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## Transformational leadership strategies in U.S. public universities

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Pepperdine University  
Graduate School of Education and Psychology

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES IN U.S. PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

A dissertation presented in partial satisfaction  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

by

Jason C. Hardman

May, 2023

Laura Hyatt, Ed.D – Dissertation Chairperson

This dissertation, written by

Jason C. Hardman

under the guidance of a Faculty Committee and approved by its members, has been submitted to and accepted by the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

Doctoral Committee:

Laura Hyatt, Ed.D., Chairperson

Paul Sparks, Ph.D.

Latrissa Lee Neiworth, Ed.D.

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## VITA

Jason Hardman is a highly accomplished Data Scientist with over 18 years of management experience. He began his career at Costco Wholesale, where he worked his way up to the position of General Manager before pivoting his career to the information technology industry.

Jason holds two Bachelor's degrees, one in Computer Science and the other in Finance, in addition to an MBA and a Master of Science in Data Science and Analytics. As a Data Scientist, he is highly skilled in data analysis, statistics, and machine learning. His proficiency in data visualization, programming languages such as Python and R, and database management systems enable him to analyze complex data sets and derive insights that drive business decisions.

Throughout his career, Jason has demonstrated a commitment to excellence and a passion for innovation. He is a respected leader and skilled collaborator, having worked with stakeholders across various industries to achieve common goals. His contributions to the field of data science and analytics have had a positive impact on organizations, enabling them to make data-driven decisions that improve operational efficiency, reduce costs, and enhance customer satisfaction.

## ABSTRACT

This qualitative study explores the transformational leadership strategies used by university leaders to transform their respective institutions of higher education in the post-pandemic era. The study builds on Bass's (1985a) transformational leadership model, and the guiding research question is, "What transformational leadership strategies do university leaders use to transform university environments?" The study utilizes a narrative inquiry approach to collect and analyze data from publicly available and accessible sources. The data analysis highlights four themes of transformational leadership practices, including idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.

The findings reveal that transformational leaders exhibit high moral standards, personal magnetism, and tenacity in their pursuits to influence others. They also nurture a growth mindset, forward thinking, and a culture of excellence to motivate others. Furthermore, they promote learning and discovery, progressive collaboration cultures, effective critical thinking, and out-of-the-box thinking to stimulate creativity. Lastly, they create an individualized connection, acknowledge and validate feelings, take a personalized approach, and enable employees to show individualized consideration. This study contributes to the body of knowledge on transformational leadership in higher education and provides insights for university leaders to lead their teams more effectively in a rapidly changing global economy. The study concludes with a discussion of the principal results, conclusions, and applications.

## **Chapter 1: Transformational Leadership in U.S. Higher Education**

### **Background**

Dramatic changes in the political, social, and economic spheres are taking place, and these changes have an impact on society on a large scale. Globalization and competition are creating an environment of uncertainty in all sectors of the markets. Leaders are needed to help remedy the uncertainty and continuously changing environment. The success of every business depends on good leadership, according to Bolman and Deal (2017); however, there is little research on effective leadership in higher education (Bryman, 2007; Spendlove, 2007). Most leadership research focuses on the impacts and consequences of using different leadership styles and techniques outside educational institutions. Higher education institutions are responsible for broadening their environmental knowledge and awareness and implementing important organizational changes to survive and develop in the modern world. The role of higher education leaders who guide higher education institutions toward the future, comprehend the demands of the surrounding environment, and appropriate support reforms become more of a focal point. The university leaders have the power to improve the staff's quality of life while also raising the organization's knowledge and fairness levels and improving student results. Moreover, leaders in the higher education sector need to "identify and monitor developments that are relevant to the relationship between American society and higher education in the short to medium term, and to do so in the context of the probabilities of transformational change" (d'Ambrosio et al., 2007, p. 67).

The role of higher education's leaders is critical to navigating through the issues of alignment and transformation. They must read the signs; must determine whether today's "moment in history" is one of alignment or transformation; and must frame an appropriate response. Institutional leaders—presidents and chancellors—are in higher education's trenches, and, as this panel so clearly shows, the most effective leaders are adept at alignment, recognize a crisis when they see it, and can respond appropriately. (d'Ambrosio et al., 2007, p. 67)

The leadership of great transformational leaders results in a growth in the moral maturity of the followers they are leading. Avolio and Bass (2002) ascertained, "Transformational leaders motivate others to do more than they originally intended and often even more than they thought possible. Such leaders set more challenging expectations and typically achieve higher performances" (p. 1). Those who follow them are given the tools they need to take on leadership roles. The range of the interests of the group they lead is expanded and widened by them. They promote the success of the group by encouraging their friends, colleagues, subordinates, clients, and even their superiors to put the needs of the group, organization, or society above their own personal interests. Transformational leaders deal with each follower's self-worth in order to encourage each one to give the work at hand their sincere commitment and full participation (Avolio & Bass, 2002).

In the higher education sector, transformative leaders may be able to increase their organization's performance even while operating in a turbulent and unpredictable environment. The traits of transformational leadership have the ability to provide higher education organizations with a strategic competitive edge while producing positive results.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The future of universities is of concern; except for a small number of colleges with substantial endowments, the majority are in dire straits. One of the primary reasons is that public funding for higher education has decreased since the 1980s. In recent years, the decrease in

funding for higher education has been partly a result of a financial crisis in the federal and state governments.

On average, states supply only more than one third of public colleges' revenues. However, these funds generally pay most basic instructional costs, such as faculty and staff salaries, and state support remains critical to public institutions. According to Zusman (2005), state funding for higher education will likely continue to decline and be unpredictable over the course of the next decade due to a combination of severe state financial limits, conflicting demands for state resources, and continual shifts in public opinion. Public institutions will be hit harder because they typically have less access to private funding sources, despite that many private colleges are also experiencing severe financial difficulties as a result of rising costs, market restrictions on tuition increases, decreased private giving, and declining endowment income (Zusman, 2005).

In addition, there is a significant deal of concern on campuses over the shift to online education. Duderstadt (1999) argued that the public's support for fundamental university values, including academic freedom, tenure, open enrollment, and ethnic diversity, is generally declining. In other areas of society, this tendency is evident. Faculty members are experiencing increased stress as a result of the rising demands of grantsmanship and changing curricula, which are forcing them to spend more time away from the physical classrooms.

Because of the growing specialization of academic subjects, they are also afraid that public research support will decline and the scholarly community will dissipate. Since society and its elected officials increasingly regard a college degree as an individual benefit determined by the goals of the market rather than the more fundamental requirements of a democratic society, the concept that higher education as a public good is being called into doubt.

Additionally, the federal government has changed student financial assistance programs from grants to loans and tax incentives, intended to appeal more to the marketplace and middle-class voters rather than increase access to higher education. Loans and tax incentives have replaced grants in the federal government's student financial assistance schemes.

Moreover, the coronavirus pandemic has crippled public and private postsecondary educational institutions, small, medium, and large. The reaction of the majority of schools and universities to stay financially solvent has been to raise tuition rates drastically, pushing students to incur substantial debt and jeopardizing access to higher education for those from low- and middle-income households. Many students struggle to afford college costs, and governments have, to varied degrees, offered assistance, often in the form of loans. It's unknown what higher education will look like in 10 years. Tierney (2021) asserted that even in the present day, when higher education is facing many crises, around 5% of the 4,000 postsecondary institutions are predicted to close. Unquestionably notable, the closure of 200 institutions does not represent the instability and disruption of the higher education system.

Additionally, higher education institutions are being pushed to reform and adapt to a continuously changing environment because of the rising cost of higher education and the ongoing effects of the COVID pandemic. Without question, most colleges and universities are updating their curriculum to address the challenges brought on by a changing world. They are changing so that they may better assist future generations. However, the majority are modifying their work within the parameters of the role's traditional concept, in line with the time-honored rituals of careful reflection and consensus building that have long been connected to the university (Duderstadt, 1999). Many interconnected changes appear to be occurring, including the demise of traditional academic disciplines, a redefining of the traditional academic role with



the elimination of tenure, corporatization of research, a decline in public funding, and competition from educational institutions that did not even exist 10 years ago (Tierney, 2021).

In the academic sector, the salary of university presidents has soared, quite similar to what has happened in the business world. In contrast, in order to preserve institutions' operational costs, compensation to faculty has fallen. Additionally, as assessed by quantitative outcomes such as American College Testing (ACT) or Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) scores, finding the best students becomes of the highest significance since fewer faculty seats are available because of budget cuts (Tierney, 2021).

Moreover, Tierney (2021) claimed that when seen from a different perspective, full-time instructors are viewed as ineffective, and issues such as promoting diversity and equality are viewed as having less significance than they formerly had. In addition, institutions and higher education programs have long focused on satisfying their students' needs. However, in recent times, even this fundamental principle has been called into doubt.

