to discuss bias and other variables that may influence the

research (Yin, 2014). My epistemological approach results from the extensive interaction I have with

the board of trustees, senior-level administrators, and the president. Through these interactions, and coupled with public records, I am able to approach the research from a wider perspective which will help me when conflicts in information arise.

My axiological perspective is rooted in my training as an ethics liaison as I am able to utilize recent experiences, knowledge, and ethical training. As a president's assistant, I am privy to information that is not otherwise publicly announced. Because of the sensitive issues that arise in a chief executive office, I am to sort through rhetorical assumptions and argue the need for research. It is my worldview belief that people construct knowledge and make decisions based on events that have occurred in their lives. Applefield et al. (2001) described this belief system as constructivism, as one's own experiences help that person to learn and understand.

The administrative and professional experiences that I have had in the president's office and working with the governing board inspired me to research presidential turnover. My experience with presidential turnover and the amount of presidential turnover occurring in North Carolina, lead me to conduct this study. Over a brief period of time, a past president of the research site turned more than three million dollars to the North Carolina system which was needed to support the institution. By the college not utilizing the state aid allotments, employees were not receiving salary increases or bonuses and educational programs grew stagnant. Employees did not receive pay raises, with the exception of legislatively mandated increases. The low salaries affected the quality of instructors and employees being hired at the institution. The institution is home to the only two-year curriculum associate degree equine technology program on the eastern seaboard. The college's foundation owns the horses for the program and is the fundraising/scholarship arm of the institution. However, the facilities are owned by the Board of Trustees and the maintenance of the buildings are the responsibility of the county in

which the institution resides. The equine arena, pastures, riding areas, and driveways of the equine department at the institution were in much need of upkeep and upgrading. Other facilities and fixtures were becoming dilapidated. Community members and students alike began to complain of the lack of money being spent on the college's upkeep. Forty-four allegations were submitted to the Office of the State Auditor, and as the Ethics Liaison in 2014, I was responsible for overseeing the coordination of correspondence from individuals who demanded the retirement of the president (Williamson, 2016).

Using the framework of a single-instrument case study, I am seeking to explore trustees and senior-level administrators' experiences with presidential turnover in the higher educational system looking at leadership style and institutional funding. Researching real world phenomenon is the core of case study method (Yin, 2014). As a president's assistant, ethics liaison, and clerk to the board of trustees in a community college, I have a personal stake in learning and understanding the experiences of boards of trustees. I work diligently to assist the trustees, so they make competent decisions and inform them of any instances of perceived issues. As a professional in a community college president's office, I am career-centered and focused on continual improvement.

Extraordinarily little research exists on the effect that turnover of presidents and leadership styles have on institutional funding. This study will help me to understand presidential turnover from the experiences of the trustees and senior-level administrators. This knowledge and understanding will support my role on the board and information could be used in the next presidential search.

Problem Statement

The problem of community college presidential turnover is currently prevalent in the higher educational system, especially in North Carolina (AACC, 2012b, 2019; Aspen Institute & Achieving the Dream, 2013; Barton, 2019; Boggs, 2003; Carter et al., 2019; Eddy, 2010; NCCCS, 2020a; Shults, 2001; Vaughan & Weisman, 2003). Renneboog and Zhao's (2020) research indicated that executive director turnover relates directly to deficient performance or an inability to properly execute the role of the chief executive officer in order to serve the citizens of the communities. It is the role of the president to be able to understand and navigate state allocated funding and improve institutional funding and fund balances (AACC, 2013a; Floyd et al., 2010). Enrollment, student head count, and institutional funding is affected by the inability to keep up with the demand for qualified community college leaders who need to be able to address state budget allotment shortfalls and low institutional fund balances (AACC, 2013a; 2019; Floyd et al., 2010).

McNaughtan's (2017) study explored separation of community college presidents, whether voluntary or involuntary, from their respected institution and reviewed factors such as how outside employment prior to service enabled the president for perform. Researchers have not examined factors of presidential turnover that include knowledge of institutional funding, prior experience and education, and leadership styles from the perception of community college trustees and senior-level community college administrators to determine if this understanding could factor in presidential turnover (Renneboog & Zhao, 2020). Studies by researchers such as Hornak and Mitchell (2016) and Shults (2001) addressed the impact of college and university resignations and retirement on the higher educational system. The study by Harris and Ellis (2018) analyzed involuntary and voluntary president turnover within the higher educational

system. This research study utilized data from trustee members and senior-level community college administrators to address a gap in the literature examining voluntary and involuntary presidential turnover in the higher educational system.

From a societal point of view the problem this turnover has to do with the lack of understanding new presidents have for the specific institutional budget allocations. Community colleges began because of a need for local and customized training (Trainor, 2015). There are limited resources available to teach new presidents what is required to run a community college. Research supports that untrained presidents do not understand the complexity of the budget constraints (Duignan & McPherson, 1992). Based on the focus of this research, a qualitative single-instrument case study using a two-fold theoretical framework was used to examine the evidence.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative single-instrument case study is to explore how leadership styles and funding knowledge impact presidential turnover as experienced by trustees and senior-level administrators using a rural member college of the North Carolina Community College System as the setting. At this stage in the research the central phenomenon presidential turnover will be defined as voluntary or involuntary separation from the role of a community college president (Harris & Ellis, 2018; Osbourne, 2020; Renneboog & Zhao, 2020). The theory guiding this study is Hersey and Blanchard's (1969, 1996) situational theory of leadership, which posits that leaders will change their leadership styles based on the needs of the situation. The situational theory of leadership, when used accordingly, is beneficial to the institution as a whole (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969, 1996). This research study is further grounded in Bolman and Deal's (1991) revamping of the situational leadership theory (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969, 1996), which defined leadership excellence

and further set standards for ethical and moralistic leadership. The study will explore the four styles of Hersey and Blanchard (1996) leadership identities. The four styles are delegating, coaching, supporting, and directing. Whereas Bolman and Deal (1991) placed leaders in one of four areas: political, human resource, structural, and symbolic. These styles and areas will guide the interview process.

Specifically, this research aimed to explore a gap in literature exploring presidential turnover from the lens of trustees and senior-level administrators. It is important to understand this turnover from the experiences of the trustees and senior-level administrators because it is the duty of the president to embody the mission of the institution and fulfill the role of the chief executive officer (Fisher, 1984; Fisher et. al., 1988). As the chief executive officer of an educational institution, the president is responsible for budgetary control, strategic planning, local workforce development, political aspects, and fundraising, in addition to people management (Eckel & Kezar, 2016). The next section will discuss the significance of the study.

Significance of the Study

Current literature on the topic of presidential turnover is limited and research on the current amount of presidential turnover in North Carolina is virtually non-existent; however, it is beginning to increase as the topic is becoming recognized (Harris & Ellis, 2018; Osbourne, 2020; Renneboog & Zhao, 2020). College presidents who are able to navigate appropriate leadership styles and budgetary knowledge are needed in order for the community college to fulfill the needs of the colleges' service area.

Some research on institutional funding is available (Toutkoushian & Paulsen, 2016); this research on the role a president plays in institutional funding from experiences of trustees and senior-level administrators in the community college may add to the current literature pool.

Incoming presidents may be able to adapt a leadership style and understand which aspects of budgetary control are most important to succeed in a higher educational institution. Boards of Trustees may be able to understand the needs of the president's role in the institution that could be used to guide future presidential searches. The relevance of the setting used for the research sample rests in the fifteen permanent/acting/interim presidents over its fifty plus year existence, with all permanent presidents separating from the college involuntarily (Davis, 2019; NCCCS, 2020b). Presidential mismanagement at the institution resulted in the return of over six million dollars of distributed budget to the State Board of Community Colleges (Williamson, 2016). These returned allocations were to be used for institutional needs such as: course programs, salaries, student and community needs, and workforce development needs of the service area (NCCCS, 2019). The Board of Trustees replaced the president in 2017 and then terminated the replacement president in late spring of 2019.

Qualitative research of leadership styles has existed for numerous years, and the researchers have explored a range of styles of leadership which is considered successful for community college leaders. Leadership styles used in scholarly research are documented through empirical evidence (Crane & Ruebottom, 2012; Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Hersey & Blanchard, 1996; Freeman, 1984; Jawahar & McLaughlin, 2001; Laplume et al., 2008; Mainardes et al., 2011; Roberts, 1992; Rowley, 1997). There is a lack of literature on which leadership style is best suited for community college leadership. Non-scholarly reports from resources in higher education show that the quantitative researchers have tracked nationwide position vacancies and in North Carolina which consists of data for the recent past five to twenty years (NCACCP, 2019; Osbourne, 2020; Snyder, 2016). I could find no scholarly quantitative information of community college presidential turnover. Qualitative information discusses community college governing boards,

community college president leadership styles, institutional presidential fit, personal values, institutional funding, and presidential succession (Brown & Hayford, 2019; Craft & Guy, 2019; Dettmar & Glick, 2019; Hilley & Morris, 2016; McDade et al., 2017; Pulliams, 2016).

Research Questions

This section presents the focused research questions of the study. The central question is an overall question addressing the research problem. From there, the questions are divided into sub-questions for specific information based on the theoretical framework of the study. The use of research questions in a case study aids in the identification of information that is gathered from the participants (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2015; Yin, 2014). The central question addresses the role leadership styles and budgetary administration/knowledge play in presidential turnover as experienced from trustees and senior-level administrators. The sub-questions explored components of leadership style, exploring Hersey and Blanchard (1969, 1996) for components of situational leadership: delegating, coaching, supporting, and directing.

The central question of this study is how do trustees and senior-level administrators describe their experience with presidential turnover involving the factors of leadership style, institutional funding, and presidential fit? The sub-questions were used to support the core questions for data collection utilizing appropriate question structure (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2002). Qualitative questions in research interviews can be broken into one of six categories: behavior or experience, opinion or belief, feelings, knowledge, sensory, and background or demographic (Patton, 2002). These categories are explored within the question discussions.

Research of the trustees' and senior-level administrators' view of challenges will be able to guide future presidents, trustees, and senior-level administrators. The responses will build upon the little research available on the subjects of trustees and presidential turnover. Questions

used in qualitative research are open-ended and are used to describe experiences (Creswell, 2007). In order to survey trustees and senior-level administrators, the following sub-questions guided the responses:

1: How do the participants at a rural community college describe the most crucial factors of budgetary administration necessary to be a community college president?

By asking the knowledge-based question (Patton, 2002) the participants were given an opportunity to share experiences which define crucial budgetary factors related to being a college president (AACC, 2013a; Floyd et al., 2010; Miao, 2012; NCCCS, 2019; Phelan, 2014; Thornton & Friedel, 2015). By investigating challenges, participants were able to express what new presidents should be aware of when joining an organization (Fain, 2015). This research has established that many theories exist to describe and guide leadership styles. The push-pull theory is utilized by numerous governing boards to oversee the presidents of higher educational institutions; the use of this theory enables to the president to properly administer the budget by incorporating suggestions from various stakeholders (Tekniepe, 2014). Additionally, Washington's (2018) research indicated that the presidents must understand how to control the budget. It is my hypothesis that the president is governed by the push-pull theory (Tekniepe, 2014) within senior-level administration and trustee relationships while utilizing a personal style of leadership skills and abilities.

According to Washington (2018), community college presidents are faced with numerous situations such as team building, board management, fundraising, collaborations, communications, as well as the administrative and budgetary needs of the institution. "It is important that great community college presidents acknowledge and learn from failures" (Washington, 2018, p. 1). Each of these needs plays an integral role in the success of the

employees and students (Washington, 2018). The outcomes of the push-pull theory typically

weigh in favor of the governing board which leave the president with the decision to submit a

resignation prior to a more complex situation arising.

2: How do participants at a rural community college describe the style of leadership

necessary for a community college president?

College presidents have several roles in addition to embodying institutional values and goals

(Harris & Ellis, 2018). By asking how experiences changed allowed participants to explore and

share the process they experienced, participants can share experiences that will lead to theme

development (Creswell, 2007). Hersey and Blanchard's (1996) find that individuals who are

experienced will manage jobs better and maturely as well as having accountability for their

actions. This question is intended to gauge how a president's fit plays a role in turnover. By

using these questions, the participants can share experiences so that the results can be understood

(Creswell, 2007). Leadership styles vary, and situations arise that require different approaches

per the issue (Hersey & Blanchard, 1996). Duignan and Macpherson's (1992) research indicated

the educative leadership style is ideal for college presidents as it requires the individual to

understand the varying aspects of the institutions culture and climate.

3. How do Board of Trustee members and senior-level administrators describe their

experiences with presidential leadership style, institutional funding, and presidential turnover?

Harris and Ellis (2018) deduce that one's personal style of leadership has a global effect

on institutions of higher education. Personal styles of leadership vary with each individual and

no one style of leadership suits all situations (Bolman & Deal, 2008). Asking about leadership

practices allowed participants to explore and share the process they experienced (Creswell,

2007). Situational leadership is a style wherein there is no one correct style but is instead

dependent on the situation (Bolman & Deal, 1991; Hersey & Blanchard, 1969, 1996). Boham's (1982) research indicated that boards that understand a variety of leadership theories are more equipped to understand undesired behaviors. Presidents must receive the motivational support of their governing board in order to be successful in the respected position (Boham, 1982). Boards that incorporate five basic levels of the hierarchy of needs into the overall institutional success factors will create an environment of success for the president and the institution. (Boham, 1982; Maslow, 1943).

Definitions

The following is a list of key terms pertinent to the study:

1.   *Institutional Funding* – Purposeful college funding used to administer the needs of the institution (AACC, 2013a; Floyd et al., 2010).

2.   *Governing Board* – The governing board is a number specific panel who exist to make policy and employee the community college chief executive officer, or president (Community Colleges, 2019; Craft & Guy, 2019).

3.   *Presidential Turnover* – Presidential turnover is the continual removal and replacement of a president of an institution (Gluckman, 2017; Harris & Ellis, 2018).

4.   *Budgetary Control* – Process of determining results of figures for the future and comparing with actual variances (Adeleja, 2016).

5.   *Moral Leadership* – Leadership which embraces virtues, self-discipline, altruism, and selflessness (Cheng et al., 2004).

Summary

Presidential turnover in the higher educational system is at an unprecedented level (Gluckman, 2017; Greenblatt, 2016; Harris & Ellis, 2018; Higher Ed Publications, 2018;

McNaughtan, 2017; Noyes, 2019; Selingo, 2016; Skinner, 2010). A recent study of member colleges in the NCCCS (NCACCP, 2020) revealed that 44 of the 58 colleges have recently undergone or are currently undergoing a change in presidential leadership. Reasons for turnover in the NCCCS included 30 presidents separated from the institution, nine presidents moved from the area, and five presidents were reported as the reason for separation; however, the reasons for separation were not listed.

While researching the need for more presidential training programs, the American Association of Community Colleges (Ullman, 2017) estimated that over half of the 1,100 community colleges in the United States will encounter presidential turnover between 2017 and 2027. Because of this finding, the AACC stated that they were aware of the high amount of turnover occurring with community college leadership and the shortage of qualified candidates to fill the numerous positions (Ullman, 2017). Current research available discussed how governing boards operate and the rates of presidential turnover, but there has been no research conducted to understand why this is occurring. There is little to no research available to determine if the cause of this turnover is related to college presidential leadership style or other underlying reasons.

By researching theoretical frameworks and related literature the community college governing boards and leaders will be able to understand the turnover rates and plan for unexpected leadership changes. "Individuals shape the roles that they occupy with their own styles of behavior" (Boham, 1982, p. 3). Community college leaders are all different and the governing board must decide what fit is best for the institution.

By reviewing existing literature on presidential turnover, a need for additional research is found. The unprecedented amount of turnover occurring coupled with the lack of leadership training and the hiring of presidents without desired qualifications may lead institutions to

financial and administrative instability. The recent study of North Carolina community colleges (NCACCP, 2019) indicated a higher-than-normal turnover of executive leadership positions. Governing boards have the ultimate responsibility to ensure the proper person is employed-someone who is capable of managing the fiscal and administrative needs of the institution. In this study, I expand upon the current research by qualitatively exploring leadership style and budgetary knowledge a community college president should possess by investigating senior-level administrators and the governing boards perspective. The challenges with leadership turnover are causing a crisis nationwide. This crisis is affecting enrollment trends and funding, which has a direct impact on institutional and state budgets of the college, which is used to serve the needs of the community (AACC, 2013a; Floyd et al., 2010).

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

A systematic review of literature was conducted to explore how governing boards, community college leadership, presidential fit, values, and understanding of institutional budgets are affecting the high rate of presidential turnover at community colleges in North Carolina. This chapter reviewed current literature relating to governing boards, community college leadership, presidential fit, values, institutional funding, presidential turnover, and presidential succession occurring. The first section discusses styles of leadership theory: situational leadership theory, educative leadership theory, the stakeholder theory, and the gestalt theory. Following the discussion, a synthesis of recent literature is reviewed relating to community college leadership, its practices, and the amount of turnover occurring. Literature is presented that relates to the aforementioned. Finally, the lack of information or literature of the experiences of trustees and senior-level administrators regarding the research topic will be addressed which will tie all aspects together to show the need for the study of the topic of high rates of presidential turnover in North Carolina.

Theoretical Framework

Qualitative research provides a framework wherein the participants are able to voice their unique understanding of an experience (Patton, 1980). The intent of this qualitative study, using a two-fold theoretical framework and a literature review of several leadership theories is to connect the research question to the problem of presidential turnover. The intent of this study is to identify leadership theories that relate to presidential turnover and leadership at community colleges. Responding to the need of this study, theoretical frameworks that relate to internal factors are presented. The framework will support an explanation of why the unprecedented

turnover of the position of president is occurring in the North Carolina Community College System based on the experiences of trustees and senior-level administrators. Since this phenomenon has only occurred within the last six years, there is a gap in literature on the recently occurring subject.

A review of literature of theoretical frameworks of leadership will review the varying styles of leadership listed. While many theories exist, the two-fold theoretical framework this research study utilizes are situational leadership theory and educative leadership theory. The situational leadership theory (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969, 1996) provided researchers with the information to understand how a leader can change the style of leadership of a college as necessary per the current situation. The educative leadership theory (Duignan & Macpherson, 1992) provided a new theoretical lens into leadership styles. After reviewing the aforementioned leadership styles, I will briefly review the stakeholder theory which suggested that leadership is viewed from a top-down scenario (Freeman, 1984, 2005). I will also review the Gestalt theory (Koffka, 1935) a style that suggested that group and external factors affect leadership styles.

Situational Leadership Theory

Hersey and Blanchard (1969, 1996) conceptualized a new form of leadership based on surrounding situations and the ability to adapt within the situation while employed at Ohio State University. Originally titled the Life-cycle Theory of Leadership (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969), the name was changed to situational leadership theory during the 1970's to be more reflective of what the theory entails (Hersey & Blanchard, 1996). Hersey (1996) stated, "I'm concerned that people reading the title of our 1969 article, "Life-cycle Theory of Leadership", for the first time may mistakenly think it's about someone who leads from atop a popular piece of fitness equipment" (p. 42). Contextualized from other theories of leadership from Ohio State University

research during the 1960s, situational leadership consists of two main aspects: task and relationship behaviors (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969). Originally each theorist created an interpretation of situational leadership, aptly entitled Hersey's situational leadership model and Blanchard's situational leadership model II (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969). The underlying belief of the theory was that there is not one specific type of effective leadership, and that effective leadership is based on the situation at hand (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969). According to Hersey and Blanchard (1996), effective leadership does not reside within the personality or leadership skills of the host leaders, but within that leader's ability to be adaptive and responsive to the needs of the situation or occurrence of problems. Therefore, the theory consisted of the two aspects, which are the leader's ability to relate, and the maturity utilized to solve the problems (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969).

Leaders must determine which relationship or task is occurring and with whom it is occurring. According to the situational leadership theory when a leader is dealing with subordinates who are of lower maturity, the relationship approach is used. When leaders are dealing with higher levels of maturity, the task and relationship approach is useful. It is the individual leader's ability to implement situational leadership in the decision making and reaction process that determines success (Hersey et al., 2007). Daft et al.'s (2008) collaborative research on situational leadership indicated that leaders who use this approach create an environment for subordinates that is productive, interesting, and satisfying.

Situational leadership theory is based in the belief that leaders can and should elicit adaptability and flexibility with the surroundings (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969). This style of leadership incorporates institutional and organizational needs, which allows the leader to adapt their personal leadership style to be aligned with the needs of the whole; not so much about the

leader himself, but how the leader alters their command based on these institutional and organizational needs (Hersey & Blanchard, 1996).