When it comes to the needs of students in higher education, Tierney (2021) asserted that the United States of America has been fighting to guarantee that all citizens have equal access to higher education ever since the adoption of Morrill's Land Grant Act in the year 1862. Until recently, only affluent males had access to a college education. Even though significant advancements have been made in society, many still believe that the issues with education correlated with poverty cannot be solved.

Moreover, Douglass (2011) postulated that the chance of obtaining a job after graduation has decreased rather than increased as the 21st century progresses, and the democratic advantage of a college education has all but disappeared. One of the primary motives for pursuing a college degree was to get employment. However, the primary reason students enroll in college or

university nowadays is to keep a competitive edge in the employment market.

The stagnant enrollments in higher education also reflect rising student debt and diminishing career prospects, exacerbating colleges' financial woes and the broader economic condition. The rising expense of universities has lately resulted in the rise of online courses with no initial cost to students, which casts more questions on the future of traditional in-person colleges and universities (Heller, 2016). Online programs via the Internet offer the possibility and risk of cutting a significant percentage of the high labor and fixed capital expenses incurred by traditional university campuses (Heller, 2016). The physical campus will still exist despite market forces, but rising tuition fees may make conventional education out of reach for anyone except the wealthy.

As a result of a delayed response to change, the higher education institution is transforming in unanticipated and adverse ways while at the same time developing new institutional forms that have the capacity to challenge the conventional wisdom about universities (Duderstadt, 1999). In the United States, higher education is clearly on a precarious trajectory that will significantly impact the nation's political and economic climate (Heller, 2016). Colleges and universities must adapt to the changing needs of society in the 21st century not just to remain competitive in the global economy but also to assist societies in remaining committed to democratic ideals (Tierney, 2021).

### **Purpose and Importance of the Study**

This qualitative study's objective is to gain a deeper understanding of the transformational leadership strategies currently being used in universities in the United States in the 21st century. Additionally, by focusing attention on institutions that provide organizational leadership doctoral programs in hybrid or online formats, which deviate from the norm of the

traditional university, this study hopes to shed light on how university leaders in the 21st century change their organizations using transformational leadership concepts and apply them to the organization. In addition, this research investigates the ways in which universities in the United States of America have changed during the modern era. By researching and gaining a greater understanding of the transformational strategies and the beneficial outcomes connected with these approaches, university leaders will be better equipped to lead, pivot, and transform their institutions to thrive in the 21st century.

### **Theoretical Basis**

The transformational leadership model proposed by Bass (1985a) originated from military training, in which commanders impart their prior knowledge to followers and encourage their action using several techniques, ranging from motivational speeches to careful consideration of each individual's circumstances. Fundamentally, transformational leadership is a method through which a leader may affect followers by changing their perception of what is significant. It is not merely a collection of qualities or traits; instead, it is a dynamic, constantly evolving way of being concerned with oneself, other people, the circumstance, and the overall context. Others are motivated by transformational leaders to produce what would be seen as outstanding outcomes. Leaders and followers interact with one another, encourage one another, and inspire one another. Value systems, emotional intelligence, and an awareness of each person's spiritual side are all components of transformational leadership.

It recognizes the organization's humanity and connects with the organization's fundamental essence. Transformational leadership raises "human conduct and ethical aspirations of both the leader and the led and, thus, has a transforming effect on both" (Burns, 2010, pp. 31-32). According to Bass (1985b), transformational leadership inspires organizations to persevere

in tough, stressful, and unexpected circumstances.

An aim to build a common understanding among staff members of how the company should contribute to what is seen as good results is what distinguishes transformational leadership behaviors. As a result of the leader's ambition to activate employees' higher-order demands, transformational leadership conceptualizes activities that seek to satisfy employees' higher-order wants to include them in accomplishing the organization's goals.

Even though additional studies keep advancing the theory of transformational leadership, this study focuses on the Bernard Bass model of transformational leadership. The literature reviews surrounding the transformational leadership model of the Bass model comprise four main central tenets. Transformational leadership is measured on four dimensions: (a) idealized influence, sometimes referred to as charisma; (b) inspiring motivation; (c) intellectual stimulation; and (d) individual consideration (Bass, 1985a).

### **Research Questions**

This research seeks to comprehend how university leaders modify their organizations. The study seeks to investigate this objective by establishing the following research questions:

The main question for this study, "What transformational leadership strategies do university leaders use to transform university environments?"

Subquestions are as follows:

- RQ 1: What transformational leadership strategies are practiced by university leaders to influence others?
- RQ 2: What transformational leadership strategies are practiced by university leaders to motivate others?
- RQ 3: What transformational leadership strategies are practiced by university leaders to stimulate creativity?
- RQ 4: What transformational leadership strategies are practiced by university leaders

to create individualized consideration?

## **Methods**

This study employs a qualitative design utilizing narratives in the data collection process. This study employs Bass's (1985a) transformational leadership model as the foundation for the theoretical framework to explore the main research question: What transformational leadership strategies do university leaders use to transform university environments? A university environment in this study is defined as an organizational culture and structure designed to adapt to changes while being financially sustainable and efficient to optimize the results for its students, professors, staff, and the larger knowledge driven community (Duderstadt, 2009).

The university leaders chosen for the study hold leadership or management positions with titles related to leadership, such as president, chancellor, vice president, provost, dean, and chair, with the subsequent selection of those with the highest organizational rank. Moreover, the study's sampling criteria, outlined in chapter three, intends to take a holistic view of transformational leadership strategies with the selection of seven to ten U.S. public university leaders from the doctorate granting and higher categorizations. Because this is a non-human subject study, transformational leadership strategies were collected from a variety of publicly available and accessible sources, including books, websites, journals, and news articles.

## **Ethical Considerations**

According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), ethical concerns need to be anticipated while doing research, since research entails gathering data from people and about people. The confidentiality of the participants' personal information is a very important aspect of the research ethics involved in this project. The researcher will not make use of any names, titles, or the names of organizations for the purposes of this study. Instead, the specific people will be

referred to as university leaders by the researcher. People who occupy the post of a dean or a higher-level administrative role will be considered leaders at universities for this research.

By giving the university leaders being studied a numerical ID, the researcher will further obscure their identity and maintain their anonymity. For the first research question, the first university leader used will be noted as A1, the second as A2, the third as A3, and so on. The list of university leaders will be kept confidential by the researcher in an electronic folder that is preserved on a separate, password-protected computer. This computer will be locked up when not in use, and all data with personal identifiable information will be permanently deleted after the study has concluded. Chapter 3 of this research paper provides a comprehensive summary of the procedures used in the study to safeguard the identity of the university officials who were the subject of the research.

### **Assumptions and Limitations**

This section discusses the study's key assumptions, limitations, and delimitations. Assumptions, according to Roberts and Hyatt (2019), are things that the research makes assumptions about or takes for granted. The key assumptions in the study are as follows:

- The current study is well suited for a qualitative narrative study
- The number of selected sources used was adequate to provide appropriate conclusions and complete answers to the research questions.
- The sources chosen were based on the appropriate job role level

The ability of a researcher to generalize the results may be impacted by the study's limitations (Roberts & Hyatt, 2019). The limitations of the study are as follows:

- Only public universities with similar stature and online or hybrid doctoral degrees are used in the research.

## **Significance of the Research**

The production of knowledge, as well as teaching, research, and service continue to be the primary focus of higher education in the United States. This goal has not altered in recent decades. Graduates of 4-year colleges tend to have better health and amass more money throughout the course of their lives, which is one of the most significant economic benefits of having a degree. Even though the COVID-19 pandemic caused an unprecedented disruption in the higher education industry, the industry had issues prior to the pandemic, such as low completion rates, problems of diversity and achievement, and rising student debt, with repayment issues that caused an unsustainable burden for the student. Looking at the American college student, “Almost 33 percent of enrolled students leave college without degrees. Americans hold \$1.6 trillion in student debt” (Paterno, 2022, para. 5). These problems were brought into further focus by the COVID-19 pandemic, which also brought attention to campus operations being suspended, calling into question whether it is financially beneficial to attend school in person. Universities have had to alter their teaching models to incorporate remote learning and other methods of delivery in order to assist their students as a consequence of the disruption caused by the pandemic. Because of the shift in educational models, universities are facing financial difficulties they have never experienced, including a loss of revenue from ancillary businesses such as parking and dining, refunds on tuition and room and board, and additional costs associated with scaling their online environments to meet demand. Additionally, the uncertainty around how many students will enroll in programs and the attrition brought on by switching to an online environment add to the financial strain on colleges. According to Belkin (2022), universities' expectations for a post-Covid comeback were dashed when college enrollment fell for the third straight school year following the onset of the pandemic.

Because of the COVID-19 leveling competition in the higher education sector, institutions have the chance to differentiate themselves from their competitors and enhance their reputation among prospective students by placing emphasis on factors such as student diversity, student outcomes, faculty development, enhancing research capabilities, improving facilities, and having a positive impact on the community. Higher education institutions may differentiate themselves while also becoming more formidable and improving their capacity to offer high-quality programs and results if they first identify the areas in which they excel and then focus resources to assist those areas. However, the focus on the leader's involvement in these important matters is lacking in the present research.

This study's importance lies in its ability to provide insight into how transformational leadership helps university leaders lead more effectively. The main research question in this study is, "What transformational leadership strategies do university leaders use to transform university environments?" While there is a wealth of information available on transformational leadership, there is currently a dearth of published material on how university administrators employ this style of leadership post pandemic in the 21st century. This research also looks at several transformative strategies university administrators use to affect enrollment positively.

### **Definition of Terms**

- *Accreditation* is a process that involves the official recognition of an individual's or an organization's competence to perform a specific task or fulfill a certain status. Accreditation agencies, which are private educational bodies, establish assessment criteria and conduct peer evaluations to assess whether these standards are met. When an educational program or institution seeks and satisfies the review of an accrediting agency, it is granted accreditation status (Department of Education, 2022,



- para. 1).
- *Civic engagement* pertains to the ways in which members of a society participate in communal affairs with the objective of enhancing the well-being of others or influencing the trajectory of the community's development (Adler & Goggin, 2005; Putnam, 2020).
  - *College* is a tertiary education institution providing academic, vocational, and professional education in one particular area ( Encyclopedia Britannica, n.d.-a, Filho et al., 2020).
  - *Common good* entails a set of circumstances, goods, and values that are collectively advantageous or desirable for the majority, if not all, members of a given society, regardless of whether these goods or values originate from public or private sources. The core of this concept lies in the acknowledgement and respect for the fundamental rights of all individuals (Dorn, 2017; Heller, 2016; Labaree, 2017).
  - *Coercive power* pertains to the capacity to impose upon another individual something that they are averse to, or to deprive them of or reduce access to things that they value (Bass & Bass, 2008; Cartwright, 1978).
  - *Distance education* is web-based, and computer-assisted training included in online learning, which is technology-based education. It is a teaching strategy made available via a variety of environments and instructional units that explicitly prepares interaction and communication between educators and students in situations when standard teaching and learning approaches restrict the use of classroom activities (Filho et al., 2020; Hentea et al., 2003; Teixeira & Shin, 2020).
  - *Dual-mode universities* are universities that educate both on-campus and off-campus

- students at the same time, and often the same admission standards apply to both groups of students. The dual-mode model's fundamental tenet is that, by using the proper channels of communication, the same curriculum may be made available to students on and off campus (Filho et al., Hentea et al., 2003; 2020; Teixeira & Shin, 2020).
- *Higher education* encompasses diverse forms of educational instruction and training offered in tertiary-level educational institutions, which culminate in the conferment of a recognized degree, diploma, or certificate upon completion of a program of study. In addition to traditional universities and colleges, higher-educational institutions also comprise professional schools that specialize in various disciplines, such as law, theology, medicine, business, music, and art, among others. Moreover, teacher-training schools, junior colleges, and institutes of technology also fall under the purview of higher education. The customary prerequisite for admission into most higher-educational institutions is the fulfillment of secondary education requirements, typically at the age of 18. (Encyclopedia Britannica, n.d.-c).
  - *Employability* is the ability to know how to look for, find, and keep a job or a position and underline the centrality of skills in career organization (Boffo, 2019).
  - *Expert power* pertains to the capacity to provide another individual with information, knowledge, or specialized expertise. This type of power is wielded by those who possess a high level of proficiency or mastery in a particular field or domain, and who are able to leverage their expertise to influence or persuade others (Bass & Bass, 2008; Cartwright, 1978).
  - *Followers* are those toward whom leadership is directed; the term followers is used

- to distinguish the specific individuals who are doing work (Bass & Bass, 2008; Burns, 2010).
- *Hybrid education* is a method used by higher education organizations that combines online and offline activity. The online and in-person elements of the course work in harmony with one another in a hybrid learning environment. The tasks completed online supplement those carried out in the classroom (Hentea et al., 2003).
  - *Influence* refers to the capacity of a superior-level manager to exert their power over subordinates who occupy lower hierarchical positions. Influence constitutes an indispensable element of effective leadership, since without it, the very concept of leadership would cease to exist (Bass & Bass, 2008; Burns, 1978; Cartwright, 1978; Northouse, 2015).
  - *Knowledge* is the theoretical or practical comprehension of a topic or fact or the state of knowing something with familiarity earned by experience or association; facts, knowledge, and abilities acquired via experience or education; knowledge of or proficiency in science, art, or method (Bass & Bass, 2008; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Burns, 1978; Easterlin, 1981; Gibbons et al., 2010; Heller, 2016; Northouse, 2015).
  - *Leader* is an individual who assumes a variety of roles, such as a role model, mentor, facilitator, or teacher, to inspire and guide followers, to enable them to join a group, and to motivate them to undertake tasks (Bass & Bass, 2008; Bryman, 2014; Burns, 1978; Northouse, 2015; Weber et al., 1947).
  - *Leadership* involves a dynamic and ongoing process whereby an individual leverages their abilities, traits, or skills to exert an impact upon a group of individuals, thereby steering them towards the attainment of a shared objective (Bass & Bass, 2008;

Bryman, 2014; Burns, 2010; Northouse, 2015; Yukl & Gardner, 2020).

- *Legitimate power* pertains to the authority wielded by a leader based on their designated position within a given organizational structure (Bass & Bass, 2008; Burns, 1978; Cartwright, 1978; Northouse, 2015).
- *Massification* refers to the expeditious surge in student registration witnessed during the latter part of the 20th century (Gumport, 1997; Scott, 1995).
- *Motive* is a particular state of physiological or psychological arousal that channels an organism's energy toward a goal or a rationale that is presented as an explanation for or cause of the conduct of a person (Bass & Bass, 2008; Burns, 2010; Northouse, 2015).
- *Neoliberalism* is an ideology that promotes free-market capitalism and seeks to transfer economic control from the government to the private sector (Hastings, 2019; Heller, 2016; Henry, 2010; Tierney, 2021; Tomlinson & Lipsitz, 2013).
- *Online education* is synonymous with distance education; e-learning is a teaching strategy where neither the students nor the instructors meet in person at any time throughout the course but instead uses a computer and/or the Internet. As a result, no physical classroom is required for in-person course sessions. Zoom allows instructors and students to meet at a predetermined time virtually. Synchronous and asynchronous learning approaches (Encyclopedia Britannica, n.d.-b).
- *Postcolonialism* refers to the critical analysis of the cultural, political, and economic implications of colonialism and imperialism, with a particular emphasis on the consequences of human oppression and exploitation of colonized populations and their territories. This theoretical framework involves a critical examination of the

- history, culture, literature, and rhetoric of imperial powers, particularly those of European origin (Gandhi, 2018; Hickling-Hudson et al., 2004; Spivak, 1999).
- *Power* represents a dynamic process by which an individual leverages their abilities, resources, or status to exert an impact upon a group of individuals, thereby steering them towards the attainment of a shared objective (Bass & Bass, 2008; Burns, 1978; Cartwright, 1978).
  - *Public good* refers to a good or service that is provided to all members of a community without the expectation of profit, by either public or private sector companies (Marginson, 2011; Tannock, 2006; Tierney, 2021).
  - *Referent power* refers to leaders who are liked, respected, and esteemed. Followers want to identify with leaders who have referent power and be accepted by the leader (Bass & Bass, 2008; Burns, 1978; Cartwright, 1978).
  - *Reward power* is the ability to administer to another person things they desire or to remove or decrease things they do not desire (Bass & Bass, 2008; Burns, 1978; Cartwright, 1978).
  - *Situational leadership* denotes a leadership methodology in which a leader adapts their leadership style to align with the prevailing circumstances or the requirements of a team (Bass & Bass, 2008; Bolman & Deal, 2017; Bryman, 2014; Hiebert & Klatt, 2001; McCleskey, 2014; Yukl & Gardner, 2020).
  - *Specialized institutions* are educational institutions in which a significant proportion of degree programs offered are focused on a particular discipline or a cluster of interrelated disciplines (The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, n.d.).