As briefly discussed in Chapter One, Hersey and Blanchard have four styles of situational leadership which are: telling, selling, participating, and delegating. The telling style is used in closely monitored situations where a leader is explaining sets of instructions, hence telling the employee what to do or not to do (STU, 2019). Marzano et al.'s (2005) research indicated that the telling style is most successful when subordinates are unwilling or unable to perform specific tasks. The selling style is used when leaders want to explain situations and are seeking support from subordinates (STU, 2019). Marzano et al. (2005) stated that this style is useful when the subordinates are able to fulfill the task but are not willing to participate. It is at this point the leader must use persuasion to accomplish the task (Marzano et al., 2005). The participatory style is used by leaders who share and facilitate happenings with subordinates (STU, 2019). Marzano et al. (2005) described the participating style as one that is used when subordinates want to fulfil a task but are unable to do so. This style allows the leader to interact while giving concrete direction and guidance (Marzano et al., 2005). Finally, the delegating style uses the leader to determine who will do which task instead of doing the task themselves (STU, 2019). It is notable to state that Marzano et al. (2005) discussed that leaders who utilize situational leadership allow subordinates to perform their jobs with limited instruction when the aforementioned styles are not required, in other words, delegation. Table 1 shows the relation of the unique styles within the theory.

Table 1

Development level	D1	D2	D3	D4
Ability/willingness	Unable/unwilling	Unable/willing	Able/unwilling	Able/willing
Leadership style	Tell.	Consult	Participate.	Delegate
Quadrant	Q1	Q2	Q3 LT/HR	Q4 LT/LR
High or low task/relationships	HT/LR	HT/HR		
Source: Thompson & Vecchio (2009)				

Note: Adapted from Situational Leadership Theory: A test of three versions. Retrieved from the *Leadership Quarterly*, Vol. 20 No. 5, pp. 837-848.

Goleman's (STU, 2019) research added to this theory by further defining the styles and delimitating them as: coaching, pacesetting, democratic, authoritative, coercive, and affiliative. Democratic leadership is commonly used by leaders in education (Harris & Chapman, 2002); especially when a moral purpose is pertinent along with needed collaboration and participation in decision making. Choi's (2010) research revealed that the democratic style within the situational leadership theory is most associated with higher subordinate morale. Marzano et al. (2005) stated, "The basic principle underlying situational leadership is that the leader adapts her leadership behavior to followers' 'maturity', based on their willingness and ability to perform a specific task" (p. 17).

In recent research, situational leadership is described as a style for those who manage themselves and others in order for organization to prosper (Blanchard & Johnson, 2015). Kelchner's (2016) research labeled situational leadership as an effective theory which allows all employees to support one another, receive the instruction they require, and builds morale. Situational leadership is a widely accepted leadership style (Papworth et al., 2009) and can be altered for specific situations to allow the leader the most flexibility (Asdair, 1973; Blake & Mouton, 1982; Blanchard & Johnson 2015; Kelchner, 2016; Reddin, 1967).

The distinctive styles are utilized when different situations arise, lending itself to the name- situational leadership. Hersey and Blanchard (1996) discussed several constructs that remain consistent throughout the literature for situational leadership to be effective; the leader must determine which leadership style is appropriate for the given situation. To make this choice, leaders must determine if the situation falls into one of the four styles of leadership this theory encompasses by matching their aspects with the situation. Additionally, this requires the leader to incorporate organizational culture, roles and positions, individual personalities, and environmental factors into the decision (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). Hersey and Blanchard (1996) list initiating structure as the behavior used by the leader used to establish the relationship and structure of the organization. Consideration relates to the individuals once the relationship is established (Hersey & Blanchard, 1996). These terms later became known task and relationship behavior. The life cycle theory of leadership is referred to several times, and in fact, was Hersey and Blanchard's (1996) original name of the theory. The name refers to the cycle that occurs between the leader, the staff, and the organization.

The American Association of Community Colleges developed a competency framework that guides college leaders using situational leadership as a main tool for knowledge, skills, and abilities (AACC, 2018). The competencies the AACC lists which are needed for community college leaders are reflected in the following table that includes overlapping knowledge, skills, and abilities (Table 2).

Table 2

Image Removed to Protect Copyright

Note. AACC Competencies for Community College Leaders, 3rd ed., 2018, p. 42 (Retrieved from http://www.ccleadership.org/resource center/competencies.htm).

Table 2 showed that effective leadership consists of many variables. The combination of the variables includes the situation, leader, subordinates, and organizational culture (Bass, 1990; Yukl, 2001). Campbell and Sloan's (2002) study on leadership aligns with the

aforementioned competencies needed in our community college leaders and suggests that the leader incorporate these competencies into their interactions with other leaders. Hersey and Blanchard (1969) described these interactions as readiness, wherein the group leader requires the ability to quickly understand and match the appropriate style of leadership necessary for the interaction.

Opposite of the aforementioned competencies, many leaders have only utilized their individual leadership styles in the midst of their authority (Hogan, 1991). This approach is not situational leadership, but leadership based on personality traits. Leadership that utilizes personality traits can be confused with situational leadership but is actually patterns of thinking, feeling, and behaviors that contribute to one's leadership style over varying situations (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Hogan, 1991). While different in nature, knowing one's personality traits will enlighten others as to why leaders are or why leaders are not exhibiting certain behaviors instead of leadership traits (Hughes et al., 2006).

Leaders utilizing situational leadership will use telling, selling, participating, or delegating to determine which component is necessary for the interaction (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969). Situational leadership is triune, consisting of three components that overlap one another. The three components are: leadership, followship, and situations where leadership is applied (Northouse, 2013). The approach developed by Hersey and Blanchard (1969) is useful when leaders must be adaptive to the situation at hand. This ability requires the leader to be able to shift their personality and leadership training as needed per the situation (Northouse, 2013). According to Yukl (1989), situational leadership emphasized that leaders must adapt and be committed to this style of leadership. Situational leadership requires a leader use different knowledge, skills, and abilities for each particular situation (Northouse, 2013).

According to (Northouse, 2013), leaders who engaged in situational leadership foster confidence and support from their subordinates and peers. Stogdill's (1974) meta-analytic review of literature regarding effective leadership denoted several personality traits that successful leaders encompass including: intelligence, self-initiative, responsibility, and integrity. While not a component of any specific leadership theory, these traits are personal characteristics that afford leaders the ability to be effective with the situation at hand.

Situational leadership is the ability to adapt to the situation as needed (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977). Situational leadership was developed for leadership skills to be able to connect behavior and maturity in scenarios that require specific leadership styles (Northouse, 2013). The original model has shifted over the years, modern situational leadership is based on the leader's competence and commitment towards a specific goal or task (Blanchard, 1985). Modern situational leadership involves the four leadership styles of directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating which assist today's leaders in being successful in their styles (Blanchard et al., 1993). No single approach is a perfect approach for any form of leadership, and that is a core factor of situational leadership (Northouse, 2013). Because situations lend themselves to individuality, leaders must be adaptable to unique tasks, individuals, and goals being able to match the needed leadership style to the situation (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969; Northouse, 2013).

Educative Leadership Theory

The second theory presented in the framework is educative leadership. P. A. Duignan and R. J. S. Macpherson (1986) created the educative leadership theory in Australia to address the need for new leadership styles in education that arose after a study by the Australian Council of Education. Duignan and Macpherson's (1992) research indicated that this style is ideal for

educational executive leaders, administrative leaders, and classroom teaching. The term educative leadership theory was coined as a response to redefining what is needed from educational leaders (Duignan & Macpherson, 1992).

Educative leadership theory is based in assumptions (Duignan & Macpherson, 1992). The first assumption states that the best approach to the theory is intent and outcome; secondly, research and theory should be newly generated and tested in-service; third, use the collective wisdom of the experts; fourth, educational systems must support each other to reach educational standards; and fifth, treat education as a culture and not a system (Duignan & Macpherson, 1992).

Leadership in education has a top-down hierarchy (Duignan & Macpherson, 1992). Due to the nature of top-down hierarchy, leadership styles are not typically noticed by subordinates until the need arises. Situational and educative leadership styles are ideal for educational institutions as they embody attributes that facilitate a complete understanding of the institution as a whole (Duignan & Macpherson, 1992). Duignan and Macpherson (1992) refer to a moral compass that leaders must use to exercise proper decision-making control. Langdon and Ward's (2015) research of educative leadership revealed that this leadership theory is becoming popular among mentors and emerging leaders seeking to acquire new skill sets.

Gestalt Theory

The final theory in the framework is the gestalt theory which I discuss to pull the theories together. At the onset of World War II in Germany, theorists Kurt Koffka, Max Wertheimer, and Wolfgang Kohler began working on a theory that encompassed leadership as a whole (Koffka, 1935). Koffka's (1935) theory included the following factors of perception: contour, constancy, illusion, and movement. Koffka (1935) based the theory structure on the individual's collection

of life experience within the working environment. The gestalt learning aspect is similar and is based on the belief that similar groups, when placed together, act, think, and learn better than when separated (Koffka, 1935). Gestalt investigated leadership in its entirety based on life experiences (Koffka, 1935). The belief that peoples are perceived by others based on non-related attributes outside of leadership is an earmark of the theory and that these non-related beliefs of leadership negate the purpose of the leader's position relating to subordinates (Dumitru & Joergensen, 2016; Guberman, 2017).

Utilizing the perceptional factors such as illusion, contour, consistency, and movement, this theoretical framework is based in psychology (Koffka, 1935). The theory became known as gestalt due to the factors of perception involved, as gestalt is the German word for form, which translated into English, gestalt represents a pattern or configuration (Koffka, 1935). Studying the organizational structure, the gestalt theory builds on the collective of the individuals and their experiences in the organization (Koffka, 1935). Behavioral environment or the environmental field is a term that refers to the ontological status, relation and location, and insufficiency. Koffka (1935) referred to this construct numerous times and states that it cannot be explained.

Guberman' s (2017) research discussed Wertheimer's findings of the flaws of the gestalt theory. Wertheimer's (Guberman, 2017) found that this theory had many flaws and made it difficult to use in any one situation. These flaws continuously cause criticism of the gestalt theory (Guberman, 2017). Guberman (2017) noted that for many years, the Prägnanz principle (Evans, 2019) was used within the theory to determine the parts and the whole. Trying to break the gestalt theory into these parts causes the theory to become unstable, as the basis of this theory is the utilization of the whole (Guberman, 2017).

Board members whether overseeing a presidential search committee or a sitting president should understand the gestalt of the situation and the impact of turnover to the community (Guberman, 2017). Research has shown that organizations that practice gestalt theory focus on the leader and the relationship between constituents (Frew, 2006, 2019). By using the gestalt theory (Frew, 2019), governing board will be able to find a contemporary fit for the organization as presidential transitions continue.

Stakeholder Theory

The third theory presented for this framework is the stakeholder theory. Stakeholder is a term first popular in the early 1960's as a way to acknowledge others in an operation other than shareholders (Parmar et al., 2010). The stakeholder theory came about through Dr. Edward Freeman, while employed at the Wharton Applied Research Center. He is a professor at the University of Virginia and is known as the father of the stakeholder theory (Bowie, 2012; Freeman, 1984). The name was presented as the stakeholder theory in Dr. Freeman's (1984) *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach.* The stakeholder theory revolved around an ethical approach to organizational management for decision making (Freeman, 1984). The theory has been studied further and now includes a stakeholder social identification which are markers used by distinct groups to distinguish themselves among others (Crane & Ruebottom, 2012). The markers can include political distinction, religious distinction, gender, and age (Crane & Ruebottom, 2012).

The stakeholder approach is recognized as a leader in theory and is used in scholarly research regularly (Crane & Ruebottom, 2012; Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Jawahar & McLaughlin, 2001; Laplume et al., 2008; Mainardes et al., 2011; Roberts, 1992; Rowley, 1997). Many of entrepreneurial boards utilize this theory due to the maximum return of investments the

theory facilitates (Bradshaw et al., 1998). By using this approach as a factor in the theoretical

framework, the research will determine what responsibility the stakeholders have in regard to

presidential turnover, other than the educational and state-mandated requirements (Freeman et

al., 2004). According to the theory, the interests of the stakeholder are valuable and therefore

organizations much take these interests into accord and by doing so natural relationships occur

(Hom, 2011; Jones, 1995; Mainardes et al., 2011). Within the stakeholder theory four practices

assist with effective leadership: ethical influence, use of committees, selection of appropriate

trustees, and high-level work performance of the board (Bradshaw et al., 1998). Community

college presidents and boards that use this approach typically enjoy immediate returns and

maintain a competitive edge in the educational arena (Bradshaw et al., 1998).

With an average of a quarter of colleges undergoing a presidential search (Martin & Samels,

2004) the use of stakeholder approach will allow for a decision informed board. According to

Freeman's (2005) research, boards that implement this theory in the presidential search will focus

more on the process and how the incumbent will affect the institution. While some are labeling

this presidential turnover as a crisis, those employing the stakeholder theory will view the process

as an opportunity to propel the institution into forward thinking momentum (Johnson & Eckel, 2013;

Wilson, 2005).

Freeman's (1984) theory is important for governing boards or the 'stakeholders' in order

to understand their respective roles. "Stakeholder management, as a concept, refers to the

necessity of the organization to manage the relationships with its specific stakeholder groups in

an action-oriented way" (Freeman, 1984, p. 53). Stakeholder theory utilizes three aspects to

determine if the stakeholder is a good fit for the organization's climate (Freeman, 1984). The

three aspects Freeman (1984) referred to are: rational perspective, organizational processes, and

an understanding of the organization's internal structure. Stakeholders can be a single individual or a group of individuals (Freeman, 1984). Stakeholder theory involves the use of tenants to guide the understanding which include an understanding of the culture, understanding of relationships, new thought processes, and a balance of interests (Freeman, 2005). The basis of this theory is accountability and rational behavior (Jensen, 2010). According to Jensen (2010) upwards to 50% of individuals are not rational in thinking which leads to required training for stakeholders. Freeman (2008) researched stated that for any decision to be decided a series of ethical questioned are warranted. The questions include: Who is the decision affecting? Whose rights are enabled. And what kind of person am I if I make this decision?

The nature of situational and educative leadership styles encourages leaders to learn the environment, the campus culture and climate, as well as all things institutional. Duignan and Macpherson's (1992) research revealed that leaders who utilize these leadership styles are more likely to make decisions that are appropriate for the educational institution. Leaders who use the Gestalt theory of leadership will focus on the environment as a whole to make good and sound decisions. Finally, the stakeholder theory, when effectively used by governing boards, will guide proper decision making for the institution, students, and staff/faculty (Langdon & Ward, 2015).

Related Literature

An examination of the amount of presidential turnover occurring in the North Carolina community colleges leaves the question of how governing boards, leadership styles, presidential fit, values, and institutional funding are influencing this turnover. Whichever leadership style is utilized by the community college leader, the leader, in addition to being able to lead and share vision with the employees, must also please the governing board. Boards have an obligation to the institution and the students served to be objective and ethical (Craft & Guy, 2019). In

addition, it is the legislative role of the individual community college board of trustees in North Carolina to employ or terminate the employment of the institution's president (Community Colleges, 2019). Many boards opt to use professional executive search firms to facilitate the search for president (Brown & Hayford, 2019; McDade et al., 2017) however, this is a less desirable search process, as it denies the board the opportunity to thoroughly review the applicants on a personal level (Dettmar & Glick, 2019). Potential candidates must invest his or her own time in learning the culture and environment of the institution to be considered for an interview (Pulliams, 2016). Once the president has secured the position, they must invest in the institution to be effective as the leader.

By understanding the different theories of leadership, boards will be able to conceptualize and possibly predict undesired behaviors prior to a crisis occurring (Boham, 1982). Presidents must receive the motivational support of their governing board in order to be successful in the respected position (Boham, 1982). According to Boham (1982), boards that incorporate Maslow's (1943) five basic levels of needs into the overall institutional success factors will create an environment of success for the president and the institution. Tarker's (2019) systematic review of literature supported Boham's (1982) research on the desired qualities and traits needed to be an effective leader in an educational venue.

Presidential turnover is beginning to be studied more often (AACC, 2012b; Aspen Institute & Achieving the Dream, 2013; Barton, 2019; Boggs, 2003; Brown & Hayford, 2019; Clinger, 2016; Craft & Guy, 2019; Eddy, 2010; Fain, 2008; Gluckman, 2017; Harris & Ellis, 2018; Kolomitz, 2016; Leubsdorf, 2006; McDade et al., 2017; McNaughtan, 2016, 2017, 2018; NCACCP, 2019; NCCCS, 2020b; Reid, 2018; Shults, 2001; Tekniepe, 2014; Vaughan & Weisman, 2003; Washington, 2018) and theories of the presidential turnover, such as a push-pull

theory, are starting to arise (Tekniepe, 2014). Tekniepe (2014) described the push as pressures from current leaders that include opposing views different than the governing boards, internal and external stakeholder pressures, and negative perceptions of the leader. Pull factors include opportunity for advancement (Tekniepe, 2014). The push-pull theory research indicated that these pressures are what likely causes departures from positions, including local and higher government administrators (Clinger, 2016; Feiock & Stream, 2002; Hall, 1989; Helmich, 1974; Lundberg, 1986; Tekniepe & Stream, 2010, 2012). While no true attempt has been made to research the Push-Pull theory with educational boards and presidents (Tekniepe, 2014), this research reveals a potential for future research.

In addition to the arising theories, the amount of turnover occurring is causing a community college presidential leadership crisis (Eddy & VanDerLinden, 2006). It is estimated that a 17% turnover rate between employees and leaders will continue to occur during this time (Keim & Murray, 2008; Selingo & Carlson, 2006). It is imperative for community colleges to have proper leadership, as reports indicated that up to 25% of senior-level administrators that could be successors to the president are retiring within the first two decades of the 21st century (Shults, 2001). Over the course of higher education history, the traditional route to presidency was from within the institution (Barwick, 2002). Unfortunately, this is no longer the case as senior-level administrator turnover is beginning to mirror presidential turnover and global retirement trends (Blumenstyk, 2005; Filan, 1999; Gonzalez, 2010; Leubsdorf, 2006; Rothwell, 2005; Shults, 2001; Weisman & Vaughan, 2007).

The inception of community colleges required a great amount of college presidents to be employed and towards the end of the 20th century it was typical for presidents to spend at least eight and a half years in their position By the second decade of the 21st century, this number had

dropped to seven years (American Council on Education [ACE], 2012; Betts et al., 2009; Leubsdorf, 2006). This turnover, coupled with the number of senior-level administrators retiring from higher education, are making the crisis even more critical (ACE, 2012; Association for Governing Boards [AGB], 2013; Boggs, 2003; Campbell, 2002; King et al., 2008; Patton, 2004; Song & Hartley, 2012; Shults, 2001). Shults' (2001) work is further supported by studies that indicated that 84% of presidents interviewed at the time planned to retire by 2017 (Weisman & Vaughn, 2007). However, a study in 2011 indicated that some of the presidents did not retire as reported due to the downtown in the economy and the need to remain working (Curphy, 2011). The AACC's (2012c) study indicated that while approximately 600 community colleges presidents were newly employed between 2001 and 2012, there is still an alarming number of retirements anticipated by 2022. A later study (AACC, 2016) indicated that of 239 responses to a presidential turnover survey, 80% of the respondents plan to retire by 2026. This study was up by 50% in a report by the AACC (2014) that stated they would be leaving their position within the decade. Again, this alarming rate of turnover will leave a difficult gap of qualified community college leaders (Corbett, 2012; Fulton-Calkins & Millings, 2005).

According to Washington (2018), community college presidents are faced with numerous situations such as team building, board management, fundraising, collaborations, communications, as well as the administrative and budgetary needs of the institution. "It is important that great community college presidents acknowledge and learn from failures" (Washington, 2018, p. 1). Each of these needs plays an integral role in the success of the employees and students (Washington, 2018). The outcomes of the push-pull theory typically weigh in favor of the governing board which leaves the president with the decision to submit a resignation prior to a more complex situation arising (Tekniepe, 2014). Tekniepe (2014)

acknowledged the lack of literature in this area, but his study indicated that the turnover rates of community college leaderships can be described by one of four areas, politics, pressure from within, pressure from an outside source, or budgetary needs and issues of the institution. Being able to or not being able to meet the needs of the students and institutional service areas, plays a significant role in the success of the president (Washington, 2018). Washington (2018) stated that the needs of institutions today are far more complex than of yesteryear, having to incorporate campus infrastructure and aging buildings on campus, wellness of students and employees, and the interactions of a variety of generations of people. Washington (2018) said that these changing needs affect the president in a variety of ways such as health, well-being, and family issues.

Unfortunately, success of presidents is in jeopardy as succession programs have been reduced and training for new presidents is limited (Amey, 2004). With that said, the American Association of Community Colleges have started programs and initiatives to support presidential succession and address the turnover rates (AACC, 2003). Programs such as these prepare community colleges for turnover during the highest changeover rate in the history of the United States higher educational system (Boggs, 2003; Vaughn & Weisman 2003). To manage this crisis, community colleges will require proven leaders that are trained to meet the complex needs of institutions (Kezar et al., 2006). In order to achieve these goals, succession planning will need implementing to fill the vacancies created by college presidents who are aging out, retiring, or exiting positions for other reasons (Amey & VanDerLinden, 2002; Patton, 2004). Scott-Skillman (2007) stated that it is important to begin the process of succession planning to best suit the needs of the individual institutions.