- *Socioeconomic status* is a multidimensional construct that captures an individual's or group's relative social position or class, commonly evaluated by a composite of measures such as education, income, and occupation (American Psychological Association, n.d.-a; Bass & Bass, 2008).
- *Social mobility* refers to the process of movement by individuals, families, or groups within a social stratification system, from one social status to another (Burns, 2010; Cowen et al., 2009; Encyclopedia Britannica, n.d.-e; Perna, 2020; Teixeira & Shin, 2020).
- *Transactional leadership* is a management approach that emphasizes structure, oversight, and a system of incentives and punishments to achieve objectives (Bass & Bass, 2008; Bolman & Deal, 2017; Bryman, 2014; Burns, 1978).
- *Transformational leadership* is a dynamic process in which leaders and followers engage in reciprocal interactions that inspire and elevate both parties to develop and act upon shared values and visions, leading to heightened motivation and moral reasoning (Bass & Bass, 2008; Bolman & Deal, 2017; Bryman, 2014; Burns, 2010).
- *Truth* pertains to the inherent quality of sentences, assertions, beliefs, thoughts, or propositions, which, in the context of conventional discourse, align with factual reality or effectively articulate veracity (Bass & Bass, 2008; Encyclopedia Britannica, n.d.-f; Bowen & Schuster, 1986; Burns, 1978; Hickling-Hudson et al., 2004; Hinkin & Tracey, 1999; Kerr, 1991).
- *Trust* is faith in someone or something's reliability. In interpersonal relationships, trust is the belief that one person or group of people has in the dependability of another person or group; more precisely, it is the level to which each party believes they can rely on the

other side to keep their word (American Psychological Association, n.d.-b; Bass & Bass, 2008; Bryman, 2014; Northouse, 2015; Olssen, 2004; Putnam, 2020).

- *University* is an institution of higher learning with the power to award degrees in a variety of academic subjects that often consists of a college of liberal arts and sciences, graduate, and professional schools. A university differs from a college in that it frequently has a wider curriculum, offers graduate and professional degrees in addition to undergraduate ones, and is frequently larger. (Encyclopedia Britannica, n.d.-g).

## **Summary**

Chapter 1 provided an introduction to the historical context of colleges in the United States, which led to the challenges that universities are confronting in the 21st century. It focused on transformational leadership and how it is utilized in universities, as well as the theoretical framework, research questions, assumptions, constraints, the relevance of the study, and operational definitions. Additionally, it discusses the significance of the study.

Chapter 2 then follows and examines the relevant literature. In addition, it shows the characteristics shared by university leaders who are transforming their universities in the 21st century.

In Chapter 3, the research methodology is further elaborated upon by examining the following topics: the methodological approach and study design in connection to the study's purpose, data sources, data collecting instruments, procedures, and data analysis. The findings of the research are presented and discussed in Chapter 4. In the last section of the study, Chapter 5, conclusions are drawn by elaborating on the findings of the research, discussing the ramifications of those findings, and emphasizing its proposals.

## Chapter 2: Review of Literature

To fulfill its mission in the dynamic environment of the 21st century, the modern university's purpose is to evolve with the world around it. To remain relevant in the ever-changing context of higher education, university administrators must be able to reform their institutions. Goldin (1999) stated that the education and training of individuals, both locally and internationally, is a significant contributor to economic development and productivity. Education directly affects a person's productivity levels and, therefore, their income, since it gives information that can be used daily. In addition to developing originality and innovation, education paves the way for the expedited distribution of technical advances. The introduction of new technologies has altered the purpose of education; although certain technologies have imposed stringent cognitive requirements on employees, others have made it possible for machines to substitute human expertise. Without formal education and basic literacy, a democratic republic cannot operate. In addition, formal education strengthens the sense of community connection among individuals. Education aids people in better understanding and appreciating their surroundings, making it a kind of pure consumer good. Therefore, education has the capacity to influence a population's political structure, economics, culture, and aspects of their personal and religious lives.

The literature review starts with the history of modern universities from European civilizations leading into evolution and segmentation throughout the years of the segments. The literature review breaks down the categories of degrees offered in higher education. It leads into a discussion of the diverse conceptions of the role that universities are supposed to play in society. The next portion of the literature review is titled "Competition and Capitalism," It provides an in-depth analysis of the myriad of aspects and points of view that have played a role



in shaping the higher education sectors throughout the course of recent history. Following the preceding part is the section titled “Leadership,” which highlights the numerous leadership styles that are used in higher education, with transformational leadership being the primary emphasis of this research. This leadership is then broken down into the four I’s that are a part of the theory, and it is eventually disassembled so that more comprehension may be gained. The last part of this chapter discusses mobility and the ways in which the higher education industry influences the myriad of factors that contribute to the possibility of upward social mobility for students. This section concludes with the rising requirement for leadership in higher education to be capable of reorienting itself and adapting to the environment’s fast pace of change.

### **History and Purpose**

The history of the modern university can be traced to the Greeks, Romans, and Christians and the foundation laid for American civilization. Universities were an enduring legacy of medieval European civilization. The University of Paris took form in the 12th century and inspired the formation of similar organizations at Oxford and Cambridge. Additionally, another element has been essential in shaping schooling religious convictions. Geiger (2015) declared that these institutions began as groups of clerical scholars, or masters, who taught and certified their pupils to teach. They became the first Northern European universities when Popes or monarchs gave them separate legal incorporation and accorded them the right to confer degrees.

Moreover, Geiger (2015) ascertained, “Appreciation of this new cultural aim penetrated the English universities by the latter fifteenth century. They gradually incorporated the study of Greek, more extensive reading of classical literature, and greater emphasis on rhetoric and oratory” (p. 9). The expanding number of affluent families who wanted to raise their kids to be not just gentlemen but also men of means went for this education. The restructuring of the

English university organization accelerated this growth. Academics at English universities started to acknowledge the relevance of this new cultural purpose by the later part of the 15th century (Geiger, 2015). The United States of America appropriated numerous European educational concepts and institutions, but they were adjusted to American standards. The educational system in the United States, on practically every level, was more focused on application and practical experience than the educational system in Europe (Goldin,1999).

Geiger (2015) expressed that higher education in North America was conceptualized for the first time on October 28, 1636, when the General Court of Massachusetts Bay decided to invest £400 toward establishing a college. The leaders of the Puritan movement aimed to provide education on par with the training they had received at Oxford and Cambridge. As a direct consequence of the General Court of Massachusetts Bay donation, Harvard was established, and its first commencement ceremony took place in 1642, 6 years after the first donation was made.

It is generally considered that Harvard University, which originally opened its doors in 1638, was the first American institution of higher education to be established. The opening of Harvard is seen as the catalyst for establishing institutions like universities in the United States. Religious beliefs have played a crucial role in the formation of both public and private education, even in the United States, where there is a long tradition of church-state separation. Labaree (2017) claimed that the American College of the 19th century was a local institution. It was sometimes established to benefit a particular religious group rather than further higher education. In regions with no preminent religious organization and where everyone had to fight for visibility, rank, and membership, it was essential to establish educational institutions to propagate the religion and spread the faith.

Additionally, governmental initiatives contributed to the growth of higher education. The earliest of several similar legislative measures was the Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862, which “set aside federal lands to create colleges to benefit the agricultural and mechanical arts” (U.S. Senate, 2020, para. 1). The fundamental idea behind the land-grant movement was that for equality and freedom to exist, all men needed the opportunity to engage in all endeavors to the best of their abilities (Silva & Nevins, 1962).

As more states entered the union, the original statute was amended, according to Goldin (1999), to increase the size of the land allocations. University financing for land-grant institutions was created annually in 1890 by the second Morrill Act. Withholding payments from states that did not provide Black students facilities indirectly contributed to establishing historically Black colleges and universities. The famed Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862 was one of several pieces of legislation approved during the 37th Congress of the American Civil War that had previously been denied or vetoed and is responsible for the rise of public colleges in the 1870s. Additionally, Silva and Nevins (1962) declared that each state received capital in the form of federal property under the Morrill Land Grant Act, or they could use it to fund, sustain, and maintain at least one institution, with education being the primary goal to “teach agriculture, mechanic arts, and military tactics, without exclusion of literary and scientific studies” (p. 26).

The Morrill Land Grant Act did not create the first state colleges. State institutions of higher learning existed in 19 of the 24 states that were still outside the northeast by 1862, and several states had more than one. The Morrill funds were put to a variety of purposes by the states. Some governments constructed their first institutions or established a second university, while others contributed the money to an already-existing state school (Goldin, 1999). According to Labaree (2017)

In 1790, at the start of the first decade of the new American republic, the United States already had nineteen institutions called colleges or universities. The numbers grew gradually in the first three decades, rising to fifty by 1830, and then started accelerating. They doubled in the 1850s (reaching 250) and doubled again in the following decade (563) and by 1880 totaled 811. (p. 27)

In both the governmental and private sectors, there was a significant uptick in activity in the 1870s and 1890s. Goldin and Katz (1999) stated that the number of 4 year institutes of higher learning that offer B.A.s expanded consistently in the United States during the nineteenth century. According to Goldin (1999), many factors led to widespread access to higher education in the United States around the beginning of the 19th century. One example is that the number of pupils who completed high school increased around the 20th century. The G.I. Bill's availability to World War II and Korean War veterans is another argument in favor of its existence. In conjunction, the widespread usage of the SAT, especially in the 1940s, also contributed to the democratization of the application process for colleges. Furthermore, the 1970s saw an expansion in the number of public junior colleges, sometimes known as community colleges or 2-year schools, making it possible for students with inadequate intellectual and financial resources to pursue higher education. Early on, American schools were publicly funded, accessible, and often lax in their admissions practices, enabling students to attend at any level regardless of age, social position, prior academic performance, or gender.