Several studies have shed light on the challenges that presidential succession will have, especially with the board of trustees relating institutional sustainability while dealing with the challenges brought about by local society, public trust, and economic relations (Altbach et al., 1999; Levin, 2001; McPhail, 2000, 2005; McPhail et al., 2007; Polonio, 2006; Scott-Skillman, 2007). Vaughan's (2004) research indicated that the leadership crisis brings about a challenge in itself to diversify community college leadership, which is another area of worthwhile research. Succession planning in a community college affords the institution to place a leader who is from within the institution while being knowledgeable of the institution (Hollenbeck et al., 2006).

Leadership skills are necessary to facilitate presidential success (Howells, 2011; McDonald, 2012; Shults, 2001). Shults (2001) stated that the new leaders should be selected based on their traits and behaviors, as well as the use of 21st century leadership theories. McDonald (2012) identified five themes that should facilitate community college longevity: communication skills, balance and charisma, patience, initiative, and awareness of adversaries. Even though the high turnover is happening, the turnover garners an opportunity for colleges to bring in trainable, fresh faces (Evelyn, 2001). Giannini's (2011) research revealed that this is an opportunity for the women of education to step to the forefront. These opportunities afford trustees a chance to employ effective leaders who embody these skills and accomplish the goals of the institution (Fisher, 2005).

It is thought that North Carolina community colleges are autonomous in nature and each entity has full discretion over the individual institution. While the colleges have autonomy over structure and personnel, the institutions are guided by North Carolina General Statue § 115-D, the State Board of Community Colleges Code, the North Carolina Community College System, and Southern Association of Colleges Commission on Colleges. Additionally, the trustees who

are charged with the overall administration of the institution are appointed by governmental or local educational agencies (Community Colleges, 2019).

The AACC (2001) reported that the impending retirements and other turnover creates quite a challenge for community colleges and their trustees. Phillippe and Sullivan (2005) identified these challenges and included funding, accountability, student diversity, and changes in modern technology as factors in turnover. Other challenges identified in turnover are the evolution of college missions, aging facilities, and faculty retirement (Bailey, 2003; Boggs, 2003, 2004; Evelyn, 2004; Vaughan, 2006). Since the president is not only the institutional executive officer, but also the face of the college, it is important for the president to understand that community colleges are the backbones of workforce development training for each state in the US (Bailey, 2003; Dougherty & Bakia, 2000; Holmes, 2004; Larose, 2004; Schmidt, 1997).

Since the inception of community colleges, which are a vital source of employees for our workforce, community college presidents are accountable to their governing board to implement the needed education and firsthand training that citizens of the community require (Cohen & Brewer, 2008; Polonio, 2006; Roueche et al., 1989; Sullivan, 2001). Unfortunately, declining funds from federal, state, and local levels strongly impact the success of the president as the need for customized training continues to increase (Eddy & VanDerLinden, 2006; Kezar et al., 2006; Sullivan, 2001). This need requires the president to be proven and capable while responding to the needs of the community (Kezar et al., 2006).

The community college was created for education of America citizens (Goff, 2002). Presidents at the inception of the community college managed the faculty and staff and received into the institution the resources for its service area (Goff, 2002). Modern presidents are still

required to steward this need, but also answer to local boards and industry (Vaughan, 1986).

Additionally, presidents manage budgets, accreditation, and student success, all while maintaining

exemplary reputations and upholding the values of the institutions (Cohen & Brewer, 1996;

Nasworthy, 2002; Wen, 1999). Vaughan (1986) wrote that to achieve these goals the president

must embody specific traits and characteristics of a leader. In addition to leadership attributes, the

president must be able to manage the fiscal health of the institution (Boggs, 2004).

Community college leadership is a unique genre within educational leadership (Harris &

Ellis, 2018). Harris and Ellis (2018) deduced that one's personal style of leadership has a global

effect on institutions of higher education. Personal styles of leadership vary with each individual

and no one style of leadership suits all situations (Bolman & Deal, 2008). Individuals will fill

roles with their individual styles based on personality and experiences (Boham, 1982).

Therefore, it is necessary to have a president in place who is able to adapt to the internal and

external demands of the institution.

Harris and Ellis (2018) described transactional leadership as a style that is proper for

higher education. Transactional leadership sets goals, rewards employees, and continuously

watches for improvements or success (Berkovich & Eval, 2019). Another desirable type of

leadership in higher education is transformational leadership (Adserieas et al., 2017).

Transformational leadership encourages subordinates to be creative in leadership's efforts while

the leaders govern the process by expounding a vision of success to others (Kark et al., 2018).

Conflict is an area of concern for college presidents that could possibly lead to

involuntary turnover (Britt, A., Personal Communication, December 16, 2016). Boham (1982)

wrote that conflict is typically treated as a social phenomenon that has implications of the

understanding of conflict within the organization. Values are important for a college president as

he or she plans for their career (Boham, 1988). Boham (1988) showed that many times career choices and internalized values are based upon the life experiences of the presidential candidate; these values and choices will determine how conflict is approached. Cohen (1985) discussed these values as having a number of differentiating aspects affecting ones' belief. Cohen (1985) listed these values as intrinsic, extrinsic, use, inherent, moral, personality, and epistemic. As a leader grows in experiences, the values held change through those experiences (Hollis & Hollis, 1976). These experiences motivate the leader to act in a certain manner (Garan, 1987). Hollis and Hollis' (1976) research alluded to values as being subject to change and the importance of the values in relation to one's life experiences. Presidents must have commitment to their values in order to rigorously evaluate budgetary and administrative circumstances (Levi, 1969). Levi (1969) wrote, "The internal as well as the external world, both mental and physical, are created by men themselves as a result of their value experience" (p. 16).

The ability to understand, navigate, and contribute to or improve institutional funding and fund balance is required by community college presidents (AACC, 2013a; Floyd et al., 2010). This has the potential to affect enrollment, student headcount, and institutional funding nationwide, as well as in North Carolina (AACC, 2013a). However, a gap was found in literature, as this is a lack written about the experiences of trustees and senior-level administrators regarding the research topic. This potential impact is directly attributed to state budget allotments and institutional fund balances (Floyd et al., 2010).

The AACC (2001) reported that the impending retirements and other turnover creates quite a challenge for community colleges and their trustees. Phillippe and Sullivan (2005) identified these challenges and included funding, accountability, student diversity, and changes in modern technology as factors in turnover. Other challenges identified in turnover is the

evolution of college missions, aging facilities, and faculty retirement (Bailey, 2003; Boggs,

2003, 2004; Evelyn, 2004; Vaughan, 2006).

North Carolina community colleges began budget allocations based on specific criteria of

achievement in 1999 (NCCCS, 2019). Tuition cannot be considered in the budget formulas, as

state owned institutions must pass the fees collected to the state department of colleges or

education (Phelan, 2014). This type of funding does not cover the needs of the entire institution

and can affect the turnover of presidents. It may actually be detrimental to the institution as it

attempts to meet unrealistic goals set by an outside funding agency (Phelan, 2014). State

allocations include performance measures and at times include local bonds for the purpose of

enhancing the quality of education for local areas (Phelan, 2014). Phelan (2014) contended that

this form of budgetary allocations leaves an institution in a vulnerable predicament financially.

Thornton and Friedel (2015) discussed how many colleges are frustrated that the lesser amounts

of performance-based funding is allocated and that restrictions are placed on its use to the

institution. The majority of states utilizing the performance-based budget reward base the award

on pass/fail indicators in curriculum and basic skills programs (Miao, 2012).

Historically, North Carolina community colleges presidents were able to rely on state

funding to supply financial support for capital project's needs (Bucci & Waters, 2014; Bumphus,

2014). Current funding shortages are requiring college leaders to become extremely creative in

their fundraising efforts (Bumphus, 2014). Colleges are having to shift focus from brick and

mortar needs to non-tangible student success initiatives (Bumphus, 2014). Even through the lack

of funding, which affects the overall infrastructures, college leaders are required to deliver

specific educational and workforce development needs. Importantly, college leaders must shift

their priorities between visionary leaders and fundraising (Drumm & Zeiss, 2018; Heaton, 2015).

Drumm and Zeiss (2018) reported that board members should be involved in the fundraising process to allow the president more time to address educational needs. Forms of fundraising could be ontological, methodological, or axiological (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017) and will allow the stakeholders to evaluate which concept will facilitate the needs of the institution.

Community colleges exist to provide short-term training, workforce development, continuing education and other areas that remove barriers to education (Boggs, 2003; Duree, 2007; Hockaday & Puyear, 2000; Roueche et al., 2008). Because of the ability to serve local areas, community colleges have become the largest area in higher education (Boggs, 2004). Community colleges were strategically placed throughout the nation in order to reduce commute times for the student (AACC, 2012; Boggs, 2004). The presidents of the United States have agendas for education as part of their platform, which includes funding (AACC, 2012b). Incidentally, when President Obama was in office, one of the challenges of his Completion Agenda was to credential and educate five million students by the year 2020 (AACC, 2012b). In order to complete this agenda, funding was necessary. Carnevale et al.'s (2010) research revealed that by 2018, 63% of jobs will require college education for employees. The role of the community college president aligns with the need for college educated and credentialed employees by providing the needed courses and credentialing programs (AACC, 2012b; Boggs, 2004; Eddy, 2010).

Phelan (2005) stated that community college presidents need to be aware of funding opportunities and be effective fundraisers. Durée's (2007) research identified funding as the single most important challenge for college presidents. This challenge has shifted towards a primary function for community college presidents (Cohen & Brewer, 2008; Muller, 2004; Phillippe & Sullivan, 2005; Townsend & Bassoppo-Moyo, 1997).

Legislation also impacts funding for community colleges, which the presidents must understand (Skinner, 2010). With funding shortages, it is imperative that a college president network in the community in order to secure additional funding through alternative sources (Phelan, 2005; Skinner, 2010). In order to facilitate this need, presidents must be creative to fiscally sustain quality and affordable educational programs (Miller & Skinner, 2011; Skinner, 2010).

Industry training has become a significant area of education for workforce development and is being threatened for lack of funding (Jacobs & Dougherty, 2006; Skinner, 2010). The community college system is significant for higher education, by offering access to higher education to anyone interested in learning (Jurgens, 2010). The college gives access to students by offering entry-level courses, workforce training, and assisting students in accomplishing educational and life goals (AACC, 2014; Green et al., 2006; Phillippe & Patton, 2000; Ratcliff, 1994).

Phillippe and Sullivan (2005) reported that the challenges for funding will impact future presidential turnover. Ullman's (2017) research showed that today's college presidents are spending at least 80% of their time focusing on networking and relationship building to secure funding. Obviously, the role of the college president is more than just a glorified manager and advisor, but a complex role that must understand the budgetary functions of the institution while fulfilling the role and answering to a governing board (ACE, 2007; Rile, 2001; Thelin, 2004). With state and federal budgetary aid declining, community college presidents now require a knowledge of finance, budget cuts, and enrollment management specific to recruitment and retention (Jones & Wellman, 2010; Oliff et al., 2013; Song & Hartley, 2012; Tierney, 2004).

Community college leadership is a leadership style unlike any other style with the exception of the university setting (Harris & Ellis, 2018). The governing board grants full administrative control to the president; therefore, the institution is guided by that one individual's style of leadership (Harris & Ellis, 2018). Gluckman's (2017) research discussed the connection of the president's leadership style to the overall atmosphere of the president's institution. Succession planning should be a discussion governing boards take seriously, in order to prepare for unexpected turnover (Röbken, 2007). When a change, such as senior-level leadership turnover occurs, the institution is affected (Röbken, 2007). Not all employees, students, and governing boards will appreciate and embrace the change, and consequences are more than likely to occur (Röbken, 2007).

Grow your own programs and graduate student involvement for community college leadership are becoming important for successful planning for future turnover crises (Forthun & Freeman, 2017; Friedel, 2010; Katsinas, 2002). Richards (2009) felt that a successful planning process will allow colleges to create a future of organizational continuity. The theory of organizational knowledge creation (Nonaka, 1994) allowed the leader to acquire the necessary skills needed to administer the needs of the institution. Instilling the necessity of succession planning by the governing board would allow for a commitment by both the board and the president of the college (Craft & Guy, 2019).

North Carolina community college presidential turnover is the responsibility of an appointed board of trustees to ensure a leader is employed who embodies the needed moral and ethical characteristics (Community Colleges, 2019; Craft & Guy, 2019; Snyder, 2016). Because North Carolina is experiencing such a high rate of turnover, the search for a new president is the focus of many boards of trustees (Hilley & Morris, 2016; NCACCP, 2019; Snyder, 2016).

Currently, North Carolina is experiencing the highest rate of presidential turnover in the state's higher educational history (Barton, 2019; NCCCS, 2020a). Adding to the problem of turnover, is a shortage of highly qualified successors (Fain, 2008). Applicants for positions are not always aware of the institutional culture, organizational structure, or student needs creating communication issues between leadership, subordinates, and the governing board (Gluckman, 2017). The Ryken et al. (2018) research found the following:

> Economic turmoil, technological innovation, rapid globalization, increased government regulation, media scrutiny, public skepticism about the mission of higher education, student unrest, the volatile climate of social media, and the sheer complexity of campus life in the twenty-first century all require exceptional management, expansive vision, and enormous stamina (p. 107).

Factors of leadership style determines the fit of an individual and the atmosphere of an institution (Harris & Ellis, 2018; McCaffery, 2018). These styles are specific to an individual and do not apply to all situations (Bolman & Deal, 2008). These transformational and transactional leaders are highly desirable for the success of the institution (Adserieas et al., 2017; Berkovich & Eval, 2019; Harris & Ellis, 2018; Kark et al., 2018). Coupled with the fact that North Carolina presidents have state budgets that are strict and require careful leadership to expend, the leader must be willing to take ownership and learn from mistakes (NCCCS, 2019; Washington, 2018).

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Summary

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The NCCCS, also charmingly known locally in North Carolina as The Great 58, have a variety of committees that network the different departments in the colleges so that the entire system works in a cohesive manner. NCCCS has the North Carolina Association of Community College Presidents (NCACCP, 2017). NCCCS presidents report to their local Board of Trustees

for directive; but have a conglomerate of political resources at their fingertips. Once the president determines to whom the request should be made, a trustee or lobbyist will reach out to the official. It is a numbers game, and each community college is vying for funding from the State of North Carolina.

From maintenance/facilities up through the presidents, each department is represented. This is also true of the local governing board of trustees. Some of the departments have networks at the federal level to adhere to the Department of Education's requirements. As one would assume, not all committees are politically motivated, but have a foot in the door of legislation.

Governing boards have an obligation to the institution and the students to have a president in place who has a moral leadership style (Craft & Guy, 2019). Craft and Guy (2019) explained that it is necessary to employ a person who is capable of performing the presidential duties in an ethical manner. North Carolina boards of trustees are legislatively mandated to employ the president using a framework of requirements (Community Colleges, 2019). Snyder (2016) discussed how not only the boards are responsible for the employment of a presidential leader, but also the termination. However, with the North Carolina community colleges experiencing the current level of institutional leadership turnover, issues of finding qualified presidential candidates are becoming a focus for the governing boards (Hilley & Morris, 2016; Snyder, 2016).

According to Snyder's (2016) study, the unprecedented turnover also affects the institutions funding situations and administrative needs. Recently, a trend to secure a search firm to seek applicants for these positions has erupted (Brown & Hayford, 2019). Gluckman (2017) disagreed with the sole use of an external firm to search for a president as it leaves the board unprepared to properly vet the applicant to determine if the individual is a good fit from an

administrative and budgetary aspect.

This literature review discusses many topics that relate to the effectiveness of a governing board hiring the proper president. The North Carolina Community College system is experiencing the highest number of executive vacancies since its establishment. The concept of situational, Gestalt, and stakeholder leadership theories reveal the necessary traits needed to be that effective leader. The amount of NCCCS presidents that have separated from their positions within the last five years warrants a deep discussion. It is essential to have leaders in place that understand the financial needs and requirements of the institution. This review of literature emphasizes what is required of immediate future leaders.

Community colleges are facing a shortage of presidents and leaders. It is feared that not enough qualified individuals are available to fill these positions. The AACC leads the way by suggesting competencies needed in a president. Many institutions of higher learning are training leaders from within the institution (Forthun & Freeman, 2018). According to a recent report from the North Carolina Community College System (2020), 43 of the 58 colleges that comprise the North Carolina system have recently undergone or are currently undergoing a change in presidential leadership. The AACC (Ullman, 2017) estimated that over half of the 1,100 community colleges in the United States will encounter presidential turnover between 2017 and 2027. There is little to no research available to determine if the cause of this turnover is related to community college presidential leadership style or other underlying reason. Current research available discusses how governing boards work and cover rates of presidential turnover, but no research has been done to understand why this phenomenon is occurring.

The AACC stated that many states incorporate a presidential leadership program to prepare future leaders with needed skillsets for the desired role (Ullman, 2017), however, this is

not the case in North Carolina. The only known president's academy offered in North Carolina is a for-profit leadership program that is administrated through the Belk Center at N.C. State University (North Carolina State University [NCSU], 2020). The lack of proper training and qualified applicants with experience is creating a never-before-seen situation in the community college system (Smith, 2017). The applicants not only have a lack of institutional training but may not hold the desirable doctoral terminal degree offered by a regional accrediting agency.

By researching theoretical frameworks and related literature the community college governing boards and leaders will be able to understand the turnover rates and plan for unexpected leadership changes. "Individual shape the roles that they occupy with their own styles of behavior" (Boham, 1982, p. 3). Community college leaders are all different. The governing board must decide what fit is best for the institution.

By reviewing existing literature on presidential turnover, I found a need for additional research. The unprecedented amount of turnover occurring coupled with the lack of leadership training and the hiring of presidents without desired qualifications may lead institutions to financial and administrative instability. The recent study of North Carolina community colleges (NCACCP, 2019) clearly showed a higher-than-normal turnover of executive leadership positions. Governing boards will have the ultimate responsibility to ensure the proper person is employed who is capable of managing the fiscal and administrative needs of the institution.

This chapter presented an overview of presidential turnover; a theoretical framework consisting of situational leadership, Gestalt, and stakeholder theories; reviewed literature relating to leadership styles; history of presidential turnover; governing boards; conflict; institutional funding; and succession planning. I presented a brief history of the North Carolina community college system, boards of trustees and the presidents association. A gap in literature exists

relating to the trustee members and senior-level community college administrators experience with presidential turnover in the higher educational system. The review of the literature presented some of the factors present in presidential turnover in the higher educational system. In addition, it discussed desirable leadership styles and attributes of each style.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Overview

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the research method that was used for this

qualitative case study examining the role of presidential leadership styles and funding knowledge

and how these factors impact presidential turnover as experienced by trustees and senior-level

administrators using a rural member college of the North Carolina Community College System

as the setting. Utilizing a qualitative single-instrument case study approach, I ethically and

confidentially gathered information regarding trustee and senior-level college administrators'

experiences of presidential turnover in higher education. Yin (2002) defined a case study as a

phenomenon occurring in real-life; therefore, the case study approach is appropriate to

investigate the experiences trustees and senior-level administrators have had with the factors of a

president's leadership style and institutional funding knowledge and if and how these factors

impact presidential turnover (Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Yin, 1994, 2002). Based on Yin's (2002)

definition, the research identifies the real-life phenomenon as presidential turnover. The single-

instrumental case study research is appropriate to explore on a local level, as the identified

problem is present among the higher education system and focuses on one community college

that has recently experienced presidential turnover (Crowe et. al, 2011; Simmons, 2009; Strauss

& Corbin, 1998). Additionally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the participants

for the research which is a component of case study research (Creswell & Poth, 2019; Yin,

2018). The answers required were collected through a purposeful sampling utilizing structured,

open-ended, and deductive data to investigate the study using questions which seek to understand

factors that impact presidential turnover based on the experiences of trustees and senior-level

administrators (Creswell & Poth, 2019; Yin, 2018). This method is used when research is

exploring how or why an event is occurring (Yin, 2018). The case study approach takes the

research of real-life occurrences and puts it in social context (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier,

2013).

The organization of this chapter includes the research overview of the qualitative single-

instrument case study including research questions. The site demographics and makeup of the

setting for the study is described. Participatory selections are clearly explained, and each

decision supported by research citations. I explained my role in the study as a human instrument.

Interviews were conducted using an individual collection strategy. All interviews and

questionnaires elicited qualitative data. This section identifies and describes the specific

documents collected; providing a specific rationale for why each type of document was selected.

The data analysis section identifies procedures and a concise rationale for each type of analysis is

provided. Trustworthiness addresses credibility, dependability, transferability, and

confirmability. I explain the credibility of the study. Dependability and confirmability are

explained for consistency. Transferability is another aspect of qualitative research that should be

considered to check the possibility for potential consideration of other topics. Any ethical

considerations or implications are discussed. Finally, the summary provides a conclusion to the

chapter.

Design

Qualitative research is used when a researcher explores a topic to understand a problem

of humanistic or social context and relaying the message of the participant by investigating the

topic as a whole (Ary et al., 2014; Creswell, 1998; Morrow & Smith, 2000; Stake, 2009). The

topic of a qualitative research study is personal to the researcher and entail questions that use

how and why (Patton, 2002, 2015; Seidman, 1998; Stake, 2009). Methods of discovery occur in

a natural setting to uncover experiences of the participants involved in the study (Bogdan &

Biklen, 2003; Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). These methods are used to generate data about patterns

and characteristics (Madrigal & McClain, 2012). Merriam and Tisdall (2015) stated that

understanding how individuals interpret experiences, construct their worlds, and attributes of

experiences, is the core of the interest of qualitative research. Based on the nature of the topic

and that the participants were interviewed during the data collection portion of the research

study; I chose a qualitative case study. The qualitative method is appropriate, as the answers

required are collected through a purposeful sampling utilizing structured, open-ended, and

deductive data (Creswell, 2003; Groves et al., 2004).

The Yinian (2016) approach to qualitative case study considered three objectives as part

of the design process: transparency, methodicalness, and adherence to the evidence. Yin's (2018)

research design for case study consisted of the questions for the study, the propositions, analysis,

logical data linkage, and criteria for interpreting the findings. Having a clear and justified

purpose, transparency, and acknowledgement of bias are additional elements of a good case

study research design (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013). Crafting the central research

question is an important aspect as the case study research questions are traditionally appropriate

for how questions and why questions (Yin, 2018). Yin (2018) suggested using three stages: use

the literature to narrow the topic, examine key studies on the topic, and then examine additional

studies in the topic area. Yin (2018) also suggested doing fieldwork to garner ideas for relevant

questions.

The propositions are an aspect of case study research design that draws attention to a sub-

topic of the research (Yin, 2018). These are how and why structured questions; however, there

are times that these questions do not yield worthwhile results (Yin, 2018). Stake (2009) and Yin

(2018) indicated that some of the propositions will lead the researcher towards relevant questions and sources of information. There may be times in research where there are no propositions, whatever the reason not to have propositions, the research should still have a legitimate purpose (Yin, 2018).

Analysis of the research requires a clear definition and bounding of the case (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 2009; Yin, 2018). The researcher will make clear statements regarding the extent and focus of the study in order to bound the case study. This case study will be bounded by only researching the experiences of the president's relationship with college trustees and senior-level administrators and will be focused specifically on the factors of leadership style and institutional funding regarding presidential turnover. Stake (2009) suggested treating the bounding as a system and review the information as an object instead of working the information as part of the process. Proper definitions, propositions and questions are used to identify appropriate information to collect (Yin, 2018). Bounding the participants and outsiders, geographic region, and outlying the beginning and ending of the case will assist in determining the depth of data collections (Yin, 2018). A good deal of research analysis ends with comparison of results with prior research (Yin, 2018). Yin (2018) discussed how the analytic techniques such as patterns, explanation, models, and synthesis are ways to link data to the propositions. When statistical analyses are relevant it is necessary to discuss the interpretations of the findings (Yin, 2018). Interpretation of findings should identify any alternative explanations which should be included during the design stage (Yin, 2018).

A single-instrument case study is appropriate as the setting being used is has had recurring presidential turnover (Creswell, 1998). To achieve a single-instrument case study approach to investigate presidential turnover, individual face-to-face interviews, an anonymous

online deductive questionnaire powered by Liberty University Qualtrics, and review of various evidence in the 2014-2021 Board of Trustee minutes were used. In generating the findings, I triangulated data using three separate avenues of data collection (Green et al., 2006; Prasad, 2005; Yin, 2009). The case study approach allows the researcher to investigate a problem by using multiple sources of evidence and will have the ability to converge lines of inquiry (Yin, 2018). By using this qualitative approach, I better understood the experiences of the trustees and senior-level administrators relating to presidential turnover. This method allowed me to identify emerging themes and experiences.

Research Questions

The central question of this study is, how do trustees and senior-level administrators describe their experience with presidential turnover involving the factors of leadership style, institutional funding, and presidential fit? The central question and two sub-questions guided the research.

1: How do the participants at a rural community college describe the most crucial factors of budgetary administration necessary to be a community college president?

2: How do participants at a rural community college describe the style of leadership necessary for a community college president?

3. How do Board of Trustee members and senior-level administrators describe their experiences with presidential leadership style, institutional funding, and presidential turnover?

Setting

The research study occurred in a rural community college located in the northeastern region of North Carolina and explores presidential turnover at an institution that has recently experienced presidential turnover. I sent an email to the board chair and the president of the

institution requesting permission to initialize the research. I followed all institutional policies, procedures, and protocols to receive permission from the president and board chair prior to any further communication.

Demographics of the institution are consistent with the local economy and service area county sizes. County 1 has a population of just over 23,000 residents and County 2 as a population of just 19,000 residents (U.S. Census, 2020a, 2020b). Both counties are racially and evenly comparable at 60% black/African American and 40% white/Caucasian (U.S. Census, 2020a, 2020b). The college's student population is reflective of the service area demographics.

The community college chosen for the research is reflective of the problem facing the entire higher educational system of presidential turnover, especially in North Carolina. The setting has had numerous presidents over the past five years, as well as during its 50-year history (Davis, 2019; NCCCS, 2020b). The setting recently ended another search for president, and are currently experiencing presidential turnover (MCC, 2020). The institution is authorized by the state of North Carolina to offer curriculum and continuing education and is approved by the Southern Association of Schools Commission on Colleges to offer two-year associate degrees in a variety of areas (NCCCS, 2020b; Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges [SACSCOC], 2020).

The institution is a member of a larger system of 58 institutions comprising the North Carolina Community College System. The institution is situated in rural north eastern North Carolina and serves the counties of County 1 and County 2. The institution became accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges Commission on Colleges in 1972 (SACSCOC, 2020).

The institution is governed by North Carolina General Statute §115-D through an appointed thirteen-member board of trustees (Community Colleges, 2019). The North Carolina

Governor's office appoints four trustees (Community Colleges, 2019); one appointee from this appointing agency represents County 2 at all times. The County 1 local school board appoints four trustees (Community Colleges, 2019). The County 1 county commissioners appoint four trustees (Community Colleges, 2019). The thirteenth member is the student government association (SGA) president (Community Colleges, 2019). The SGA trustee is ex-officio and a non-voting member (Community Colleges, 2019). Trustees serve a staggered four-year term, with a board member rotating off or being reappointed each year from each appointing agency for a total of three a year (Community Colleges, 2019). The SGA president serves one term lasting the academic year.

The purpose of the institution's board of trustees is to employee the president and set institutional policy (Community Colleges, 2019). The board of trustees is also responsible for property acquisition and disposal (Community Colleges, 2019). The president is responsible for the daily administration of the institution. The president is also responsible for institutional fundraising (SACSCOC, 2020).

The president and each senior-level administrator have the opportunity for input at scheduled board of trustee's meetings. Six administrators directly report to the president and are responsible for the daily administration of the student services division, business office division, foundation division, communications division, administrative services division, and information technology division. At some level, all employees report to one of these six administrators. The institution's current employee makeup consists of 27 full-time faculty members and 81 full-time or permanent part-time staff members. The institution employs part-time adjunct faculty and instructors when required and budgetary allotments allow. The institution's Fall 2019 unduplicated headcount showed that curriculum and continuing education students combined

was 3,000 active students (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System [IPEDS], 2020).

Continuing Education offers the bulk of classes, including workforce development (MCC,

2019a), and that amount is reflected by the continuing education student population (NCCCS,

2019). Fall 2019 curriculum headcount was 901; nearly 450 of those students are high school

students (NCCCS, 2019). The reported full time equivalent for that period was 850 (IPEDS,

2020).

Participants

The single-instrumental case study approach utilizes purposeful sampling. Purposeful

sampling is appropriate as this practice is the most widely accepted and popular approach using

information rich cases to study presidential turnover in depth and offers insight into the problem

(Patton, 2002; Yin, 2014). Merriam-Webster Dictionary (n.d.) defines the process of sampling as

a technique that represents a portion of a population to make determinations of the characteristics

of the population as a whole. The participant selection process involved a review of historical

data, reports from the NCACCP, and the organizational chart for the institution. The selection

criteria for participants included the following: (a) individual must be a trustee or senior-level

administrator of the institution, (b) the individual expressed a desire to participate, and (c)

participant was in the first 11 affirmative responses for the requests to interview. I chose this

criterion based on my professional experience in higher education and the convenience of the

location setting. Once I received IRB approval, I emailed a request survey to the board of

trustees and senior-level administrators inviting them to take part in the research study. The

survey tool is appropriate as it is a widely accepted instrument used for acquiring information

from participants (Patton, 2002; Bulmer, 2004).

All trustees and senior-level administrators at the setting site were invited to participate in

the research process for interviews and questionnaires. Patton (2002, 2015) described the selection of sampling units as the resource to select specific criteria for the sample pool. All board of trustee's members and senior-level administrators at the institution were invited to take part in the research project. All potential participants received an invitational email; however, participation was limited to the first 11 participants for the purpose of manageability. Potential participants were invited to participate in the interviews via email. Selections were based on relationship to the institution, whether the individual was a trustee or a senior-level administrator. Approval to join in the research study was based on the willingness to participate and by being one of the first 11 affirmative responses. To protect the confidentiality of the participants, each participant was assigned a pseudonym based on the following explanations of the sample pool, size, and procedures.

Trustees

For the purposes of this research study, the institution's board of trustee's members are duly appointed individuals for the respected appointing agencies: North Carolina Governors, County 1 Commissioners, and County 1 Board of Education. All trustees at the institution were invited to participate in the research project in the interviews via an Office 365 email. To protect the confidentiality of the trustees, each individual was assigned a unique pseudonym. The response rate was determined by the responses received. The determining factor for eligibility was the result of three guiding factors.

Senior-level Administrators

For the purposes of this research study, the institution's senior-level administrators are staff members who report directly to the community college president and included: the executive vice president, the chief financial officer, and the associate vice presidents. These

administrators were invited to participate in the research project in the interviews via an Office 365 email. To protect the confidentiality of the participants, each senior-level administrator was assigned a unique pseudonym. The response rate was determined by the responses received. The determining factor for eligibility was the result of three guiding factors.

<div align="center">**Procedures**</div>

In order to execute the research study, I completed the required IRB modules and waited to receive the IRB approval (Appendix A). After IRB approval, I requested approval from the research site (Appendix B). After I had approval from the Institutional Review Board and approval from the research site (Appendix C), I invited Board of Trustee members and Senior-Level Administrators to participate in the research study via email (Appendix D). The data gathered through email was used to schedule interviews. Upon the scheduling of the interview, I sent an emailed consent to each participant (Appendix E). Based on eligibility, after the consent form was received, the interview questions (Appendix F) and the questions for the anonymous online deductive questionnaire were emailed to the participants (Appendix G). Participants were allotted three weeks to complete the electronic anonymous deductive questionnaire survey. Interviews were conducted based on the participants schedule and availability. Each interview was allotted a forty-five-minute period; however, interviews were shorter or longer based on length of responses to questions. Electronic responses were stored on an electronic file. Replicability of the study was achieved by methodically collecting the information, while obtaining dependability of the study (Creswell & Poth, 2019). The dependability of this case study rests in using appropriate data collection techniques which resulted in evidence from multiple sources (Green et al., 2006; Prasad, 2005; Yin, 2009). These sources of evidence were triangulated to support replicability reliability (Stake, 2009; Yin, 2009). Methods were utilized to

support replicability, but due to the setting involved, a pure replication is difficult (Wiersma & Jurs, 2000).

The Researcher's Role

Qualitative research requires the researcher to collect data and analyze the information (Creswell, 2014; Merriam, 1998; Stake, 2009; Yin, 2018). For this study, I served as an observer and a participant that embraced personal values as well as assumptions and bias. I have worked in the educational system for 15 years with the immediate eight past years as a direct report to a community college president. I am the executive assistant and clerk/recording secretary to the board of trustees and serve as the ethics liaison for trustees and employees of the community college. As a direct report of the president, I recused myself from being a responding participant. In the past eight years, I have been administratively involved in the search for three presidents. I have the potential for bias as researcher, which may impact the outcome of the study. I strived to maintain objectivity; however, my personal bias may have played a role in how the data was collected and interpreted. I set aside what I have experienced in order to properly gather evidence and understand the experiences of the case study research participants.

To study the experiences of the participants, I collected and analyzed data from questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and reviewed evidence from local college board of trustee minutes, news related to North Carolina presidential vacancies and evidence on presidential turnover. To avoid the bias, a researcher-side scripted dialogue during the interview sessions was adhered to as well as pseudonyms assigned to the participants. This qualitative data was analyzed for emerging themes and meaning units. I remained objective and unbiased throughout the study. The connection to the board of trustees and senior-level administrators aids in the process of data collection to understand the presidential turnover phenomenon. A personal

journal was kept documenting the process. The purpose of these methods is to control researcher bias. The researcher is an instrument within qualitative research that is responsible to make sense of the evidence (Eisner, 1998).

Data Collection

Yin (2018) discussed the four principles of data collection: multiple sources of evidence, case study database, chain of evidence, and social media care, which he warned the researcher to be mindful of falsehoods in social media. It is not recommended to use single sources of evidence, but multiple sources of evidence in order to strengthen the research triangulation (Yin, 2018). According to Yin (2018), the basic motive of a case study lay in the use of multiple sources of evidence to create an in-depth study, as well as, converging lines of inquiry. The more sources of evidence present will support case study findings and validity (Yin, 2018). While Stake's (2009) approach is not as structured as Yin's, he suggested creating a plan to gather the necessary evidence.

During a research study, an assortment of documents is collected and is indexed into an annotated bibliography (Yin, 2018). In addition to the bibliography, tabulated information, narrative complications, memos to self, and open-ended answers are some items that comprise the database (Yin, 2018). The evidence may come from works cited, interviews, questions, documents, and observations (Yin, 2018). Yin (2018) reiterated that researchers should use evidence from multiple sources and understand multiple techniques in data collection. While Yin (2018) suggested the use of both qualitative and quantitative evidence, Merriam (1998) and Stake (2009) both indicated that qualitative data should be the focus of a qualitative case study. The most used data collection formats for case study research are observations and interviews (Yin, 2018). This research study will use an anonymous deductive questionnaire, semi-structured

interviews, and review evidence from local college board trustee minutes, as well as news related to North Carolina presidential vacancies and turnover.

Once the IRB and approval from Liberty University and the institution was granted, I began the data collection. Data collection triangulation consisted of participant face-to-face interviews, an anonymous online deductive questionnaire, and a review of documents (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2003). Interviews were recorded, and a written transcript compiled throughout the interview process. Transcription is appropriate to generate the data relying on voice and manuscript of the sessions (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). The use of meaning units to explore responses were utilized (Creswell, 2013). The meaning units were used to capture repeated themes.

Interviews

The personal interview data collection method was conducted with each participant. The interview process consisted of 15 open-ended qualitative questions. The interviews were voice-recorded using a Phillips Voice Tracer device. The device used an encrypted memory card to store recordings. The device and memory card were stored in a locked filing cabinet while not in use during the research. Participants were assigned pseudonyms to protect their confidentiality. The interviews were structured and used standardized open-ended interview questions. By using a structured interview supported with standardized open-ended interview questions, the participants each answered the same following questions which allowed for proper organization and data analysis (Patton, 2002).

Standardized Open-Ended Interview Questions

1. Please introduce yourself to me.

2. Please walk me through your position or role with the institution.

3. How would you describe the institutional budgetary knowledge and control needed for a community college president? (SQ1)

4. From your experience, which aspects of budgetary administration is necessary for a community college president to effectively interact with the Board/Administrators? (SQ1)

5. How would you describe effective leadership? (SQ2)

6. In your experience, which leadership qualities and traits in styles work best for a college president? (SQ2)

7. In the past few years, more than half of North Carolina college presidents have separated from the colleges. What experiences can you share about the presidential turnover occurring in North Carolina? (SQ3)

8. How would you describe your experiences with presidential leadership style as it relates to institutional funding? (SQ3)

9. From your experience to what extent does institutional funding and leadership style affect presidential turnover? (SQ3)

10. We have covered a lot of ground in our conversation, and I so appreciate the time you have given to this. One final question… What else do you think would be important for me to know about your experiences of presidential turnover?

Questions one and two are background/demographic-based questions (Patton, 2002) and are used to understand the characteristics of the participant. These questions are meant to illicit specific information to develop a comfortable, non-threating environment and starting point for the interview and following subsequent open-ended questions. Using Patton's (2002) six types of interview questions: questions three through nine are experience/opinion/belief-based questions

designed for the participant to share an opinion of the president's role, presidential fit, and reason for turnover in the higher education system and are designed to capture the experiences of the participant regarding the research study.

Questionnaire

An anonymous deductive questionnaire (Appendix G) link from Liberty University's Qualtrics program was emailed to the participants to elicit information of their experiences with presidential leadership styles and institutional funding at a rural community college in North Carolina. It is appropriate to use an anonymous deductive questionnaire survey in order to use a structured protocol to gather data (Groves et al., 2004). The results were rigorously evaluated to ensure validity and reliability as a meaningful questionnaire will improve the quality of evidence collected (Williams, 2003).

1. Explain how understanding the institutional budget is a factor of presidential turnover whether voluntary or involuntary?

Assorted studies show the importance of the president understanding the institutional budget (Floyd et al., 2010; Snyder, 2016). It is important to understand the level of comprehension that the president has regarding budgetary issues (AACC, 2013a; Floyd et al., 2010; Phelan, 2014). The research study used interviews and documents which focus on the qualities which the literature review established.

2. How should the college prepare and orientate incoming presidents?

By investigating challenges, participants were able to express what new presidents should be aware of when joining an organization (Fain, 2008). In order for an institution to flourish, administrative challenges must be present (Mehdinezhad & Mansouri, 2016). "It is important that great community college presidents acknowledge and learn from failures" (Washington, 2018, p.

1). Trustees and senior-level administrators were interviewed. Based on the interviews, the answers were used to see if the factors of budgetary control and leadership style play a role in presidential turnover based on the experiences of the participants.

3. Describe how a president's leadership style can impact an institution in both positive and negative manners?

Harris and Ellis (2018) deduced that one's personal style of leadership has a global effect on institutions of higher education. Personal styles of leadership vary with each individual and no one style of leadership suits all situations (Bolman & Deal, 2008). The current study used the interviews to determine which leadership style is best suited for higher education presidency. The findings of the research study may be useful for future trustees in determining which leadership style is best suited to reduce presidential turnover at their designated institution.

4. Explain what presidential fit means to you.

This question allowed the participants to explain the factor personal values play in presidential fit (Cable & Judge, 1996; Ostroff & Schulte, 2007). One may assume that the governing board will investigate how the presidential applicant will fit into the organization culture (Gumus et al., 2018). The current study used the interviews to determine which personal values factor into presidential fit and succession planning. The findings of this research may be useful for current and future trustees determining if budgetary experience and specific leadership styles are preferred in a community college president.

Document Analysis

I analyzed board of trustee minutes and NCCCS minutes for the period of 2014-2021 to explore the history of North Carolina community college presidential turnover. The minutes and newspapers supplied documentation of presidential turnover for the past few years. To support

transparency documents, I reviewed public records allowable in the state of North Carolina. Board of trustee and NCCCS minutes were chosen for the research study as the documents hold legal and ethical information necessary for this research.

Data Analysis

The Yinian process of analyzing the evidence begins with a clear methodological path (Yin, 2018). Stake (2009) defined this process as a way of assigning meaning to both first impressions and final compilations. Stake's (2009) approach included two analytical methods: categorical aggregation and direct interpretation. Merriam (1998) and Yin (2018) agreed that the literature review, theoretical framework, and definition of the research questions, combined with the appropriate participants, are important to a proper analytical process. As the analysis is the least developed step in the process, fieldwork and literature review may need to be the first step in order to address theoretical issues (Yin, 2018). Merriam (1998) stated that analysis becomes intensified as more evidence is gathered. Computer software is available to index copious amounts of data taken from interviews or written works (Yin, 2018). The analysis will require a detailed description of the research, especially in the how and why evidentiary portion (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2018). Analysis and data collection occur simultaneously in research as the evidence is reviewed and themes emerge (Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Merriam, 1998) An example would be reading the responses and transcribing questionnaires and interviews (Colaizzi, 1978).

Yin (2018) suggested that a good analytic strategy is to play with the evidence to search for emerging patterns or concepts; this is as simple as comparing participant answers side-by-side. Yin (2018) suggested memo writing as an alternate strategy to begin the analysis; additional analysis can be derived using tables and diagrams. Doing this several times will illicit emerging strategies (Yin, 2018).

Yin's (2018) four strategies for analyzing evidence included: relying on theoretical propositions which shaped the way data was collected, working data from the bottom up by combing through data, development of case description using a descriptive framework, and the examination of potential explanations by reviewing additional research. Yin (2018) and Merriam (1998) agreed that the best way to prepare for research is having an analytic strategy to produce working knowledge.