Demand for higher education has generally increased as a result of ongoing national economic expansion and upward social and economic mobility. Scott (1995) elaborated, "The transition from elite to mass higher education was developed in America" (p. 8). Moreover, Scott (1995) attested that after World War II, the military and private corporations were the two most important institutions in American society, with schools and universities coming in third. These organizations significantly provided the U.S. government with the technical, scientific, and

intellectual resources required to enhance its power after 1945. Higher education in the decades after World War II was predicated on mass education and academic research that mirrored the supremacy of the United States in the international arena. The American educational system was partly shaped by extensive state regulations, a strong commitment to open markets, and planned stratification. Gumport (1997) postulated, “building on the advances made in the 1950s, American higher education showed a period of unprecedented growth—often characterized by the term ‘massification’—during the decade of the 1960s and through the mid-1970s” (p. 2).

Furthermore, according to Heller (2016), these collaborations helped American universities rise to the top of the world’s higher education rankings. The humanities and social science disciplines produced a huge amount of valuable knowledge that contributed in boosting the American economy and political influence. Universities have grown more linked with the world of business as a result of the research that private foundations support. That there are more than 4,000 schools and universities in the United States is a resource that cannot be matched in terms of its educational, scientific, and cultural value. These institutions play a significant role in the American economy and culture. With its elite private institutions, world-class public universities, private colleges, and junior colleges, the American higher education system was a notable accomplishment of a victorious American republic.

Additionally, the development of education accreditation coincided with the expansion of higher education institutions in the 19th century. According to the U.S. Department of Education (2022), accreditation serves to guarantee that institutions of higher learning adhere to established standards of quality. Accreditation is a peer assessment procedure that ensures the legitimacy of the diplomas and credits granted by higher education institutions and involves accreditation commissions with participating institutions to oversee it. There are two fundamental categories

of educational accreditation: institutional and specialized or programmatic. Institutional accrediting organizations evaluate the organizational and academic structures as a whole to determine if the education provided by a college or university complies with quality standards. Programmatic accreditation evaluates the departments, schools, or programs that make up an organization and are subject to specialist accreditation. The recognized unit may be as large as a college or school within a university or as little as the curriculum for a particular topic.

National and regional agencies are the two categories that accredit higher education. The Department of Education holds both organizations equally accountable; the only distinction is in the scope of control. While national organizations may accredit colleges and universities throughout the country, regional organizations only accredit institutions in a particular region (U.S. Department of Education, 2022, para. 7). The historical context of the modern day shows that various types of leadership have affected the university's evolution. By first comprehending and being acquainted with the history of the current institution and then utilizing preset criteria, such as accreditation, which was employed in this research, it may help in grasping the need for transformational leadership of the university.

### ***Segments of Higher Education***

As claimed by Goldin and Katz (1999) a bachelor's degree was often the first professional degree received prior to the beginning of the 20th century. Professional degrees typically need a bachelor's degree, although there are exceptions. These exceptions were because for many professional degrees, such as those in law and medicine, bachelor degrees were not mandatory at the time. Because of this unique characteristic, the undergraduate enrollment and degrees series encompasses the first professional degrees granted up to the middle of the 20th century. Since the turn of the 20th century, junior colleges and community colleges have

undergone significant redesigns to enable students to complete their degrees in as little as 2 years. Most traditional schools offered 2-year curricula and sometimes referred to themselves as teacher preparation programs. Moreover, in the 1920s, several states began expanding such programs to endure for 4 years. In the 1940s and 1950s, most states had already adopted this strategy.

The Carnegie Commission on Higher Education was established by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching in 1967. Because of the lack of differentiation across schools, it was founded to research the most major problems that affect higher education in the United States and make recommendations for possible remedies. The lack of an existing classification system that categorized schools and universities according to the factors most important to their work presented a problem for the committee. Therefore, the commission created a new classification system to meet its analytic needs in 1970. To aid the many individuals and groups researching higher education at the time, it published categorized lists of schools and universities after another 3 years (McCormick & Zhao, 2005).

Under Clark Kerr's direction, the Carnegie Commission developed the categorization scheme. The massive institutional variety within the American higher education sector was one of the purposes of the new categorization system. It also aimed to highlight this diversity. Grouping higher education institutions with comparable characteristics could capture category variation into manageable analytical units. McCormick and Zhao (2005) stated, "The classification provided a way to represent that diversity by grouping roughly comparable institutions into meaningful, analytically manageable categories. It enabled researchers to make reasonable comparisons among 'similar' institutions and to contrast them with groups of 'different' ones" (p. 52). The commission's goal was to create homogeneous groupings of

categories that were relatively comparable in terms of the institutions' objectives and the traits of students and faculty members.

Groups of educational institutions were created based on the kind of students they taught and the purposes for which they were used. The categorization led to the establishment of specialized institutions, master's level universities, undergraduate liberal arts colleges, 2-year colleges, and doctoral universities. Except for 2-year institutions, which were classified as a single group, each category was further separated. Additionally, educational institutions were further divided into groups based on the tasks they had to do and the students they had to train. This objective was achieved by investigating data on degree types and completion rates, government funding sources for research, academic priority areas, mainly undergraduate institutions, admissions competition, and success in preparing students for doctoral programs (McCormick and Zhao, 2005).

In addition, McCormick and Zhao (2005) reported that the majority of the nation's leading research institutions and liberal arts schools were located in a single region. These communities displayed reasonable behavior and a commonsense approach to resolving issues. This, together with the history of the new classification, likely contributed to the widespread acceptance of the established types of schools.

Moreover, since its initial publication in 1973, there have been four updates to the Carnegie Classification to take into account changes in the constellation of institutions brought about by openings, closings, and mergers, as well as changes within the institutions by changes in offerings and activities. Subsequent editions demonstrate the historical development of American higher education (McCormick and Zhao, 2005).



### *Categories*

Doctoral universities are institutions that have issued at least 30 professional practice doctorate degrees in at least two programs that are eligible for consideration. Institutions with less than 20 research/scholarship doctoral degrees during the current year are also eligible for consideration. Exceptions are made for special focus institutions as well as tribal colleges.

Only institutions that had at least \$5 million in total research expenditures and at least 20 doctoral degrees awarded for research or scholarship were considered for the first two categories of this list (National Science Foundation, 2021).

Universities are ranked by the number of research or practices doctorates awarded, the amount of money spent on research, and the number of research faculty:

- R1—Very high research;
- R2—High research activity;
- Doctoral/professional universities;
- Master’s degree colleges and universities;
- Baccalaureate colleges;
- Baccalaureate/associate colleges;
- Associate colleges;
- Special focus research institutions:
  - 2-Years;
  - 4-Years; and
- Tribal colleges and universities.

Higher education universities vary in offerings, with only 600 giving master’s degrees and 260 designated as research institutions. Only 87 of them represent the majority of the annual

56,000 doctorate degrees awarded (Heller, 2016).

### *Learning Environments*

The typical higher education environment has existed from the beginning of school, according to Park and Choi (2014). The traditional environment encompasses instruction between an instructor and a student, where they are both physically in the same classroom. The physical classroom is an essential component that supports students' learning in a traditional higher education institution. The most important aspects influencing students' retention and success are active participation in peer and student-faculty interaction. Cooperative learning's significance in higher education has emphasized deeper learning's value as social, active, contextual, engaging, and student-centered learning.

Furthermore, there is a general trend towards online education due to the increasing demand for scheduling flexibility and the constant emergence of new communication technologies and capabilities. Even before the pandemic, the fundamental concept of online education was already being explored for use in higher education. Cox (2005) indicated that advocates designate online learning as the driving force and model for transformation in teaching, learning, and formal schooling. Because the COVID-19 pandemic devastated higher education, Gallagher and Palmer (2020) contended that the abrupt shift to remote learning brought on by campus closures revealed the distributed adoption of superior educational technology and digital capabilities across hundreds of institutions and universities. The tumultuous semesters during COVID, which featured postponed campus openings and starkly dissimilar online and hybrid options, have only increased the urgency of American schools and universities to adapt. Hentea et al., (2003) asserted:

The term blended learning or hybrid learning refers to learning environments that combine aspects of online and face-to-face instruction. Hybrid learning combines the best

of both worlds: the social support of classroom learning and the flexibility of distance learning outside the classroom. (p. 160)

Students learn in ways comparable to conventional face-to-face training when the hybrid online instructional strategy is used (Ernst, 2008).