To research trustees and senior-level experiences with presidential turnover, a qualitative single-instrument case study method was used. It is appropriate to use a qualitative approach to understand the purpose of the research study on presidential turnover as the research is comprised of notes, recordings, and transcription of the information (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2018). Throughout the process, confidentiality was maintained through multi-factor provisions. Data analysis for the research paper included triangulation of face-to-face interview transcriptions, anonymous online deductive questionnaires responses, and documentation from the research site and the NCCCS. Research evaluation involved the collection and analysis of data (Stake, 2009; Yin, 2002). Effective analysis explored first impressions and the compiled information (Stake, 2009; Yin, 2002). The process of data analysis began with the organization of information, identifying themes, and explanations of the patterns (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2018). Data analysis was conducted using Creswell's (2013) steps for data analysis. Creswell (2013) identified the following qualitative steps to effectively analyze data: Step one is to prepare and organize data, step two is to explore and code the data base, step three is the description of finding and formation of themes, step four is the representation and reports, and the last step, is validation (Creswell, 2014).

Documentation reviewed minutes and attachments from the research site and the

NCCCS. Participant responses were organized and analyzed by question number. I implemented

anonymous deductive questionnaire surveys and structured open-ended interview questions.

Interviews were voice-recorded and transcribed. Voice-recordings will be destroyed in

compliance with the IRB. Question types organized the research. To maintain confidentiality

pseudonyms are used for each participant. Overall characteristics of the participant were

recorded throughout the interview. Upon completion of interview transcriptions, participants

reviewed the interview for accuracy using member checking. Wolfe (2010) described member

checking as a process wherein the participant is included in determining the trustworthiness of

the data analysis.

During and after the transcription process, meaning units were captured from common

phrases and thought processes. The use of meaning units compiled from the face-to-face

interview transcriptions and the anonymous online deductive questionnaire responses were

utilized as an instrument that captured emerging themes and statements (Creswell, 2013). Using

meaning units allowed me to hand code responses to interviews and questionnaires to recognize

connections to the research problem (Creswell, 2013). Five hundred seventy-five phrases were

used repeatedly, and the other phrases were compiled for documentation. Using Creswell's

(2013) process, phrases were categorized by theme for the process of hand coding. The common

themes were bureaucracy, competence, advancement/separation, conscientiousness, and

management. Through inductive analysis of the interviews, I compiled the information based on

the themes and categories arising from the study (Patton, 1980) in order to remove any bias that

may exist. The analysis of the participants' experiences will be presented using a qualitative

single-instrument case study design, which is less desirable than the multi-case design

counterpart (Yin, 2003, 2016) because it impedes a true replication scenario (Wiersma & Jurs, 2000). This research study analyzed the participants' experiences (Jones et al., 2006) using questions presented regarding presidential turnover.

Trustworthiness

In order to ethically research the problem, qualitative researchers must be transparent throughout collections and document review (Creswell & Poth, 2019; Yin, 2018). I promoted trustworthiness through consistent and unbiased protocols and measures using the following methods: credibility, dependability and confirmability, and transferability. Other methods for trustworthiness were consistently used during the triangulation of data (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2003) included pseudonyms and proper handling of research documentation. Accuracy was determined using several measures. Using well-known qualitative methods (Creswell, 2013; Lincoln & Guba, 1985), the following subsections explains the methods used.

Credibility

The literature review and preparation established credibility for the study. The researcher achieved credibility through the use of triangulation, through analyzing three sets of information: face-to-face interview transcriptions, anonymous online deductive questionnaire responses, and documentation from the research site and the NCCCS (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2003). The meaning units were compiled from the face-to-face interview transcriptions and anonymous online deductive questionnaire responses as an instrument to capture emerging themes and statements (Creswell, 2013). The data analysis methods were used to analyze the interviews and anonymous deductive questionnaires to recognize factors of the research (Creswell, 2013). Credibility for these components was achieved by the use of triangulation, which Creswell (2013) described as corroborating evidence from the compiled data collection. Five hundred seventy-five phrases

were used repeatedly, and the other phrases were compiled for documentation. Using Creswell's

(2013) process the phrases are categorized by theme. The common themes are related to

bureaucracy, competence, advancement/separation, conscientiousness, and management.

Through the analysis of these themes the participants experience and perspectives on presidential

turnover or fit are compiled. Information gleaned from interviews were member checked to

ensure accuracy.

Dependability and Confirmability

In order to establish replicability, the qualitative research was transparent. Transparency

will maximize the researcher's trustworthiness. Research interview questions and the anonymous

deductive questionnaire link were emailed to the participants upon return of affirmative consent.

Research questions were emailed in an attachment in a separate email from the electronic

anonymous deductive questionnaire link survey instrument. Electronic data was on a password-

protected flash drive and locked in a file cabinet only I had access to. The use of member

checking between the participant and researcher guarantees dependability and confirmability of

the information (Creswell, 2013). Participant responses and affirmations of responses further

confirmed dependability and confirmability. Patton (2002) explained that the research must

accurately represent the findings of the data. Using Patton's (2002) methods, the research

utilized an audit trail (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The audit trail included all documentation,

notes, transcriptions, and correspondence further strengthening the research's dependability.

This audit trail promotes replicability.

Transferability

Transferability is apparent in the research study so that other researchers can replicate the

study for use with another group of participants (Creswell, 2013; Creswell & Poth, 2019; Stake,

2009; Yin, 2009). Participants received full disclosure related to my position and intention of the research study. I used rich descriptive language to describe participants and responses (Creswell, 2013; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Participatory data collection consisted of scheduled interviews and emails and expectations were clearly delineated. The research study included detailed information which was presented in this study; however, transferability included the determination of applicable references to another study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) surrounding presidential turnover; but due to the nature and personal aspect of the setting involved, a pure replication is difficult (Wiersma & Jurs, 2000).

Ethical Considerations

Before the study, I discussed with the participants the nature and scope of the study (Creswell, 2009; Yin, 2003, 2018). Following ethical considerations (Creswell, 2013), I acknowledged working relations with the participants. Participants were notified of the study and that participation was optional (Punch, 2005). Participants were given the questions in order to gauge the depth of questions and participant expectations. Participants were supplied with a copy of the IRB approval prior to the research process. Participants were notified of the choice to decline participation through the consent form.

Summary

The focus of this single-instrument qualitative case study was to examine the impact of leadership styles and funding knowledge regarding presidential turnover as experienced by trustees and senior-level administrators using a rural member college of the North Carolina Community College System as the setting. The focus of this was to outline the single-instrumental qualitative case study method used. All factors of research are detailed, explained, and cited for credibility. Data collection for the study is achieved through documentation

analysis, face-to-face structured open-ended interviews, and an anonymous deductive questionnaire survey. The purpose of this chapter was to explain the methods utilized in the research to understand presidential turnover from the experiences of the trustees and senior-level administrators in the higher educational system looking at leadership style and institutional funding. The next chapter will discuss the findings of the research.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

The purpose of this chapter is for the researcher to present the results of the data analysis. This chapter includes the chapter overview, a detailed description of participants, and a results section. The purpose of this qualitative single-instrument case study (Yin, 2018) is to explore how leadership styles and funding knowledge impact presidential turnover as experienced by trustees and senior-level administrators using a rural member college of the North Carolina Community College System as the setting. The theories guiding this study are situational leadership theory (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969), educative leadership theory (Duignan & Macpherson, 1992), the stakeholder theory (Freeman, 1984), and the Gestalt theory (Koffka, 1935). The researcher used the research questions as a guide and used themes to organize the data. The themes were organized in tables.

Participants

In order to contact potential participants, I requested the use of trustee and senior-level administrator's contact information from the Office of the President at the research site. A total of 17 individuals were contacted. I sent emails, inviting potential participants to interview. Five participants requested more information on the overall purpose of the study. I received 13 responses affirming a desire to participate, but only 11 individuals participated. All participants signed a consent form to participate in the study prior to any research occurring (Appendix E). Demographics of the participants included six female and five male trustee and senior-level administrators. The number of years affiliated with the institution range from one and a half years to 12 years. The demographics of the participants are illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3

Participant Demographics

Participant Name	Gender	Years Associated with Research Site	Additional Years Associated with NCCCS	Affiliation
Allie	Female	12	8	Trustee
Carl	Male	1.5	n/a	Trustee
Jazzy	Female	3	n/a	Trustee
Thomas	Male	2	n/a	Trustee
Frankie	Female	5	n/a	Trustee
Toby	Male	8	n/a	Trustee
Ellie	Female	10	40	Trustee
Allan	Male	5	5	Trustee
Alvin	Male	3.5	10	Administrator
Anita	Female	2	17	Administrator
Jane	Female	7	13	Administrator

Allan

Allan has been affiliated with the Board of Trustees for over five years and has been affiliated with the institution in other capacities for ten non-consecutive years. Allan described that the institutional budgetary knowledge and control needed for a community college begins prior to employment. Allan maintained that beyond education and a doctorate credential, a president must have some basic accounting and finance knowledge. Allan explained his experiences with the question that asked which aspects of budgetary administration are necessary for college president to effectively interact with the board included wanting to know who can

answer every budget question. Regarding matters of president and board interaction, Allan wants the president to be able to identify budget needs, whether the administration is budgeting these needs correctly, and if the president is deflecting answers at Board meetings to those who are able to respond to specific budget questions a board member might ask.

As a trustee, Allan expects the president to know what entities are supplying funding to the institution. His expectations as a trustee are that the president should be able to explain what money is where, what can that funding be utilized for, and why it is a good idea to have the funding in that specific line item. He also stated that the institution has money for items we do not have, such as daycare. He questioned why a president would not move that money as the program has been discontinued for a few years. If it could not be spent, he would expect a president to explain the situation to the Board.

When asked to describe effective leadership. Allan felt that participative leadership style was an acceptable style but questioned to what extent it should be used. He questioned whether that style could be used to lay blame on another individual. He stated when it comes to the president, all blame is placed on that role and that reflects on the Board. Allan feels as a trustee when issues arise, he would want other opinions, so when bad things happen the trustees and president would talk things through. He felt the participation portion on participative leadership is a good leadership style, a happy medium. He does not agree with totalitarianism leadership.

Allan identified traits and qualities that work best, which are being a confident leader and embracing sound leadership. Allan has been a member of the Board for five years and has worked with three presidents. Each president had their own traits. He felt the perfect president would be a little of all three of those individuals. Allan maintained that beyond personality traits,

the individual must be a community and business leader who is willing and able to communicate internally and externally.

Allan respectfully declined to share his experiences regarding the presidential turnover occurring in North Carolina. Allan described his experience with the leadership style as it relates to institutional funding by saying, each individual was different, one president delegated the budget to the CFO and another was a master of institutional funding, and another went by the book. How the budget is utilized reflects on the whole institution. Allan respectfully declined to answer the question of his experience in what extent does institutional and funding in leadership style affect presidential turnover.

Allie

Allie has been affiliated with the institution through the Board of Trustees and Board of Directors nearly twenty years. Allie shared that it could present problems when the president doesn't understand budgets or the budgeting process. Allie stressed the necessity for college presidents to understand the colleges' finances. She shared that financial problems affect faculty, staff, students, and programs. The president must have trustworthy and competent individuals in the financial roles. Allie shared that aspects of budgetary administration are necessary for a community college to effectively interact with the board and administrators included monthly reports and general communications. Allie shared that a proper budgetary report at each board meeting is useful and required for trustees. The reports should include debts and credits as well as a prioritized budget. Each department should have their budgets in order to fulfill expectations.

Allie described situational leadership as the leadership style she considers most effective in a community college. The college needs a leader who sets clear expectations and job

responsibilities. Allie also discussed her experiences with previous college presidents as using

the leadership qualities, traits, and styles of transactional leadership and transformational

leadership. Allie stressed the president must be able to do the same job as everyone else and at

the same time require job ownership. Allie stressed that everyone in the organization has a

responsibility for success, whether that success is appearance of the facility or success in the

instructional area. Departments must be crossed trained and should be encouraged to function at

an optimum level.

Allie's two perspectives on presidents from North Carolina separating from their colleges

included stronger and weaker presidents. Situational leadership played a role in one separation

while another was ready to retire. Allie described her experience with presidential leadership

styles as it relates to institutional funding. She feels that some topics are privy to the board only.

Allie shared that each president is different, and some are happy being complacent while other

push boundaries. She shared that none were wrong, it was just different personalities. Allie

stated, "Really and truly, there's no way you really know anything about that person's actual

leadership style, aside from whatever is presented in the resume, which may or may not be an

accurate picture and what kind of feeling you get down to interview with the questions asked and

answers given, but when you face it day to day, it could be entirely different" (Allie, personal

communication, February 24, 2021).

Allie's experience of institutional funding and leadership styles affecting presidential

turnover included a president coming in because it was expected they would get more money.

Some colleges put perks and supplemental money into the president's position. Allie referred to

this as climbing the ladder. Allie shared that her experiences with presidential turnover show that

the president must be transparent, able to communicate, not only with the board but people in general. The president must have board support to be successful.

Alvin

Alvin has been a senior administrator at the institution for about 3 ½ years. Alvin has been with the North Carolina Community College system for about 13 ½ years. Alvin described the institutional budgetary knowledge and control needed for a Community College president as involving transparent clear spending knowledge patterns and operational control. He stated it was important to understand the spending process of the state, operational and county funds, and budgets. He shared the importance for the president to have general knowledge of each area of the college and how the spending affects the divisions and the FTE derivatives brought in by the expenditures. Alvin stated that open and transparent spending patterns were important for administration.

Alvin described effective leadership as someone who will be a supporter, a resource provider, and will assist the college body as a whole. Alvin commented that qualities of knowledge, general college operations and a willingness to learn are the best leadership qualities and traits from his experience. His only experience with presidential turnover occurring in North Carolina was one of mismanagement.

Alvin described his experiences with presidential leadership style as it relates to institutional funding by relating his role as an administrator with the funding and expenditures aspect of his position. Alvin feels the best style was open and honest communication with an unclouded vision. The president would ensure that funding is being used to its full potential for the college. Alvin stated that the president and their personality style could affect the funding.

One must have community collaboration. If that doesn't happen, the college will not flourish and grow. Alvin shared that attrition would inevitably happen as it relates to turnover.

Anita

Anita has been a senior administrator at the institution for two years. Anita has been with the North Carolina Community College system for about 19 years. Anita described the institutional budgetary knowledge and control needed for a higher educational institution as a president who intimately understands how the institutional budget functions and how it can be manipulated. It is not just knowing the money and the function but understanding who the key decision makers are to keep the college moving forward. The president, and not the CFO, should have control. Anita stated in order to do this, the president must meet with key decision makers on a regular basis to collaborate and communicate the vision.

Anita described effective leadership as only being possible if the board of trustees allows them to be effective. The board has a lot of say in the leadership style. In Anita's experience a good leader is a participatory leader who listens to administration during the decision-making process. The vision has to be clear, but the president must have a supportive board.

Anita described situational leadership qualities that work best in a transformative and communicative president. She felt that this was appropriate because of the political nature of the position. Anita stated she has been with five presidents, each had different leadership styles. The best ones listened. Anita's experience with budget includes opposite ends of the spectrum where one was the president being in control and then another where the president was controlled by the chief financial officer.

Anita's perspective on leadership style is appropriate leadership style with the appropriate training and understanding and experience to be able to function is what is needed.

Anita shared that most of those schools that have healthy budgets tend to hire presidents who were former presidents at a smaller institution who already have experience. Anita stated that a president has to be open to learning the campus culture and history before executing major changes. The board must support the president and the president must support your administration all the way from senior-level administrators to the maintenance staff.

Carl

Carl is a board of trustee member with about two years of services. Carl shared that the budget is controlled by a set of rules. He shares that a grand knowledge of budget and human resources is important, it makes the life of a president easier when dealing with the trustees. The president has to understand the sources of revenue. It is one of the most important things for a president. From his experience it is important for a college president to have full knowledge of the budgetary administration and what the employees who are responsible for day-to-day operations of the budget are doing. The president must be able to share this information, whether daily during a phone call or formally at the meetings with the trustees.

Carl stated that effective leadership starts with knowledge of the institution, personnel, and relationships. Carl stated it is important to understand how to get the best out of people that work for you, their skill sets and personalities. It is about relationship building. Carl stated that it is relationship building that is the best of leadership styles and traits in his experience.

Carl has no experience with presidential turnover although he was on the board during the last presidential selection. His experience with presidential leadership style as it relates to institutional funding is limited but he maintained that knowledge, understanding, and relationship building was crucial. Carl's experience was that presidents must be community

builders, understand the college finance, the needs of the community and region and have programs that are needed by the college.

Ellie

Ellie has been affiliated with the institution through the board of trustees for over ten years and has 50 total years of affiliation through training, education, and the other institutional boards. Ellie has experienced a great deal of turmoil with numerous presidents and stated they all were discharged involuntarily. Ellie's experience showed that the president must understand budgetary needs on at least a basic level. It is the president's responsibility to make the staff understand why certain funds cannot be used for any item. Ellie's stated that quality instruction is one of the most important aspects of budgetary administration needed by a community college president to effectively interact with the board. Economic development is also crucial for the social and economic standards of the college. It is important because there is not a lot of county support, there is no extra money from the county to support the college. The budget is important when you get in a hole and you need to do something that's really important to you.

Ellies' experience shows that multidimensional leadership qualities and traits work best. Ellie shared that through her experience with turnover most presidents might last five years. Ellie's experience was that the college president needed industrial and county support. Presidents must be politically inclined to do so. Ellie's turnover experience included nine presidents, some of whom have had strong finance backgrounds and others strong educational backgrounds. The fundraisers who cared about the school were most successful. In Ellie's experience, institutional funding is always problematic in that there's never enough money to do everything that everybody wants. Then it becomes internal politics.

Frankie

Frankie has been affiliated with the institution originally as a student and later as a trustee. Frankie has been a trustee for about five years. Frankie discussed the importance of promoting the college not only as a trustee, but as a citizen. Frankie explained that from her experience institutional budget knowledge is important because without the president knowing about that money, where it comes from, and what it can be spent for, it is easy to waste money. Frankie maintained that there is no money in a college that needs to be wasted. She explained the students have the most to lose regarding the budget.

Frankie explained that her experience showed that budgetary administration is crucial for president and board relations. It's important that that president to know how to use the budget appropriately. She referenced the importance of understanding the different funds and usages. In her experience, not understanding the budget can get the president in trouble, quickly she added.

Frankie explained effective leadership involves more than just one type of leadership. It is important to understand and involve people and have them feel a part of the whole. She stated that presidents at the institution would better serve everyone by being an instructional leader. In other words, understanding and communication is key.

Frankie's experience with presidential turnover occurring in North Carolina included three presidents and one individual as interim president twice in five years. Frankie shared that different presidents spend money different ways. She stated it only hurts the college by not spending money that possibly could have been spent to enhance programs. Frankie stated overall her experience is good and bad and has worked with the best and the worst.

Jane

Jane is affiliated through the institution as a senior-level administrator serving in multiple roles over the past seven years and has over twenty years of service in the North Carolina Community College System. Jane explained that institutional budgetary knowledge comes from experience at other levels in the college. She stated that she felt that some of the best presidents she worked with had been through the system at other levels. She stressed the importance of a president understanding what function each department and division preformed and the needs to make that area function.

Jane stated that effective leadership is personal. She stated the leaders she has enjoyed most brought the campus together, listened to needs, and communicated. Effective leaders understand resources. Jane's experience revealed that for her the best presidents interacted with employees and took the time to appreciate small victories of employees.

Jane has also experienced multiple presidential turnovers. Jane stated the different leadership styles of multiple presidents was evident in areas such as new programs, or buildings. The money has to be there, or these things will not happen. She explained that it was a hard balance for most presidents she has worked with.

Jazzy

Jazzy is a board of trustee member and was unsure how long she has been affiliated with the institution, although it is just a few years. Jazzy stated that a president needs to have detailed budgetary knowledge due to them being the head of the college. This position needs to understand and be able to make necessary budgetary modifications or adjustments and be able to delegate responsibilities as needed. The president should not be surprised. In Jazzy' s experience the president should have a budget committee that meets to discuss the budget periodically to

ensure that they're on target with goals and or funding. Jazzy stated that creation, monitoring, and assessment were the most important aspects of budgetary administration needed for a Community College president to effectively interact with the board. She stated that the president is the person who the board looks to provide the streamlined information.

Jazzy stated that effective leadership is being able to delegate tasks and prepare those under your leadership for success. Effective leadership is able to accommodate all types of people, including those who have barriers. It's also the ability to be transparent. Jazzy said the best qualities for a college president is simplifying. Leadership begins with someone who has qualities and traits including the willingness to compromise when needed, possesses confidence, and is active in their communities and the college. Jazzy shared that in her experience, turnover in the smaller community colleges can be attributed to resources and budgeting.

Jazzy' s experience with turnover includes two presidents and an interim president. Each have possessed a leadership style that was open minded. In her experiences budget knowledge and leadership style is correlated to presidential turnover. If the funding is sparse, then it affects their leadership style because they are juggling other things that are taking time away from other duties. This was also directly affecting the college. Also, when individuals are determined to grow a college and it's not happening due to funding, they become discouraged, hence making the decision to leave not only due to lack of funding, but frustration, burnout, and disappointment. Jazzy shared that politics are rampant in community college and it is easy for a president to get caught up in that situation.