### ***Purpose of Higher Education in America***

To fully comprehend the goal of higher education in the United States, it is important to adopt a holistic viewpoint of the many definitions offered by academics who influence the industry. Different academics, such as David Labaree, Charles Dorn, Henry Heller, Mark Olssen, Peter Scott, and Richard Easterlin, each have their unique take on why higher education exists. Labaree (2017), in *A Perfect Mess*, suggested that the genius of American higher education stems from its unplanned and unfettered evolution, which he assumes was a result of the operation of the market. Because the states did not support colleges, “the American college in the early to mid-nineteenth century functioned as a private good, with primary benefits going to its founders and graduates but not necessarily to the larger community” (p. 87). Dorn (2017) characterized “higher education’s reorientation toward a social ethos of practicality during the antebellum and Civil War eras” (p. 19). These organizations relied on charitable contributions, and the individuals who gave to them did so specifically to promote what Dorn (2017) referred to as the “common good” (p. 1).

According to Labaree (2017), after the Cold War, a new idea emerged about higher education: it should primarily focus on serving the public interest. In the public interest, community colleges, regional universities, and metropolitan institutions received a disproportionate amount of state funding as a result of their locations, despite that there was a correlation between the government’s funding of graduate education and research and the

objective of increasing social access. As a result, these investments were a reflection of the personal aspirations of prospective students to better their socioeconomic conditions (Geiger, 2019).

The foundation of Heller's (2016) critique of postwar higher education is a traditional Marxist understanding of American society, the economy, and the government. Heller focused on the development of academic knowledge and how it affected institutions. He asserted that postwar higher education had been dominated by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), large businesses, and for-profit foundations. Nevertheless, the emphasis on methodological individualism, social stability, and disciplinary specialization completely altered Marxism and the idea of class struggle and historical transformation (Geiger, 2019). Subsequently, Heller (2016) stated "real advances were made in the creation of new knowledge across the board, and this new knowledge, however instrumental and ideological, was nonetheless quite real," although, in his opinion, this knowledge was "fragmented" and "based on a division of labor between compartmentalized departments" and "isolated from the extraordinary explosion of creative Marxist thought in the rest of the world in the 1950s" (pp. 88–89).

An alternative view of higher education provided by Olssen (2004) stated, "The purpose of education is to help construct a socially established normative culture that provides security and builds the capabilities for democracy" (p. 263). These could include political action, meeting process, legal eristic, and debating skills. In addition, trust and civility standards are required to uphold the law and meet the restrictions imposed by contestability and debate. On the other hand, Scott (1995) asserted that higher education, in a broader sense, is still a distinctive category, a coherent conceptualization because its project is to emancipate its students through critical self-reflection. He further argued that by institutionalizing these values of critical theory,

higher education has become a key instrument in maintaining an open society. In contrast, Easterlin (1981) suggested

major advances in mass education are thus likely to signal sizable changes both in incentive structures and aptitudes favorable to modern economic growth. At the same time they are symptomatic of powerful new political and ideological forces at work in the cultures of the various countries. (p. 14)

Therefore, the educational system is a key connection between contemporary economic progress and a society's culture. When the balance of the main cultural forces in society moves in a way that is beneficial to economic development, it may be determined by studying the growth of mass education (Easterlin, 1981).

Wai (2019) contended that the purpose and goals of higher education are constantly evolving, despite the disparate explanations given to it by various academic experts. Even with the myriad of defined purposes by academic scholars, educational institutions such as schools, colleges, and universities' main goal is to encourage and facilitate the dissemination of general knowledge. Additionally, Wai (2019) ascertained that higher education may be a way of attaining many different things, such as career success, community engagement, and public service, including developing students' social skills, critical thinking ability, empathy, and commitment to civic participation. In the beginning, the objectives of public schools in the United States were threefold: first, to provide students with a solid, moral education that had a religious undercurrent; second, to prepare students for a select group of learned professions, particularly the clergy; and third, to ensure that all children attended school. Later, many aspects of higher education that are commonplace, such as accessibility for students from low-income families, majoring in specific fields of study, extracurricular activities, and faculty research, were created (Wai, 2019).

The influence of objectives comes with the different categorizations in the higher education system; for example, community colleges have other purposes than research institutions. Most of the nearly 3,000 4-year colleges and universities spend most of their time teaching, especially in vocational fields that, in principle, prepare graduates to find jobs. In lower division classes, students will take a few general education courses and have the chance to become involved in extracurricular activities. According to research, social interactions and networking opportunities on campus play a more significant role in students' educational experiences than classroom studies. These interactions allow students to refine their interpersonal skills and establish valuable connections that can serve both utilitarian purposes and personal enrichment. For graduates, their diplomas provide greater marketability in quantitative fields compared to other disciplines (Busteed, n.d.).

Because of the intrinsic complexity of these organizations, it is difficult to provide a succinct description that includes the wide range of activities that take place at universities. Universities have multifaceted roles that extend beyond the mere instruction of courses. They also oversee a diverse range of student clubs and organizations, facilitate the selection of students for advanced degrees based on their academic merit, offer guidance and mentorship to graduate and professional students, and generate a vast quantity of research publications each year. In addition, universities engage in building strategic partnerships with industry partners and supporting semi-professional athletic teams. Additionally, the universities address issues in the local community, manage tertiary care hospitals, patent discoveries, and attempt to develop new technologies, which are the real goals that research institutes are meant to pursue when all of these activities are considered together (Wai, 2019).

To answer the question of what the purpose of college is, Busted, n.d. asserted, “college is about both preparing people for a job (and helping them advance their careers and earnings) and to thrive in their overall lives” (para. 2). Moreover, as it pertains to jobs and a sense of purpose, Gallup (2021) declared that “Four out of five college graduates say it is very important (37%) or extremely important (43%) to derive a sense of purpose from their work” (p. 5). The Gallup (2021) further elaborated that

- Graduates who link their job with their interests, values, and strengths are almost three times more likely to have a strong sense of purpose in their career.
- Millennials are more likely to find meaning in their employment than in other places in their lives.
- Millennials are more inclined to lament their lack of internships and job shadowing throughout their undergraduate years.
- Whereas only 6% of those with low levels of purpose in their work have high levels of overall well-being, 59% of those with high purpose in work have high well-being.

The results of the Gallup (2021) survey revealed that many students put off beginning their career exploration for an excessively long time, highlighting the need for institutions to be creative and fast to adapt to the needs of each individual student. While more than half of those surveyed claimed to have entered college after giving their future careers much thought, the majority want further support along the way. Career development professionals and other educational administrations should facilitate a constant self-examination process. A collection of institutionalized student experiences would provide a constructivist learning method (Gallup, 2021).

Even though policy makers understand that education functions as a stimulant for

economic growth by building up human capital, there is a tight correlation between education and increasing levels of social capital. Education has a direct correlation with increased levels of social capital. The many benefits that an educated voter may bring to civil society are, in point of fact, a fundamental justification for the large investments in education made by many democratic governments. Education has been shown to affect profoundly and positively various aspects of engagement in society (Campbell, 2006). Understanding the history of the various categories and how they are derived affects the understanding and purpose of the university of society in the United States. With this understanding, the study focuses on the most elite degrees offered in the modern university.

### **Competition and Capitalism**

Throughout the history of the modern university, there have been many competing variables that have affected the change and evolution of the modern-day university. The various competing aspect encompasses the viewpoint of education from a postcolonialism point of view derived from those times that address the effects of being colonized as a community on the viewpoint of higher education. The section compares and contrasts the viewpoint of democracy versus neoliberalism and the effect on civic engagement, along with understanding higher education as a private versus public good. Last, it goes into truth research and how it affects the production of knowledge of higher education for the greater good of society.

### ***Postcolonialism***

Postcolonialism “addresses the effects of colonization” (Hickling-Hudson et al., 2004, p. 2). Gandhi (2018) contended, “postcolonialism can be seen as a theoretical resistance to the mystifying amnesia of the colonial aftermath. It is a disciplinary project devoted to the academic task of revisiting, remembering, and, crucially, interrogating the colonial past” (p. 4). According



to this perspective, the colonial period shows an adversarial and desire-driven relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. Loomba (1998) defined postcolonialism as “a process that reviews and explores the ‘structure of inequality’” (p. 18). Postcolonialism is a process rather than a word or verb since it considers colonialism’s philosophical, political, economic, and social effects. The word post is a prefix that indicates that colonialism’s effects are still being debated, not that it has disappeared. It provides a method to break the harmful patterns that have persisted after the end of colonialism, but its effects can still be seen in the world.

The postcolonial theory clarifies ambiguities and inconsistencies while addressing issues of conflict, privilege, domination, struggle, resistance, and subversion. These difficulties stem from an understanding of how words, ideas, visuals, and texts that depict the world affect beliefs and behavior and from a critique of the relationship between knowledge and power (Hickling-Hudson et al., 2004).

Hickling-Hudson et al. (2004) further elaborated that postcolonial theory contends that one’s degree of knowledge and truth is intimately tied to their capacity to produce, manage, transmit, and consume information. In addition to economic and political power, a corpus of literature that includes academic works, political tracts, journalistic and creative writing, tourist guides, religious and philological studies, and other works also has cultural power that supports the exercise of colonial authority.

The postcolonial viewpoint on education as it pertains to the student, according to Spivak (1999), examined the ways in which many aspects of schooling, independent of the learner’s level of literacy or the outcomes of the education, impact the learner’s growth and understanding of themselves. It offered insight into the experiences of a single individual. This viewpoint offers a favorable environment for conducting an analysis of the person’s position in regard to different

social, historical, and cultural settings, both in the past and present. It allows the theorist or practitioner to reflect critically on these happenings and investigate the conundrums brought about by power and empowerment. Individual opinions may be brought to light via the investigation of vital components by the researcher or practitioner.

### *Neoliberalism*

What is neoliberalism? Neoliberalism is often talked about in terms of its belief that free markets are the best way to distribute resources, its faith in steady economic growth as a way to make human progress, its focus on keeping the government out of economic and social matters as little as possible, and its commitment to the freedom of trade and capital (Heller, 2016).

Tierney (2021) expressed, “Neoliberalism has been around for over a century and currently is the primary mode of thought in the United States” (p. 5). Henry (2010) ascertained that the theoretical work of John Maynard Keynes, which called for the active, intervening government to save capitalism, was the spark that launched the organized neoliberal agenda, which aimed to preserve a capitalist social order for the mostly wealthy property owners. Neoliberals are capitalists who strongly believe in the idea of free markets to the point of becoming dogmatic and aim to keep the capitalist system in place. Hastings (2019) posited that the political agenda of the capitalist class, termed as neoliberalism, strives to bolster its ability to generate profits by wielding power over political events, including elections, and directing the privatization or regulation of governmental institutions and authorities in a manner that advances their interests.

As a result, Heller (2016) felt that neoliberalism causes the privatization of public institutions and the establishment of new areas for private investment via state-led initiatives rather than encouraging the development of competitive markets. According to Henry (2010), the emergence of corporations, more government engagement in the economy, the development of

the collectivist economic activity, and, most importantly, the expansion of the labor movement and the ensuing danger of socialism all served to obstruct the neoliberal goal. To clarify further the terms of neoliberalism and globalization, Tomlinson and Lipsitz's (2013) remark is worth reproducing in full to assist in clarifying:

Neoliberalism is not just an economic system. Unimpeded capital accumulation requires extensive ideological legitimation. Neoliberal practices seek to produce neoliberal subjects through a social pedagogy that aims to naturalize hierarchy and exploitation by promoting internalized preferences for profits over the needs of people, relentless individuation of collective social processes, cultivation of hostile privatism and defensive localism based on exaggerated fears of difference, and mobilization of anger and resentment against vulnerable populations to render them disposable, displaceable, deportable, and docile. The grandiose aspirations of neoliberal pedagogy, however, are often undermined by the system's ruinous effects. Neoliberalism promises prosperity but delivers austerity. (p. 4)

The neoliberal philosophy may be succinctly summed up as follows, as stated by Lorenz (2012), "The dogma of the free market can best be expressed by a formula: free market = competition = best value for the money = optimum efficiency for individuals as both consumers and owners of private property" (p. 601).

Tierney (2021) established that in modern society, the affluent financial capitalists who rule society under neoliberalism are the ones who hire and reward the educated managerial elite. The consequence, which advances the neoliberalism agenda, has significant effects on the key players inside organizations. Members of administration get greater significance and prestige as a result of these important individuals being the ones who have the potential to enhance efficiency and lead the effort to move up the rankings. The neoliberal agenda also impacts higher education institutions. This exclusive group includes, in addition to professors and researchers working in universities, highly educated professionals working for the government or high-tech firms and personnel with very high levels of expertise.

According to Heller (2016), the historically democratic field of education is increasingly being subjected to neoliberal governance because charter schools are replacing district schools, elected school boards are being consolidated under appointed leadership, and private companies are increasingly providing school resources such as curriculum, testing, and even teacher training. In addition, charter schools have been shown to be more cost-effective than district schools. Neoliberalism describes the purpose of education in terms of financial investments in developing students' human capital. The value of education and what students should study are influenced by future financial prospects. The limited view of education raises significant questions regarding the purpose of education and the interaction between democratic society, public education, and state government. The primary beneficiaries of neoliberal policies are capitalists, and they know that conversations and education efforts might be based on alternative democratic sources of value and purpose.

### ***Democracy, Civic Engagement, Public Good***

Democracy includes intellectual freedom, and unfettered freedom of speech, the press, and thought. It suggests a caste-free, egalitarian society where people can change jobs and positions anytime. It also represents a mobile society where people may move around geographically, change their surroundings, and relatively easily find new jobs or business ventures. Because of democracy, there should not be any limitations on higher education because of someone's socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, location, social standing, or anything else. When liberty is exercised to its logical extreme, there is always a fight for equality, and education is the most potent weapon in this conflict (Silva & Nevins, 1962).

Looking at democracy from a political view, Almond and Verba (2015) stated, "An effectively functioning democracy implies that a substantial proportion of its members are

involved in the political system through the meshing of the more diffuse structures of the community with the more differentiated ones of the polity” (p 142). The common person’s desires, wants, grievances, and goals can only enter politics via the participation of family and community and influence both the form and content of political discourse as well as the formulation of policies.

Strong linkages exist between education and democratic governance. Because of their exposure to formal education, individuals learn to interact with others, and the benefits of civic engagement, such as voting and organizing, grow. Moreover, Glaeser et al. (2007) stated that education increases the advantages of civic involvement and boosts support for a broadly based democratic regime compared to support for a narrowly focused authoritarian regime. However, according to Glaeser et al. (2007), the central premise is that education increases the advantages of political engagement since higher-educated peers are more successful at recruiting others to participate. As a result, although education increases participation in democratic and authoritarian regimes, it increases more for the democratic system because of its higher inclusivity. Education supports democracy over tyranny when comparing political success based on the total number of followers. Education, which promotes the preservation of democratic institutions, provides these supporters. On the other hand, in countries where the degree of education is poor, dictatorships or oligarchies are safer than democracies. Only dictatorships provide the powerful external incentives necessary to convince people to support them; hence education is inadequate.

Currently, globalization is taking place on a worldwide stage. One way to look at globalization is as a process that grows or spreads with technological advances. Because of globalization, democracy is beginning to take root in formerly autocratic nations; this can only

be seen as a good development when contemplating democracy on a global basis. Even while globalization has provided many opportunities, it has also increased inequality. Americans will point out that more people are pursuing higher education than a generation ago, but college graduates also leave school with more debt, confront more job market instability, and experience more income disparity (Tierney, 2021). Furthermore, a neoliberal agenda influenced by globalization is causing significant changes in the labor market, which was “actively promoted by the neoliberal state”(DuRand, 2019, p. 113). Therefore, Tierney (2021) asserted, “Established democracies are giving in to illiberal forces driven by popular passions because of the economic forces resulting from globalization and neoliberalism” (p. 39).

### ***Civic Engagement***

Adler and Goggin (2005) defined civic engagement as the ways in which community members engage in activities aimed at enhancing the lives of others or influencing the community’s future. Moreover, Putnam (2020) stated that education is one of the most significant predictors of many other types of social involvement. These types of participation range from voting to associational membership, chairing a local committee, holding a dinner party, and donating blood. The fundamental structure is the same for people of all different races and generations, as well as for men and women. A person’s level of education is a very accurate indicator of their participation in civic life.

Social capital refers to connections among individuals and social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them. Putnam (2020) asserted, “social capital is closely related to what some have called ‘civic virtue.’ The difference is that ‘social capital’ calls attention to the fact that civic virtue is most powerful when embedded in a dense network of reciprocal social relations” (p. 16). Applying Putnam’s theories, it is clear that civic networks are

the source of social capital and that social engagement provides a platform for the growth of connections that facilitate easier access to social resources. According to Hyman (2002), civic engagement comes before social capital. However, when civic involvement is motivated by a particular problem or event and is focused toward a specific goal, social capital is developed.