Thomas

Thomas is a trustee and has been a member for nearly three years. Thomas explained that institutional budgetary knowledge for a president is really an imperative and thinks it is an

essential element to being able to function effectively within a Community College system. It is the responsibility of the president to be able to manage funds at a high level. Thomas explained it is important for the president to understand, and the people on the board, their positions on the board and in the community. The president must be able to assess their strengths, not only as a trustee, but as a form of financial support and maximize the effectiveness of their role.

Thomas explained to be an effective leader, the president must understand not only basic knowledge of the institution, but how to apply the knowledge to the job. The leader must have an effective vision. Not only a vision, but the ability to communicate that vision to people. Thomas explained communication skills are critical for a president. In Thomas' experience the best leadership qualities of a president rests in determining if the person is a match for the position. He explained prior experience is a plus. The individual must be flexible and open minded and intelligent enough to be able to understand and adapt to new situations.

Thomas has not experienced presidential turnover since he has been a trustee. Thomas explained the credentials are important for a college president, but also prior success, and the ability to assess the needs of the institution. These credentials and success must align. The individual must have, or be able to create, resources for the institution. Thomas explained he was still learning about the true implications of institutional funding in the Community College system. And, while he did not have a strong knowledge in this area, he shared that he understood it takes someone who is creative and flexible to administer the budget. The individual must be aware of the political aspect also because you will need to find additional sources of funding.

Thomas shared that the institutional funding and leadership style have a strong connection. The person must be able to maximize funding while maintaining control. Thomas shared a factor that he feels is influential in presidential turnover which is connecting with the

larger community. It takes connections to build programs and buildings because that requires money and funding. He feels the president is a person who must have a lot of credibility, understand how the community that you serve works, and who are the real people in that arena in order to tap into those that have connections.

Toby

Toby is a board of trustee member and has been affiliated with the institution for nearly eight years in that capacity. Toby responded that the president must have special knowledge of budget and finances for community college. He felt the finance side was more important than the academic side. He stated that the president doesn't need to be the one balancing the checkbook but must have working knowledge of where the money is going and where it is coming from. He also must be able to draw grants and rearrange the budget in order to use the funds where it is needed.

Toby described the push pull theory as effective leadership. He explained it takes a team to run a college and that an effective leader will recognize that. Toby explained that ideal qualities include working together and taking ownership. Altruism is a needed quality. The leader must understand laws surrounding privacy and employees. Presidents must be able to come to the board when needed and not blindside the board members.

Toby shared that he has experience with several colleges that have had presidential turnover occurring in North Carolina. The president must be able to deal with the board as a whole and as individuals. Toby stated the best leader is collective and transparent. The ability to fundraise is another important aspect of being a president. Toby shared that it is not always the credentials that matter, but the person's competence to do the job.

Toby's experience with turnover was not financial but dealt with leadership style. Toby shared that while he was reviewing the questions, he wondered why I didn't ask the question of "Why did these people get hired?" Toby stated it was important for the president to network with community and regional entities because knowing the right people makes a difference for the institution.

Results

The results of this single-instrument qualitative case study about the experiences of trustees and senior-level administrators at a rural member college of the North Carolina Community College on how leadership styles and funding knowledge impact presidential turnover are delivered in the theme development section of this research. The theme development includes quotes from interviews of the participants, as well as the narrative and data gathered from the interviews, deductive questionnaire, and board meeting minutes. The codes were derived from the interviews and deductive questionnaire. The codes arose during the theme development and are represented in Tables 4 through 7.

Theme Development

Data analysis for this research followed Yin's (2018) strategies to analyze evidence. The data analysis included data collection, review of data, developing codes by using meaning units captured during the data collection, and examination of potential explanations. Yin (2018) specified to search for promising data using patterns, insights, and concepts. To achieve Yin's approach, the researcher compiled and reviewed the transcripts of the 11 individual face-to-face interviews, thoroughly read the 11 responses collected from an anonymous deductive questionnaire survey, and thoroughly read Board of Trustee minutes for the years 2014-2021. The researcher made careful notes about the documentation received both during and after the

research. The researcher repeated this process for each of the 11 face-to-face interview transcripts, 11 anonymous online questionnaire responses, and each set of Board of Trustee minutes reviewed. The researcher utilized the Microsoft Office programs, Word and Excel, to store and organize meaning units and phrases. The triangulation of data allowed the researcher to identify the themes and subsequent codes (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) and create tables showing this information. Data collected provided the researcher with insight to better understand the experience with presidential turnover involving the factors of leadership style, institutional funding and presidential fit with trustees and senior-level administrators using a rural member college of the North Carolina Community College System as the setting. The researcher created initial codes prior to the research based on the subject and research questions and added additional codes after the research began. The researcher labeled presidential fit as an initial code; however, this code was not supported through the evidence collected and was removed from the themes list. After analyzing the data, the researcher created tables which contain the theme, code, and frequency mentioned. Five themes emerged from this single-instrument case study. The themes are as follows: bureaucracy, competence, advancement/separation, conscientiousness, and management. Since the Board of Trustee members are appointed by an external agency, politics was a theme initially identified by the researcher, however, after reviewing the participant's responses, this theme was replaced with bureaucracy. Bureaucracy encapsulates both external and internal politics. An unexpected code was identified as competence, which overwhelmingly was the strongest set of meaning units. Competence was identified throughout the data research process and is reflective of how trustees and senior-level administrators require a president to administer to the institution. During initial theme development, the researcher identified separation as an expected theme. The researcher found

that advancement and separation were used interchangeably during some of the responses

regarding institutional budget and turnover. Conscientiousness arose as a theme when

participants described their experiences of community college presidents regarding budget and

leadership style. Finally, management developed as a theme when participants discussed

experiences with leadership styles. Table 4 below lists the themes and codes that developed

during analysis of the data collected. The codes are listed in the chronological order in which the

meaning unit arose during data analysis.

Table 4

Themes

Themes	Codes	Frequency
Bureaucracy	Taxpayers	2
	Community/Residents	38
	External Politics/Politically/Workplace Politics	23
	Governor/Commissioners	8
Competence	Experience	48
	Understanding	77
	Accountability	8
	Administration	49
	Alignment	2
	Knowledge/Expert/Expertise	52
	Credentials	5
Advancement/Separation	Furthering career	5
	Turnover	55
	Service	4
	Contracts/Buy-Out	6
Conscientiousness	Needs	45
	Strategic Planning	7
	Mission/Vision	40

Management	Budgetary	45
	Respect	12
	Confidence	8
	Communication	16
	Delegation	9

Bureaucracy

During data analysis, the researcher discovered 71 instances where the trustees and administrators discussed topics that were coded and categorized under the theme of bureaucracy. In the 11 face-to-face interviews ten participants stated that the job of the president is very political. The politics discussed that affect the president's position can be internal workplace or external. Triangulation of the 11 face-to-face interview transcripts, 11 anonymous online questionnaire responses, and each set of Board of Trustee minutes revealed the following codes which were identified as bureaucracy: taxpayers, community/residents, external/politically/workplace politics, and governor/commissioners. The theme bureaucracy is important to this research as the North Carolina Community College System is dependent on state funding, which is included in the Governor's annual budget. Participants all agreed that the president must understand and know people in governmental agencies, such as the Board of Education, Governor's Office, Board of Commissioners, State Senate and State House, presidents of contingent colleges, and grant providing agencies. The data collected showcased the importance of this theme by revealing that a community college president must have political savvy in order to secure desired funding or networking and meeting the individuals who will facilitate funding for the institution.

Thomas voiced the necessity of the president learning the local government officials for counties that the institution served. Ellie stressed the importance of understanding politics for a

community college president in order to secure a local bond if necessary. Ellie felt the president needed the support from the local taxpayers and community members to support a bond endeavor. Carl stated, "In addition to the knowledge, and understanding the finances, a president has to be a community leader and understand the needs of the community" (Carl, personal communication, March 1, 2021). Jane stated, "Community College leadership is political because you have elected board members or appointed board members" (Jane, personal communication, March 19, 2021). When administrators discussed the president, local government, and community the topic was service to the community in line with the college's mission statement.

The requisite of politics differed between the trustees and administrators. Trustees felt that it was important for the president to know members of state agencies that have influence over the community college system. Thomas and Carol both referred to the president needing alignment and connection with the right people at the North Carolina Community College System office. Toby shared that it was important for the president to have influence at the local governmental level in order to have input in external affairs that impact the institution. Toby also stated, "It would be great if the president had the Chair of Budget Appropriations committee on speed dial" (Toby, personal communication, March 3, 2021). All of the administrators felt that politics plays a huge role in the president securing employment in the position. Anita discussed this stance in detail stating:

> I know at least two presidents who should never have been president. The only reason they became president was because they knew the right people were all fast tracked through. Which means they didn't learn the Community College system. They learned how to politic. (Anita, personal communication, March 7, 2021)

All of the administrators referred to receiving grants as an important aspect of the job. Jane stated, "As far as grants, when the president knows the grantor and has the support of the county commissioners, well, it is how things are done" (Jane, personal communication, March 19, 2021). Two of the trustees referred to seeking grants as an important funding stream for the institution and that the president plays a pivotal role in the funding. All of the participants who discussed grants felt that it was important for the president to actively seek grant funding in order to grow the institution.

Competence

During data analysis, the researcher discovered 241 instances where the trustees and administrators discussed topics that were coded and categorized under the theme of competence. All of the participants stressed the importance of understanding the budget. In the 11 face-to-face interviews ten participants discussed that presidents must understand how the budget will dictate how the individual is able to maneuver the position. Competence was the most widely captured theme. Competence was discussed during responses regarding budget, leadership style, and turnover. For this research, competence encapsulated any trait that the president needs to effectively manage the institution, employees, and relations with Board of Trustee members and senior-level administrators. All participants discussed the ability to be competent as a needed attribute in a community college president.

Allan stated, "Your budgets can get out of whack before you know what's going" (Allan, personal communication, March 11, 2021). Toby stated, "There's one issue here that I see occurring over and over and over, and that is that the presidents are not prepared to deal with the financial side of the business" (Toby, personal communication, March 3, 2021). Anita expressed her disdain of presidents allowing CFOs to run the college and manage all aspects of the budget.

Triangulation of the 11 face-to-face interview transcripts, 11 anonymous online questionnaire responses, and each set of Board of Trustee minutes revealed the following codes which were identified as competence: experience, understanding, accountability, administration, alignment, knowledge/expert/expertise, and credentials. The theme of competence surprised the researcher as it was one of the codes that were identified during the initial phase of data triangulation.

The trustees and the administrators have different views of competence. Trustees place competence in items such as the president understanding the budget, departmental structures, being able to effectively manage administrators while allowing them to do their respective jobs, and networking appropriately. Administrators place competence in the president providing active listening, understanding the issue, and taking proper action to address topics discussed. Alvin stated,

> So, the president should have a vision of the college as a whole and keep moving forward and so a leader would state that and then provide resources so that the employees can assist with meeting that vision. Has to be knowledgeable and have general knowledge of all operations within the college. Plus, a willingness to learn. (Alvin, personal communication, March 5, 2021)

Each of the 11 participants referred to presidential experience in the face-to-face interview as not as important as understanding how to administer the budget or the needs of the institution. Each of the 11 participants discussed experience with people and situations as extremely important to the president's position. Eight of the anonymous online questionnaire responses indicated that experience being a college president was less than important than the ability to grow and adapt.

While reviewing the 2016 Board of Trustee minutes, the meaning units labeled accountability, administration, and alignment as used quite frequently. These same meaning units appeared again in the 2019 Board of Trustee minutes. These dates coincided with presidential turnover occurring at the research site. Only two of the trustee responses discussed required credentials for a college president. Allie felt that a PhD or EdD was a critical component. Toby discussed the need for business minded presidents in lieu of college presidents with educational type credentials used on the academic side of education. The 2017 Board of Trustees minutes discussed the credentials needed which was a terminal degree in higher education or similar discipline. The 2019 Board of Trustee minutes discussed and eventually approved changing the credential requirement by adding the word preferred. The 2020 Board of Trustee minutes showed that the incoming president had a Master of Business Administration degree, but 30 years of senior-level experience in the North Carolina Community College System.

Advancement/Separation

During data analysis, the researcher discovered 70 instances where the trustees and administrators discussed topics that were coded and categorized under the theme of advancement. In the 11 face-to-face interviews six trustees discussed how many presidents use the position to advance careers, while no administrators discussed this theme. Triangulation of the 11 face-to-face interview transcripts, 11 anonymous online questionnaire responses, and each set of Board of Trustee minutes revealed the following codes which were identified as advancement/separation: furthering career, turnover, service, and contracts/buy-outs. The researcher identified separation as an initial theme as the research subject includes questions on presidential turnover. Advancement arose from experiences shared wherein trustees and administrators alike discussed amenities and using a position in a smaller institution as a

steppingstone for advancement. Advancement was only discussed as a possibility of what a president may desire when being hired. Separation encompassed all avenues of separation from the institution whether voluntary or involuntary.

Board of Trustee minutes reviewed from 2016-2020 discuss separation many times, there was no instance of any meaning unit for advancement documented in the minutes. Allie stressed that many presidents want all of the amenities that go along with the position such as housing and other allowances and that lack of these amenities can deter the better applicants. Jazzy stated, "When individuals are determined to grow a college and it's not happening due to funding, they become discouraged, hence making the decision to leave not only due to funding, but frustration, burnout, and disappointment" (Jazzy, personal communication, March 1, 2021). Allie stressed in her face-to-face interview:

> The president should feel like that the board truly supports him or her, whoever they are. When that is lost. That trust is lost or that communication is lost Then you can expect a president to move on because there are any number of people waiting to fill those shoes. (Allie, personal communication, February 24, 2021)

Toby stated, "I'm not so sure that the turnover is necessarily a bad thing. And I hate the term progressive, but if you have people that are willing to move the college forward', that's a good thing" (Toby, personal communication, March 3, 2021). Over half of the responses from the face-to-face interviews and the anonymous online deductive questionnaire referred to presidents using small institutions such as the research site to gain knowledge and experience in effort to advance or further their careers as executive officers. Seven of the trustees interviewed identified presidential contracts as problematic for the trustees and beneficial for the president when faced with the issue of separation. Ellie, who has experienced multiple separations stated:

But the presidents leave the college is because of the various challenges that they face.

You know, it's difficult for a president to work with board members and staff and faculty

each who believes that his way or her way is the right way. The president has to be able

to function within these with all these various entities working against him, if you will,

'cause that's what it comes down to, and our culture (Ellie, personal communication,

March 4, 2021).

Conscientiousness

During data analysis, the researcher discovered 92 instances where the trustees and

administrators discussed topics that were coded and categorized under the theme of

conscientiousness. Triangulation of the 11 face-to-face interview transcripts, 11 anonymous

online questionnaire responses, and each set of Board of Trustee minutes revealed the following

codes which were identified as conscientiousness: needs, strategic planning, and mission/vision.

All responses to the online anonymous deductive questionnaire discussed the role of the

president in budgetary matters. Meaning units within conscientiousness were unexpected during

the research. Trustees referred to conscientiousness when discussing strategic planning,

accountability, and advancing the institution. Administrators discussed conscientiousness when

discussing budgetary matters. Many of the participant responses discussed conscientiousness as a

needed aspect of delegation.

Institutional budgets should be aligned with the strategic plan for the institution. Lack of

understanding of the institutional budget can lead to poor business decisions and lack of

strategic progress. This can have an adverse effect on the institution which will definitely

lead to turnover. (Anonymous, Boards of Trustees and Senior-Level Administrators'

Deductive Questionnaire, March 19, 2021)

Allan expressed the importance of the president being aware and present while being accountable for decisions made. Allan feels that a president should not delegate authority as a means to have a scapegoat but use delegation accordingly to utilize the experts in the fields. He had this to say as it relates to leadership and budgetary control of a president:

> To prepare for a changing environment, and I think he [the president] needs to know how to do that, and I think he needs to be able to have a vision out to say we might need AG program one day or trucking program alignment program. We need to anticipate some of those things on the horizon, so we don't get caught with zero dollars basically. (Allan, personal communication, March 11, 2021)

Frankie's view was slightly different, she stated, "And if you allow some of your directors and so forth to be empowered, of course you're going to watch what they do, and you want them to come to you and talk to you about it as a leader" (Frankie, personal communication, March 2, 2021). Frankie felt it was simple to empower people.

Trustees and administrators fully agreed that the president is responsible for the overall vision of the institution. The three administrators discussed the needs of the institution as part of the strategic planning process and a delineated approach that the president would utilize to achieve those goals. Four of the trustees discussed strategic planning and needs assessment as a topic needed in the presidential search process.

Management

During data analysis, the researcher discovered 102 instances where the trustees and administrators discussed topics that were coded and categorized under the theme of management. Triangulation of the 11 face-to-face interview transcripts, 11 anonymous online questionnaire responses, and each set of Board of Trustee minutes revealed the following codes which were

identified as management: budgetary, respect, confidence, communication, and delegation. Meaning units for management were recorded during all responses regarding leadership style. Participants discussed management in two separate arenas: budgetary and human resources. When budgetary management was recorded it encompassed appropriate and inappropriate financial decisions. Human resources management was recorded when participants discussed leadership styles. Singularly, the theme management was used most often when discussing budgetary matters. The remaining meaning units under the management team related to human resources and the ability to lead others.

During Carl's interview, the majority of answers alluded to effective budgetary management. Allie was expressive of having a leader who was amenable and easy to approach. In the 11 face-to-face interviews all participants agreed that a president must be a leader who attracts others to follow.

> There's a difference between telling somebody to do something or saying this is your job; and being able to convey to them and incentivize that those people to actually assume accountability and responsibility and the willingness to put in what is necessary to do their job. (Allie, personal communication, February 24, 2021)

Administrators felt that the budget and management were intertwined and that there should be clear communication and gathering of input on how the funds are expended. Alvin said, "This is because every dollar spent affects every place on this campus (Alvin, personal communication, March 5, 2021). Jazzy stated, "The flow of the institutional budget is vital for college present" (Jazzy, personal communication, March 1, 2021). In the interview with Jane, she discussed the importance of having a president who is present and willing. Jane stated, "They have to be able to not just work with the trustees, but the Foundation board as well and board

development is very important. So, you have to have a personality that allows you to" (Jane, personal communication, March 19, 2021).

The management and conscientiousness themes overlapped for Allan who expressed the importance of the presidential accountability. As aforementioned in conscientiousness, Allan is against delegation due to his experiences with the president being able to avoid consequences for bad decisions. Other trustees discussed conscientiousness in terms of being mindful with the budget and fair treatment of employees. A response to the anonymous online deductive questionnaire shared that presidential fit includes the willingness to get to know the employees before making changes to organization charts or terminations. The response continued with the importance of respect and communication in the president's role.

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Research Question Responses

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This qualitative case study research was guided by one central question to better understand the experience with presidential turnover involving the factors of leadership style, institutional funding and presidential fit with trustees and senior-level administrators using a rural member college of the North Carolina Community College System as the setting. In addition to the central question, two sub-questions were utilized to support the research. In the next sections, I provide narrative responses for each question as well as a table outlining themes of each. Tables 5 - 7 provide the themes, codes, and frequencies of the responses.

Central Research Question

The central question asked for the study is: How do the participants at a rural community college describe the most crucial factors of budgetary administration necessary to be a community college president? Theme development by using codes was utilized from the face-to-

face interviews and the anonymous deductive questionnaire. The board of trustees' minutes

revealed that at each board meeting, the Chair of the Budget and Finance committee in

conjunction with the CFO delivered the budget reports. In each set of minutes, there is a

President's Report wherein I found several references to budgetary happenings. I researched

minutes spanning seven years. Community and politics were the themes that correlated with the

central research question. Table 5 reveals descriptive responses from the face-to-face interviews

and anonymous questionnaire that bound the central research question to the themes. All

participants were content with how budgets are administered, but a few of the trustees

experienced problems with past presidents stating either that the individual presidents over-

controlled or under-controlled the budget.

Table 5
Central Research Question

Themes	Codes	Frequency
Community	Community Members	27
	Residents	6
	Service Area	2
	Students	3
Politics	External Politics	4
	Politically	19
	Workplace Politics	2

Community was the overwhelming theme for the central research question. It was

reflected greatly during the face-to-face interviews for questions 3, 4, 8, and 9. During the face-to-

face interviews the trustees and administrators concurred that the community was most important because of the nature of the institution. Trustees feel that it is important to the institution for the president to understand and respond to the needs of the community to deliver the programs needed in this area. Frankie shared, "I think the worst experience that I've had is a president not spending, not spending money that possibly could have been spent to enhance programs" (Frankie, personal communication, March 2, 2021).

The trustees view budgetary administration differently than administrators. Trustees expect the president to be frugal with the funds using the monies appropriately and saving enough for other ventures. The administrators placed current student needs first. The administrator's area needs included finding money for students when a need arose.

The next theme that correlated to the central research was politics. Politics was a sensitive but blunt subject for some trustees. Allie, Carl, Jazzy, Thomas, Frankie, Toby, Ellie, Allan, and Anita felt that budgetary administration must be a joint effort with legislative authorities, grant writing, and using networking to meet people who can assist the institution with growth and moving forward in the future.

> The president needs to be somewhat politically inclined in that something may be trivial to him or her, but it is not nothing to others. His goals future might depend on how politically he or she navigates the president's position. (Ellie, personal communication, March 4, 2021)

Anita expressed disdain with the manner in which the budget is administered. She felt that each department should be allowed to have more input in the decision-making process that affects the outcome and expenditure of funds. Administrators were frustrated and wanted their

needs to be heard. Trustees felt that the president should be able to answer any question posed at a board meeting without deferring to the CFO.

Sub-Question 1

Sub-question 1 was: How do participants at a rural community college describe the style of leadership necessary for a community college president? Theme development by using codes was utilized from the face-to-face interviews and the anonymous deductive questionnaire. The board of trustees' minutes did not reveal any apparent leadership style, but it was apparent through the structures of the meetings, that the President answered to the Board of Trustees as a collective. I researched minutes spanning seven years. The following themes relating to management emerged from Sub-question 1: a.) interactions and b.) ownership. Table 6 illustrates the responses recorded from the face-to-face interviews and the anonymous deductive questionnaire.

Table 6

Sub-Question 1

Themes	Codes	Frequency
Interactions	Respect	12
	Communication	27
Ownership	Confidence	8
	Delegation	9

Overall, the participants viewed interactions as a key factor in effective leadership followed by ownership. This theme developed organically from questions 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 9. The trustees expressed delegation, used appropriately, would bolster effective leadership, and

create a harmonizing workplace. Allie and Anita discussed how situational leadership is a desirable trait for a president, if the president could interact within the situation to make the best decision that would lead to a positive outcome. Allie and Anita also discussed that an effective leader would be transformational and would place the institution to move forward in the future. Jazzy, Jane, Toby, and Allan explained that they do not trust leaders who delegate too much or not enough and also discussed how communication and respect made a good leader. Anita wanted the president to delegate to them to avoid narcissism in the president's position. Frankie agreed with Anita, stating:

We have had some dictator type presidents. It was narcissism going on there. Definitely some narcissism going on. I don't know why any president would feel that they had to handle everything. It was like they were micromanaging their own work. They had to almost micromanage everything you know and had to have their hand in it. And that's not what a good leader does. (Frankie, personal communication, March 2, 2021)

The trustees expressed the need to have a confident president who owned their mistakes and was willing to celebrate the success of their subordinates. Jazzy said in interview, "Effective leadership is being able to delegate tasks and prepare those under your leadership for success" (Jazzy, personal communication, March 1, 2021). From the face-to-face interviews, it was apparent that overall effective leadership lay with responsible communication to the Board, the employees, and the community.

Sub-Question 2

Sub-question 2 was: How do Board of Trustee members and senior-level administrators describe their experiences with presidential leadership style, institutional funding, and presidential turnover? Theme development, by using codes, was utilized from the face-to-face

interviews and the anonymous deductive questionnaire. The Board of Trustees minutes stated

that the College has had seven acting, interim, and seated presidents over the past seven years.

The following themes relating to management emerged from Sub-question 2: a.) career

advancement, b.) separation, and c.) competence. Table 7 illustrates the responses recorded

from the face-to-face interviews and the anonymous deductive questionnaire.

Table 7
Sub-Question 2

Themes	Codes	Frequency
Career Advancement	Careers	9
	Contracts	6
Separation	In and Out	3
	One after Another	2
	Turnover	50
Competence	Experience	50
	Knowledge	50

The overriding theme for Sub-question 2 was competence. This theme developed during

face-to-face interviews through questions 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9. All of the trustees used the codes

experience and knowledge as a means to describe competence. The phrases were reiterated

several times. Allie, Carl, Toby, Ellie, Frankie, and Allan discussed how the president is hired

because of the experience that they bring to the position and that the knowledge base seems to go

with the experience. Frankie and Toby explained that while a president may seem to have the

desired traits the search committee deemed important, the problems with competence are not

always apparent until a problem arises that spirals out of control. Allie, Ellie, Toby, Allan, and Carl each discussed how presidents sometimes use a smaller institution as a start for their presidential career and use that experience for career advancement. Allie shared that her experience includes times where the president had incentivized contracts that protected them to the point where it harmed the institution. All participants had experience with presidential turnover except Carl. Administrator responses did not indicate any disparaging experience with president, but all trustees who had experience with presidential turnover indicated competence as a reason the seated presidents separated from the institution.

Summary

This qualitative case study was conducted to explore how leadership styles and funding knowledge impact presidential turnover as experienced by trustees and senior-level administrators using a rural member college of the North Carolina Community College System as the setting. Data collection methods included face-to-face interviews, an online anonymous deductive question, and Board of Trustee minutes spanning the years 2014-2021. Pseudonyms were assigned to 11 trustees and administrators to ensure confidentiality and protect their privacy. The research was guided by a central research question and two sub-questions. Proper collection protocols were used to protect the data and ensure credibility. The theme development included transcription of interviews that implored manual coding which identified two themes for the central research question, two themes for Sub-question 1, and three themes for Sub-question 2. The next section concludes the research and discusses implications, limitations, and delimitations as well as a summary.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Overview

An unprecedented amount of presidential turnover is occurring nationwide, significantly impacting North Carolina. The purpose of this qualitative single-instrument case study (Yin, 2018) was to explore how leadership styles and funding knowledge impact presidential turnover as experienced by trustees and senior-level administrators using a rural member college of the North Carolina Community College System as the setting. Institutions within the North Carolina Community College System have a clear purpose of providing citizens primarily with workforce development and vocational training, so having a president who understands the needs of the institution is imperative. With the amount of turnover occurring, communities and their citizens have the potential to be affected. The turnover is concerning due to the required knowledge and skill sets needed for community college presidents, as well as factors of employment and presidential fit (Boggs, 2003; Gnage & Drumm, 2010; Hammons & Keller, 1990; McNair et al., 2011; Plinkske & Packard, 2010; Vaughan & Weisman, 2003).

While there was a great deal of research regarding community college presidents, a gap existed to empirically understand presidential leadership and turnover as experienced by trustees and senior-level administrators. According to Harris and Ellis (2018) higher educational leadership is a specialized genre. Typically, the institutions are governed by a board of trustees or other similar makeup who through employment, entrust the administrative duties of the institution to the president (Gluckman, 2017; Harris & Ellis, 2018). The research on presidents indicates that performance and fit issues result in presidential turnover (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978; Tushman & Rosenkopf, 1996; Wiersema & Bantel, 1993).

This consists of six sections: (a) an overview of the chapter, (b) a summary of the findings, (c) a discussion of the findings and the implications in light of the relevant literature and theory, (d) an implications section (methodological and practical), (e) an outline of the study delimitations and limitations, and (f) recommendations for future research. With these sections, the summary of findings provides a concise summary of the study using the research questions. The discussion sections discuss the relationship to the empirical and theoretical literature reviewed in Chapter Two. The next section discusses the theoretical, empirical, and practical implications of the study. The delimitations and limitations provide narrative for the rationale behind decisions made to limit or define the scope and focus of the study. The future research recommendations are explored and finally a succinct chapter summary is provided.

Summary of Findings

This qualitative single-instrument case study research was guided by a central research question and two sub-questions. The central research question was, "How do the participants at a rural community college describe the most crucial factors of budgetary administration necessary to be a community college president?" All of the participants defined components of competency and communication as being the most crucial factors. Trustees and administrators have experienced different crucial factors of budgetary administration. Trustees explained that constant communication, appropriate administration, and regular fiscal reporting were among the most crucial. Trustees also shared that it is imperative for the president to delegate the budget administration appropriately. Trustees expressed angst when using the term delegate or delegation, and felt it should be used, but used appropriately. In the majority of the trustee's experiences, the president has used delegation as a tool to protect their own position. Administrators look to the president for guidance on the respected budgets. Administrator

experiences indicate that communication by email and regularly scheduled meetings are necessary to productively facilitate the different departments in the institution. Whereas trustees are used to the president being able to share with them all aspects of budgetary administration, including whom is in which position, performing what duty, as well as being able to answer direct questions without hesitation.

Sub-question 1 was: "How do participants at a rural community college describe the style of leadership necessary for a community college president?" Each of the participants felt that a president needs to be able to adjust to different situations. Two themes emerged from sub-question 1 that all participants felt was needed in leadership. Those themes are interactions and ownership. Delegation was discussed by most participants. If used properly, delegation would enhance work relations, bolster effective leadership, and assist the president in moving the institution forward. Delegating conversations are welcome by the administrators. The administrators explained that they were employed to perform a duty and lack of delegation and communication hinder the ability for proficiency in the respected position. Trustees discussed confidence and ownership as part of the necessary leadership style found in a president. All of the trustee participants discussed the importance of open, transparent communication.

Sub-question 2 was: "How do Board of Trustee members and senior-level administrators describe their experiences with presidential leadership style, institutional funding, and presidential turnover?" A variety of responses were recorded ranging from no experience to experience spanning nine presidencies. Three themes emerged from sub-question 2 as participants shared their experiences. Those themes are career advancement, separation, competence. All of the participants described their experiences with leadership style, funding, and turnover as competence in the position. Trustees shared a portion of the search process. The

search process includes review of a paper application, individuals are interviewed based on what is on the resume. The president is employed based on what attributes and experience the person has. Trustees explained their experience with funding included presidents using smaller institutions to gain knowledge and use that knowledge gained as part of career advancement. One participant described a president having certain amenities written into the employment contract. Another president described a time where the president made demands for amenities as part of the employment process. Administrators had less to say regarding presidential turnover whereas the trustees felt that competence was a leading factor in presidential separation.

Discussion

The purpose of this qualitative single-instrument case study (Yin, 2018) was to explore how leadership styles and funding knowledge impact presidential turnover as experienced by trustees and senior-level administrators using a rural member college of the North Carolina Community College System using an analysis of data collected through face-to-face interviews, an anonymous deductive questionnaire, and review of minutes associated with the institution and the North Carolina Community College System. During the interviews and transcriptions, I focused on repetitive phrases and meanings. Coding was utilized during the transcription and during review of transcribed interviews. Twelve themes evolved from 575 repeated codes. The themes and codes are listed in Tables 3 – 7 found in Chapter 4. This section discusses the study findings in relationship to the empirical and theoretical literature reviewed in Chapter Two. The results of this study supported the theoretical and empirical literature found in Chapter Two. I, as the researcher continued to use the word presidential fit, whereas the term that trustees and administrators consistently used was competence. Communication is also very important for trustees and administrators alike. Face-to-face interviews and anonymous deductive

questionnaire responses supported the theoretical literature reviewed in this case study by confirming situational leadership styles that encompass transformative and transactions qualities are appropriate in an effective higher educational leader. A novel term, competence, arose during theme development that was not distinguished during the course of this research study. This study sheds light on leadership needs by examining experiences leadership, funding, and fit through the perspective lens of trustees and senior-level administrators. These leaders agree that competence is a primary factor in proper leadership and guidance for an educational institution.

Empirical Literature

Empirical literature in this research covered community college governing boards, community college president leadership styles, institutional presidential fit, personal values, institutional funding, and presidential succession (Brown & Hayford, 2019; Craft & Guy, 2019; Dettmar & Glick, 2019; Hilley & Morris, 2016; McDade et al., 2017; Pulliams, 2016). While a great amount of research on community college presidents was available, literature is lacking an empirical understanding of presidential leadership and turnover through the lens of trustee and senior-level administrators. This is important as research has found that performance and fit issues result in changes in executive leadership (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978; Tushman & Rosenkopf, 1996; Wiersema & Bantel, 1993). Governing boards have obligations to be ethical and objective, while fulfilling the important task of presidential selection (Community Colleges, 2019; Craft & Guy, 2019). The findings of this research study support previous research and studies based on Hersey and Blanchard's (1969) situational leadership theory, Duignan and Macpherson's (1992) educative leadership theory, Freeman's (1984) stakeholder theory, and Koffka's (1935) Gestalt theory.

The literature reviewed, coupled with the triangulation of the data, sheds a great deal of light into the seriousness of presidential turnover. Presidential search committees spend quality time reviewing necessary criteria, such as leadership style and institutional budgetary knowledge as well as human resources and facilities knowledge, needed by a community college president. This study is set apart from other qualitative studies by addressing if presidential leadership styles and institutional budgetary knowledge are components of presidential turnover, which is not widely discussed in current literature.

Presidential turnover is commonplace in modern education and the research supports the current findings showing that at the end of the 20th century it was typical for presidents to spend at least eight and a half years in their position. By the second decade of the 21st century, this number had dropped to seven years (ACE, 2012; Betts et al., 2009; Leubsdorf, 2006). Trustees face other turnover problems besides the president which is the steady retirement of senior-level administrators (ACE, 2012; AGB, 2013; Boggs, 2003; Campbell, 2002; King et al., 2008; Patton, 2004; Shults, 2001; Song & Hartley, 2012). The findings support this research as the majority of the participants where in harmony that the constant turnover causes a crisis at the institutional and community level.

Participants were asked about their firsthand experiences with presidential leadership, budget knowledge, and presidential turnover. The questions were structured to elicit specific experiences of leadership, budget, and turnover and identify emerging themes. Data gathering techniques included responses from face-to-face interviews, responses from anonymous online deductive questionnaire, and review of Board of Trustee minute documentation. This research indicated that the collective wanted Gestalt (Koffka, 1935), a style of leadership presented in Chapter Two. The data revealed that all participants deemed competency and communication as the most important attributes for a

community college president. Based on the data, prior to presidential search committee meetings, it is typical for trustees to have conversations outside of the institution's walls to discuss the needed qualities and traits of a president and how that individual will impact the institution. All 11 of the participants interviewed, either stated or alluded to the need for the president to be present in the institution. All of the senior-level administrators stated the need for direction and proper communication (Freeman, 1984). During the data collection, participants referred to the college's strategic plan and mission statement (Duignan & Macpherson, 1992) as they described their experiences with incoming presidents not knowing the culture and needs of the institution. Nine of the participants discussed politics and the importance of navigating political atmospheres. Freeman's (1984) stakeholder theory describes the importance of connection between an individual and the individuals affected by that individual. The data indicated that presidents share a report at the board meetings in which they note to the board and audience exactly what efforts have occurred as well as upcoming events of interest to the college community (Freeman, 1984). Communication and competence were codes that were used repeatedly by all participants as they described their experiences with presidential leadership, budgetary knowledge, and presidential turnover.

Different experiences and expectations were presented regarding presidential budgetary knowledge needed by the president between the trustees and senior-level administrators (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969). Data gathered from this research reflected that senior-level administrators require contrasting input, communication, and execution of budgetary administration. All but two participants responded with different experiences and how having multiple presidents throughout a brief period of time has constructed another point of view regarding budgets. The trustees require reports containing information on debits/credits, grants, capital needs, state, local and institutional funds. The needs of senior-level administrators are much simpler. Senior-level administrators'

fondest experiences are situations that include having a budget provided towards the beginning of the fiscal year, regular communication with the president, and purchasing agents regarding the budget. Overwhelmingly, responses included meaning units for the term communication.

All but one participant acknowledged that it takes time for acclimation of a newly employed presidents. Political needs are important to propel colleges forward. The majority of participants shared that the position is political in nature. Three trustees shared that the political networking must extend beyond county commissioners and the board of trustees governing appointing agencies. All of these participants discussed the importance of the advantages of a new president to network in the needed areas. One trustee expressed that advantage includes reaching out to the chair of the state board finance committee, state senators and representatives, town and county commissioners and meeting members of governing boards, superintendents, principals, and local businesses.

Two participants referred to situational leadership (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969) by name as an appropriate leadership style for community college presidents. Five trustees referred to educative leadership (Duignan & Macpherson, 1992) by discussing the role a new president has and the ability to network and create needed opportunities in an unfamiliar environment. All of the participants described their position as a stakeholder (Freeman, 1984) with the institution and importance of their relationship with the president. Participants discussed the communication needed. All of the participants indicated that Gestalt (Koffka, 1935) is the needed momentum to move the institution forward. This study's findings support Boham's (1982) research on governing boards ability to predict undesired behaviors in their appointed leaders by understanding the different theories of leadership (Boham, 1982). The majority of the responses supported the previous research which listed requirements of team building, fundraising, collaboration, communication, and institutional administration listed as necessities needed by

community college presidents (Howells, 2011; McDonald, 2012; Phillippe & Sullivan, 2005; Shults, 2001; Washington, 2018).

Participatory responses supported prior research which identified the uniqueness of higher educational leadership (Boham, 1982; Bolman & Deal, 2008; Harris & Ellis, 2018). The findings showed that each individual has a personal style of leadership and that leadership is accomplished through transactional and transformational tasks (Adserieas et al., 2017; Berkovich & Eval, 2019; Harris & Ellis, 2018; Kark et al., 2018).

The findings support how crucial institutional funding is as leadership styles vary from individual to individual and these styles determine the atmosphere of an institution. Participants continually mentioned the need for the president to control the budget appropriately. Trustee participants stated the need for detailed reports and answers to questions, while administrator participants expressed the need for communication and delegation as it relates to budgetary governance.

The findings of this study add to empirical literature by discussing to the necessary budgetary competencies needed by a community college president from the lens of the trustees and administrators. A participant suggested that one approach could be the incumbent reviewing audits and financial statements and following up with the Board of Trustees Budget and Finance Committee. The findings also show that the Chief Financial Officer should work in harmony with the president to facilitate these budgetary necessities. The strongest theme, competence, emerged quickly and was referred to in each response. This was an unexpected theme; however, this theme supports prior research that lists situational leadership as a main tool for knowledge, skills, and abilities (AACC, 2018). The competencies the AACC lists which are needed for community college leaders are reflected in Table 2 which includes overlapping knowledge,

skills, and abilities.

Theoretical Literature

The theoretical framework for this research was situational leadership (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969, 1996) and educative leadership (Duignan & Macpherson, 1992). The situational leadership theory (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969, 1996) provided researchers with understanding regarding of the ability of a leader to acclimate to varying situations. This leadership style is ever changing and requires a competent individual to execute with limited errors. Educative leadership (Duignan & Macpherson, 1992) plays a role in presidents' position as he or she becomes acclimated to a new institution. This leadership style is time sensitive and can be used for a limited amount of time before stakeholders begin questioning methods. Another theory included in the literature review presented in Chapter Two was the stakeholder theory (Freeman, 1984, 2005) wherein responses of both trustees and administration, with respect to their experiences and needs, fully support the validity of this theory. Additionally, presented is the Gestalt theory (Koffka, 1935) which is supported by the responses which indicate that both trustees and administrators want to be viewed as a whole in terms of the institution.

The findings of this research show that a competent leader who embraces an appropriate leadership style is best situated to lead and grow the institution. Responses supported that a combination of the two guiding theories were ideal for an incoming president and the ability to adapt and foster growth in an institution is important. The findings also support the use of delegation, in the proper situation, to meet the needs of the trustees and the administrators (Hersey & Blanchard, 1996; STU, 2019). The findings support the use of educative leadership tactics, especially the second principle of communications as trustees and administrators

expressed diverse levels of desire for communicating needs and concerns (Duignan & Macpherson, 1992).

Situational leadership (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969, 1996) is the ability to adapt to different scenarios and situations. The theory is based in task and relationship behaviors (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969). Situational leadership theory (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969) does not have one specific leadership style, but several leadership styles based on the needs of the situation or occurrence. Situational leadership aspects include the leader's ability to relate and their maturity in problem solving (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969). Because situational leadership (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969) believes that leaders can and should elicit adaptability and flexibility, the style is appropriate to use for college presidents as it incorporates different leadership styles and ability in both institutional and organizational needs (Blanchard & Johnson, 2015; Hersey & Blanchard, 1996). Situational leadership is an effective supporting theory that empowers employees with support and instruction while building morale (Kelchner, 2016). Widely accepted, situational leadership allows the most flexibility for leaders who embrace the theory (Asdair, 1973; Blake & Mouton, 1982; Blanchard & Johnson 2015; Kelchner, 2016; Papworth et al., 2009; Reddin, 1967).

Educative leadership theory is appropriate for educational entities (Duignan & Macpherson, 1992). The theory is based in assumption using five approaches. In the beginning, there is intent and outcome, secondly the use of new and tested research, utilizing experts and supporting educational standards. Finally, the theory treats education as a culture and not a system (Duignan & Macpherson, 1992). A leader must embrace a moral compass to exercise the proper decision-making control (Duignan & Macpherson, 1992).

The stakeholder theory uses rational perspective, organizational standards, and organizational structure to guide the stakeholder collective (Freeman, 1984; Freeman et al., 2004). The value the stakeholder possess requires organizations have certain interests, these interests facilitate natural relationships among stakeholders (Hom, 2011; Jones, 1995; Mainardes et al., 2011). Research has shown that appropriate behavior, coupled with accountability, proves this theory appropriate for boards of trustees as it incorporates ethical influence, use of committees, selection of appropriate trustees, and high-level work performance of the board (Bradshaw et al., 1998).

Koffka's (1935) Gestalt theory is based on the work environment from the life experience of the leader. The Gestalt theory is practiced by boards as they act, think, and learn better than when separated (Koffka, 1935). True Gestalt uses a whole life and work experience to assist with outcomes (Koffka, 1935). These theories were the basis for the anonymous online deductive questionnaire.

Implications

The purpose of this section is to address the theoretical, empirical, and practical implications of this qualitative single-instrument case study. Participants were trustees and senior-level administrators who described their experiences with presidential leadership style, institutional funding, and presidential turnover at the research site and in the North Carolina Community College System. The participants described the ideal leadership style as an individual who is competent and communicative to all stakeholders. The president must be adaptable and have the perception to adjust the communication accordingly. Administrators have the responsibility of managing their respected departments and collaborate to propel the institution forward. Trustees have the responsibility of setting policy and the employment of the institutional leader.

The findings from this research study have the potential to be utilized in a format that would benefit community college presidential search committees and selection outcomes. The following subsections will show the theoretical, empirical, and practical implications of how leadership styles and funding knowledge impact presidential turnover as experienced by trustees and senior-level administrators using a rural member college of the North Carolina Community College System as the setting.

Theoretical Implications

The underlying belief of the situational leadership theory (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969) was that not one specific type of leadership is effective in every situation. The theory embraces effective leadership that is determined by the situation. The documentation and responses collected for this research study confirm that situational leadership is an appropriate leadership style for use in a higher educational facility, as the basis of the belief is maturity and ability to relate in order to solve problems (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969). The four styles identified in situational leadership are telling, selling, participating, and delegating. The findings of this research support delegation, when used appropriately (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969), as the leader is able to give subordinates direction and guidance (Marzano et al., 2005).

Five assumptions drive the educative leadership theory (Duignan & Macpherson, 1992). These assumptions are based in intent and outcome while respecting the culture of the institution (Duignan & Macpherson, 1992). The responses from face-to-face interviews, responses to the anonymous online deductive questionnaire, and data collected from Board of Trustee minutes support prior research of educative leadership's top-down hierarchy wherein leadership styles are not readily identified until a problem arises (Duignan & Macpherson, 1992).

There were two theoretical implications identified by the researcher for trustees and

senior-level administrators. All but one of the 11 trustees and senior-level administrators in this study had encountered recent presidential turnover. All 11 trustees and senior-level administrators described both situational and educative leadership styles as most appropriate for a community college president. The most used meaning unit was competence. All of the participants felt this was the most important part of being a college president. This feeling was driven by their previous experiences with presidential turnover at the institution. Trustees could consider this factor during a presidential search committee, whereas senior-level administrators can give input to the advisory committee for the search committee's consideration. Trustees could use this information to craft interview questions that are designed to identify competence. Competent behavior could be useful and beneficial to the search committee. Senior-level administrators should be able to voice their departmental and institutional needs to assist with this effort. Additionally, another alternative is soliciting an external presidential search firm that is known and respected for long-term placement. The findings of this study support further qualitative research in this area.

Empirical Implications

This research study focused on factors of a community college president by examining the experiences of trustees and senior-level administrators at one site regarding presidential leadership styles, budgetary knowledge, and presidential turnover. While majority large body of research on college presidents exists, there is a gap in literature examining the experiences of trustees and senior-level administrators. This research focused specifically on those experiences in an attempt to identify effective leadership styles and knowledge needed for a community college president to succeed. This case study adds to Duignan and Macpherson's (1992) educative leadership theory, Freeman's (1984) stakeholder theory, and Koffka's (1935) Gestalt theory as the

findings support Duignan and Macpherson's (1992) educative leadership theory, Freeman's (1984) stakeholder theory, and Koffka's (1935) Gestalt theory research studies on effective leadership.

Community college presidential research of needed knowledge and skill sets is rich within qualitative literature (AACC, 2012a; Aspen Institute & Achieving the Dream, 2013; Barton, 2019; Boggs, 2003; Brown & Hayford, 2019; Clinger, 2016; Craft & Guy, 2019; Eddy, 2010; Fain, 2008; Gluckman, 2017; Gnage & Drumm, 2010; Hammons & Keller, 1990; Harris & Ellis, 2018; Kolomitz, 2016; Leubsdorf, 2006; McDade et al., 2017; McNair et al., 2011; McNaughtan, 2016, 2017, 2018; NCCCS, 2020b; NCACCP, 2019; Plinkse & Packard, 2010; Reid, 2018; Shults, 2001; Tekniepe, 2014; Vaughan & Weisman, 2003; Washington, 2018). The research provides the basis of the leadership required in community college presidents. This qualitative research addresses leadership from the lens of presidents and agencies that govern or otherwise externally interact with community colleges. The findings of this research fill a needed gap in literature by examining the experiences of community college boards of trustees and senior-level administrators.

There were two empirical implications identified by the researcher in this research study. The implications for community college boards of trustees undergoing a presidential search for competencies needed by a president in areas of budget, management, leadership, and political arenas. Another implication for community college board of trustees undergoing a presidential search is buy-in from the senior-level administrators and the campus community. Colleges undergoing presidential searches will be able to use the information from the research as a starting point for questions to be used in a search committee. The questions should be open ended and crafted in a manner to elicit responses that will allow the search committee to gather sufficient information to make an informed decision whether to hire an individual. Buy-in is

important when an institution is undergoing leadership change. The information gathered from this research is useful to trustees as they determine the most important aspects needed while crafting job descriptions and position vacancy announcements. These implications will enhance community college presidential searches by allowing the search committees to focus on what is needed for the institution.

The research setting has had three presidential searches in the past five years. The findings of the research study support the literature which show presidential turnover is a current crisis (Harris & Ellis, 2018; Osbourne, 2020; Renneboog & Zhao, 2020). This is significant as the North Carolina Community College system is experiencing the highest number of executive vacancies in the history of the system (NCACCP, 2019). The findings also support the AACC's (2016) study which showed 80% of college president respondents plan to retire by 2026.

The research findings also support research identifying the ability to understand, navigate, and contribute to or improve institutional funding by community college presidents (AACC, 2013a; Floyd et al., 2010). The findings also confirm Phillippe and Sullivan's (2005) research that clearly identified challenges that included funding, accountability, student diversity, and changes in modern technology as factors in turnover. The researcher compared qualitative and quantitative data during the data collection and finds that quantitative research would not have returned the results received in this qualitative research.

Practical Implications

Data collected for this research study was based on the experiences of trustees and senior-level administrators at the research site. The face-to-face interviews, anonymous responses to an online deductive questionnaire, and review of documentation provided information that can be utilized to better understand these experiences to facilitate in the search for a new president.

There were two practical implications identified by the researcher for this study. The findings of this research study have practical implications for community college boards of trustees and firms who are engaged with presidential search committees for new community college presidents. The findings of this research study also have practical implications for individuals desiring to be community college presidents and newly employed presidents. The findings of this research study provide attributes and knowledge bases needed to provide questions and discussions that should be presented to a candidate undergoing a community college presidential search interview. The research of Phillippe and Sullivan (2005) identified several challenges for college presidents which include funding, accountability, student diversity, and changes in modern technology. Numerous studies identified the challenges of college missions, aging facilities, and faculty retirement as factors of presidential turnover (Bailey, 2003; Boggs, 2003, 2004; Evelyn, 2004; Vaughan, 2006).

Practical implications for boards of trustees and search firms in this research study reveal that presidential search committee questions should be vetted through the board and senior-level administrators in order to ask the questions that really need accurate answers and portrayal of leadership qualities. The responses from the trustees who have experienced presidential searches feel that a resume does not provide adequate information about leadership abilities. One of the trustees described the scenario as sink or swim. Another trustee shared that you don't really know if you have chosen the ideal applicant until a crisis occurs. Senior-level administrators discussed organizational structure and communication skills, as well as a president who is connected in the grant writing realm.

Practical implications for individuals aspiring to become community college presidents and new presidents in this research study include certain competencies that are required for an

individual desiring to be community college presidents and newly employed presidents. This study could be impactful for novice presidents to reflect on what is needed and required in their position. In order for a community college president to be effective with employees the individual must embrace and facilitate a leadership style that fosters understanding, communication, and trust. Additionally, new community college presidents who are struggling with the support of the trustees or have a desire to improve, can benefit from the experiences of the trustees and senior-level administrators that were shared and the results of this study. The individual can understand competencies needed to manage a budget, the institution, and its employees while serving the needs of the trustees.

The experiences can provide information that would shape and benefit interview questions and criteria for presidential search committees. The research overwhelmingly pointed to competence and communications as key factors for an effective leader. This research will assist search committees with modeling questions in a manner that would elicit responses from a candidate providing as much information as possible so the committee can make an informed decision. Trustees and Senior-level administrators know very little of an incoming president, meeting possibly two or three times prior to full employment. One trustee shared a fear of the possibility of having to select an applicant over Zoom. The board of trustees does hold a meet and greet for the incoming president to preselect desired invitees (Freeman, 1984). The results of this research study will provide trustees and senior-level administrators with information to build worthwhile, in-depth search questions and criteria for future presidents. These practical implications will be utilized by the researcher to assist governing agencies in preparing institutional presidential search committees for interviews as well as rulemaking committees to

assist with presidential search regulations and standards of accreditation which relate to the institution's governing authorities.

Delimitations and Limitations

Purposeful delimitations existed in the choices of inclusion and exclusion for this qualitative single-instrument case study. Delimitations included the research site and participants selected for this research study. Delimitations of rationale for choosing the research site was that the community college chosen for the research is reflective of the problem facing the entire higher educational system. The setting has had numerous presidents over the past five years, as well as during its 50-year history. I felt by focusing on this site, the data gathered would have true meaning and purpose. Participants were delimited to the board of trustee members and senior-level administrators associated with the research site. A case study was chosen to provide rich narrative as I explored the experiences of presidential leadership style, budgetary knowledge, and presidential turnover of the trustees and senior-level administrators at the research site. North Carolina community college presidents are employed through their governing board, the board of trustees, and work closely with senior-level administrators to accomplish the mission of the college.

The limitations of this study included sample size and logistics. I did not find it too difficult to recruit participants but found it difficult to schedule face-to-face interviews around work and life schedules. A few participants stated they were concerned about confidentiality. I responded to these concerns by explaining the steps for confidentiality and reviewing the informed consent with the individual participants. Pseudonyms were assigned to protect the participants' identity. Participants were informed that they were allowed to review transcripts for accuracy; however, no participants were so inclined. Participants were informed of their

right to withdraw from participation at any time. While no participant withdrew, one participant polity refused to respond to one question. If more time were available during the course of a day, I feel confident that more individuals would have participated.

Recommendations for Future Research

This research study provided rich narrative and meaningful insight into the experiences of presidential leadership style, budgetary knowledge, and presidential turnover of the trustees and senior-level administrators at the research site. By studying the experiences, trustees and senior-level administrators are able to enhance presidential search committee questions and criteria which elicit responses designed to glean what the individual's communication and competence skills are. Future research focusing on needed competence and communication could be beneficial if the research study site is representative of state-supported community colleges in North Carolina or across the nation or simply the experiences of the research site participants. As this study analyzed the experiences of trustees and senior-level administrators, future research could explore the experiences of a presidential search committee and why a specific applicant was chosen for the position. This research study supported the theoretical lens presented for leadership styles. Understanding what type of communication and competence is needed would be beneficial to a novice president. The recommendations for future research are founded in the triangulation of data gathered from this research study. The findings support the need to explore why specific candidates are chosen for a presidential position. The future research would benefit from the use of a qualitative methods to future elicit rich narrative and experiences.

Summary

This research study explored how leadership styles and funding knowledge impact presidential turnover as experienced by trustees and senior-level administrators using a rural

member college of the North Carolina Community College System. Participants included 11

trustee and senior-level administrators from the research site. Data collection was gathered from

face-to-face interviews, an anonymous online deductive questionnaire, and review of Board of

Trustee minutes from the research site to capture codes and create themes. The research study

results support the theoretical framework of leadership styles presented in Chapter Two. The

results of this research study fill a gap and adds to current literature providing rich narrative

detailing the experiences of participants. The research study findings revealed that participants

want open channels of communication, competence, and the ability to adapt in a community

college president. I found two significant points in the results. First, the findings indicate that

trustees and senior-level administrators have different perceptions, needs, and experiences with

presidential turnover. Secondly, communication and competence are the most crucial factors in

effective leadership of a community college president. Future research is recommended to

explore the experiences of a presidential search committee and why a specific applicant was

chosen for the position.

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APPENDIX A
IRB APPROVAL

IRB-FY20-21-529 - Initial: Initial - Expedited

irb@liberty.edu <irb@liberty.edu>
Wed 2/17/2021 9:06 PM

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY.
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

February 17, 2021

Kismet Matthews
Michael Patrick

Re: IRB Approval - IRB-FY20-21-529 Boards of Trustees and Senior Level Administrators' Experience with Presidential Turnover in the Higher Education System: A Case Study

Dear Kismet Matthews, Michael Patrick:

We are pleased to inform you that your study has been approved by the Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB). This approval is extended to you for one year from the date of the IRB meeting at which the protocol was approved: February 17, 2021. If data collection proceeds past one year, or if you make modifications in the methodology as it pertains to human subjects, you must submit an appropriate update submission to the IRB.
These submissions can be completed through your Cayuse IRB account.

Your study falls under the expedited review category (45 CFR 46.110), which is applicable to specific, minimal risk studies and minor changes to approved studies for the following reason(s):

7. Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

Your stamped consent form can be found under the Attachments tab within the Submission Details section of your study on Cayuse IRB. This form should be copied and used to gain the consent of your research participants. If you plan to provide your consent information electronically, the contents of the attached consent document should be made available without alteration.

Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB, and we wish you well with your research project.

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP
Administrative Chair of Institutional Research
Research Ethics Office

APPENDIX B
Site Request

Liberty University

January 12, 2021

████████████████████

Dear President █████

As a graduate student in the School of Education at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a doctoral degree. The title of my research project is *Boards of Trustees' and Senior-Level Administrators Experience with Presidential Turnover in the Higher Education System: A Case Study*. The purpose of my research is to explore how leadership styles and funding knowledge impact presidential turnover as experienced by trustees and senior level administrators using a rural member college of the North Carolina Community College System as the setting.

I am writing to request your permission to contact Trustee members and Senior-Level Administrators to invite them to participate in my research study. Participants will be asked to contact me to schedule an interview. Participants will be presented with informed consent information prior to participating. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary, and participants are welcome to discontinue participation at any time.

I am also writing to request your permission to examine minutes from the Martin Community College Board of Trustees meetings, as allowable by the North Carolina governing statutes.

Thank you for considering my request. If you choose to grant permission, please provide a signed statement on official letterhead indicating your approval. A permission letter document is attached for your convenience.
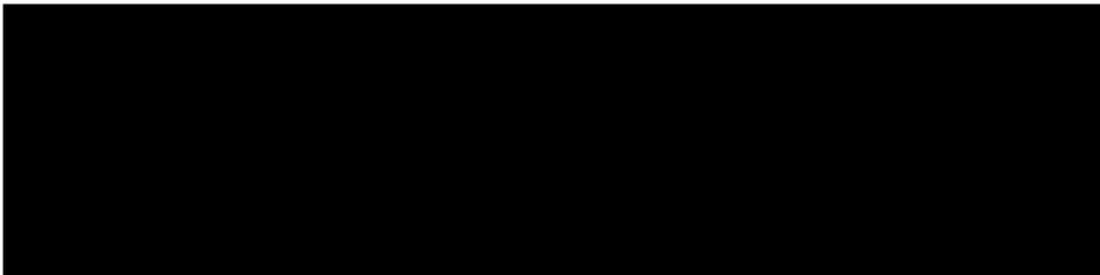
Sincerely,

████████████████

Kismet K. Matthews
Doctoral Candidate

████████████████████████

APPENDIX C
Site Permission

[REDACTED]

January 12, 2021

Ms. Kismet Matthews,
Liberty University Doctoral Candidate

[REDACTED]

Dear Kismet Matthews:

After careful review of your research proposal entitled *Boards of Trustees' and Senior-Level Administrators' Experience with Presidential Turnover in the Higher Education System: A Case Study*, I have decided to grant you permission to contact our Trustees and Senior-Level Administrators and invite them to participate in your study. You are also granted permission to examine minutes from open session Board of Trustee meetings.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

APPENDIX D

Recruitment Email

Dear Board of Trustee members and Senior-Level Administrators:

As a graduate student in the School of Education at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a doctoral degree. The purpose of my research is to explore how leadership styles and funding knowledge impact presidential turnover as experienced by trustees and senior-level administrators, and I am writing to invite eligible participants to join my study.

Participants must be 1. a member of the ███████████████████ Board of Trustees, or, 2. Be a Senior-Level ████████████████ Administrator in the position of Chief Financial Officer, Executive Vice-President, or Associate Vice President. Participants, if willing, will be asked to participate in an interview (45 minutes) and complete a questionnaire (20 minutes). Names and other identifying information will be requested as part of this study, but the information will remain confidential.

In order to participate, please contact me at ██████████ or email me at ██████████████████ to schedule an interview.

A consent document is attached to this email. The consent document contains additional information about my research. Please sign the consent document and return it to me at the time of the interview. Doing so will indicate that you have read the consent information and would like to take part in the survey.

Sincerely,

Kismet K. Matthews
Liberty University Doctoral Candidate
████████████████████

APPENDIX E

Consent

Title of the Project: Boards of Trustees and Senior Level Administrators' Experience with Presidential Turnover in the Higher Education System: A Case Study

Principal Investigator: Kismet K. Matthews, EdS, EdD (abd), Liberty University

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. In order to participate, you must be 1. a member of the ████████████████████████████ or, 2. Be a Senior-Level ████ Community College Administrator in the position of Chief Financial Officer, Executive Vice-President, or Associate Vice President. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research project.

What is the study about and why is it being done?

The purpose of the study is to explore how leadership styles and funding knowledge impact presidential turnover as experienced by trustees and senior-level administrators using a rural member college of the North Carolina Community College System as the setting. This research aims to explore a gap in literature exploring presidential turnover from the lens of trustees and senior-level administrators. It is important to understand this turnover from the experiences of the trustees and senior-level administrators because it is the duty of the president to embody the mission of the institution and fulfill the role of the chief executive officer.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following things:
1. Participate in an audio-recorded interview. This will take 45-60 minutes.
2. Complete an anonymous online questionnaire. This will take up to 20 minutes.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Benefits to society include the identification of leadership theories related to presidential turnover and leadership at community colleges. Information could be used to guide future presidential searches at community colleges.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records. Data collected from you may be shared for use in future research studies or with other researchers. If data collected from you is shared, any

information that could identify you, if applicable, will be removed before the data is shared.

- Participant questionnaire responses will be anonymous.
- Participant interview responses will be kept confidential through the use of pseudonyms. Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- The interviews will be voice-recorded using a Phillips Voice Tracer device. The device uses an encrypted memory card to store recordings. The device and memory card will be stored in a locked filing cabinet. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.
- The interviews will be structured and use standardized open-ended interview questions. Only the researcher will have access to these recordings.
- I will promote trustworthiness through consistent and unbiased protocols and measures using the following methods: credibility, dependability and confirmability, and transferability.

Does the researcher have any conflicts of interest?

The researcher serves as executive assistant and clerk/recording secretary to the board of trustees and serves as the ethics liaison for trustees and employees of the community college. To limit potential or perceived conflicts, a researcher-side scripted dialogue during the interview sessions will be adhered to as well as pseudonyms assigned to the participants. The questionnaire will be anonymous, so the researcher will not be able to link questionnaire responses to participants. This disclosure is made so that you can decide if this relationship will affect your willingness to participate in this study. No action will be taken against an individual based on his or her decision to participate.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University or ███████████████ If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time.

How to Withdraw from the Study

Anonymous Questionnaire Research: If you choose to withdraw from the study, please exit the survey and close your internet browser. Your responses will not be recorded or included in the study.

Interview Research: If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is Kismet K. Matthews. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact her at

Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu

Your Consent

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

☐ The researcher has my permission to audio record me as part of my participation in this study.

_____   _____
Printed Subject Name   Signature & Date

APPENDIX F
Interview Questions

Standardized Open-Ended Interview Questions

1. Please introduce yourself to me.

2. Please walk me through your position or role with the institution.

3. How would you describe the institutional budgetary knowledge and control needed for a community college president?

4. From your experience, which aspects of budgetary administration is necessary for a community college president to effectively interact with the Board/Administrators?

5. How would you describe effective leadership?

6. In your experience, which leadership qualities and traits in styles work best for a college president?

7. In the past few years, more than half of North Carolina college presidents have separated from the colleges. What experiences can you share about the presidential turnover occurring in North Carolina?

8. How would you describe your experiences with presidential leadership style as it relates to institutional funding?

9. From your experience, to what extent does institutional funding and leadership style affect presidential turnover?

10. We have covered a lot of ground in our conversation, and I so appreciate the time you have given to this. One final question… What else do you think would be important for me to know about your experiences of presidential turnover?

APPENDIX G
Electronic Questionnaire

Deductive Questionnaire

1. Explain how understanding the institutional budget is a factor of presidential turnover whether voluntary or involuntary?

2. How should the college prepare and orientate incoming presidents?

3. Describe how a president's leadership style can impact an institution in both positive and negative manners?

4. Explain what presidential fit means to you.