Converse (1972) argued that education is always the universal solvent with civic engagement and social capital. The connection exists regardless of whether one is talking about cognitive issues such as one's level of political, factual knowledge, or conceptual sophistication in judging it; motivational issues such as one's attention to politics and level of emotional involvement in political affairs; or behavior issues such as party work or voting. Moreover, Converse (1972) went on to say, "The higher the education, the greater the 'good' values of the variable. The educated citizen is attentive, knowledgeable, and participatory and the uneducated citizen is not" (p. 324).

### ***Public Good***

Marginson (2011) explicated that the division between the public and private realms may seem cut-and-dried and uncomplicated when seen only through ideology. A conventional socialist image of the public views the state as the common good or a neoliberal notion of the private as nested in individual freedom from government intrusion. The provision of public goods may either be done on an individual or a communal basis. Additionally, Marginson (2011), who compared the public and private good perspectives, contended that higher education is seen as a producer of public goods and one of industrialized civilization's most important social and economic institutions. Higher education provides civilization with critical social skills and talent training. Universities mimic occupations, provide structured opportunities for advancement and social mobility, create and spread codified knowledge, and facilitate many

cross-border exchanges. Numerous collective advantages are not documented as benefits for students or corporations, but they act in tandem with one another.

Marginson (2011) mentioned that some of the examples of the public benefits that higher education institutions provide include the development of students' unique intellectual and social abilities, which are essential for successful citizenship, as well as scientific, social, and economic competence. Additionally, these public outcomes support governance, the ability to innovate, the creation and transmission of knowledge, and the development of relational human capital. In addition, these public results contain certain private gains linked to general public advantages. Both public and private products have the potential to include human capital.

Institutions of higher learning provide businesses and students with private goods. These private assets include graduates' social positions, higher education-related earnings and degrees, and money generated by intellectual property resulting from scholarly research. Marginson (2011) went on to say, "because degrees as private goods are subject to economic scarcity and their production and consumption are subject to competition...the production of these private goods is readily turned into an administered neo-liberal quasi-market" (p. 427). The competition stems from students vying for prestige items and colleges vying for excellent students and status leadership positions. Both parties are engaged in a struggle to come out on top.

The importance of higher education institutions' contribution to the development of public goods is not diminished by the private products they create. Additionally, higher education institutions are under some pressure to concentrate nearly completely or fully on outcomes that are financially favorable for individuals (Marginson, 2011). Tannock (2006) defined public goods as

Universities serve the public good, all else being equal, not when they contribute to "economic development" in some abstract and general sense, but when they help to



increase the wealth and well-being of all individuals together; and more specifically, when they work to ensure that the college educated do not gain at the expense of the non-college educated. (p. 45)

Looking at higher education institutions holistically, Moretti (2012) declared, “economists have speculated for at least a century that the social return to education may exceed the private return” (p. 175). Heckman (2000) believed that, compared to public investments in higher education, public investments in effective prenatal care through age 5, preschool education, and schooling provide a greater rate of return to society because of the significant impact they have on the social and economic success of people with lower incomes. Heckman believed this is because more money is required for higher education. He goes on to say that the layout of governmental policies influences public access to higher education.

The very nature of higher education is determined by policy, and while it is bound by the forms of production that it employs, even those may be altered by political action. The public character of higher education is not so much an artifact of the timelessness of the institutions as it is an outgrowth of the behaviors of society. A higher education institution’s status as “public” or “private” depends on the financial and policy arrangements made for it (Marginson, 2011, p. 413). Looking at private and public from a financial standpoint, Kerr (1991) stated

Private funds include gifts and grants, income from endowments, tuitions and fees, income from auxiliary enterprises, and sales of services. Public funds treated as public are appropriations for specifically designated purposes, in the extreme, in the form of line-item budgets. (p. 28)

Kerr (1991) went on to assert that public money that is seen as private money includes the costs of loans and grants given to students, grants and contracts given to faculty members for research paid for with public money, and lump-sum payments made by the state to institutions. Compared to some private companies that churches sometimes run, some public organizations that are run by civilian boards and faculty guilds are more privately run in the sense that they are

more independent. Lay boards and faculty guilds are more likely to include people not affiliated with the school, accounting for the independence. When only comparing organizations based on their funding sources, certain private institutions seem more accessible to the public than others.

Moreover, Marginson (2011) contended, “there is also more to ‘public’ higher education than ‘not private,’ or ‘non-market,’ or state-owned institutions, or state-sourced financing” (p. 414). The term public is often seen as a result of higher education’s social or political impacts.

Heller (2016) argued that under the impact of neoliberalism, universities’ functions and goals are changing from serving the public good to as closely matching private corporations as possible, endangering the chances for critical and autonomous teaching and research. As this neoliberal assault comes to light, students and teachers are working to mobilize resistance to maintain their academic and intellectual independence. In addition, Tierney (2021) asserted, “that globalization and neoliberalism have created the conditions for the demise of democracy and the rise of fascism. Inequality and privatization are greater, and the public good is more constrained today than in the past” (p. 23). Furthermore, Tierney (2021) declared that colleges are distinct from for-profit businesses and have maintained distinctive roles in democratic states. They have the power to influence both the whole market as well as how people and groups interact in society.

### ***Truth Research and the Production of Knowledge***

Truth is the aim of belief; falsity is a fault. People need the truth about the world in order to thrive. Truth is important. (Encyclopedia Britannica, n.d.-f, para. 2)

Since the beginning of time, people and society have appreciated the value of the pursuit of truth. Kerr (1991) stated that the “discovery of truth is the great challenge, the highest aspiration of the academic” (p. 49). Most educational institutions at the postsecondary level have presumably placed the pursuit of truth at the center of their objectives. Nevertheless, the position

of truth has been considerably called into question in today's society as a result of postmodern critiques, uncertainty around the goals and methods of academic disciplines, and the appeal of social media and other digital platforms (Gardner & Fischman, 2021).

Easterlin (1981) maintained, "knowledge production is concerned with what we know, how we know it, when we know it, who knows it, and why" (p. 201). Easterlin (1981) went on to say that dominant elite groups shape knowledge production and can normalize specific ways of doing and being in a world that conceals realities and preferences along with the way it is understood in society.

Moreover, Bowen and Schuster (1986) referred to knowledge as "the truth—that which, so far as possible, is judged to be true" (p. 53). According to Gibbons et al. (2010), the organization of human capital produces knowledge. However, compared to physical capital, human capital may be more versatile. Human capital might be rebuilt to provide new kinds of specialized knowledge. While pursuing and spreading knowledge are considered to be the primary objectives of higher education, it is generally agreed that academics have to uphold and advance the truth even when doing so is contentious.

The emphasis on knowledge acquisition in higher education sets it apart. It serves as the cornerstone for all goods generated in the sector, whether public or private. Knowledge and information accessible to everyone are two of the most valuable public goods that institutions of higher learning may generate (Marginson, 2011). "Most knowledge is a global public good" (Stiglitz, 1999, p. 3). Furthermore, Stiglitz contended that although specific artifacts that encapsulate knowledge might be valuable and scarce, knowledge does not become nonrivalrous until it has been diffused, which happens beyond the time of its first production, making knowledge a worldwide public benefit.

However, Barnett (2000) argued that in a very complicated world, universities are bereft of their grounding in searching for knowledge and truth. The idea that there are relatively distinct categories of appropriate knowledge or that the university alone may establish its criteria and legal modes of realization are no longer viable. He went on to say that the idea of academic knowledge is still relevant. The university could be saved if it is prepared to let go of its deeply entrenched sense of “knowing” about what knowledge and truth are and understand the epistemological possibilities that follow super complexity (p. 420). “What counts as truth and knowledge are open, as knowledges multiply and as frameworks for comprehending the world proliferate” (Barnett, 2000, p. 420).

Understanding the history of higher education and the ways in which the aforementioned factors that have molded the growth of higher education have affected the development of the contemporary university may help to develop a better understanding of the education industry. Additionally, it is essential to be aware of both the strategy chosen in leading higher education and the philosophy driving leadership’s effect on the higher education system to create a more thorough understanding of the transformation of the university in the 21st century.

## **Leadership**

It is necessary to have a firm grasp of what leadership entails and how it functions to have a sense of its role in the field of higher education. Since organizational leadership is multidisciplinary in nature and has long been a subject of interest to academics, scholars from a wide variety of academic subjects contribute to its study. Although many academic researchers have expressed the idea of leadership in the past, there is not currently a widely accepted description (Asrar-ul-Haq & Anwar, 2018). According to Kotter (2012)

Leadership is a set of processes that creates organizations in the first place or adapts them to significantly changing circumstances. Leadership defines what the future should look

like, aligns people with that vision, and inspires them to make it happen despite the obstacles. (p. 29)

Fiedler (1967) defined leadership as an interpersonal relationship in which one person leads and directs the actions of others while power and influence are distributed unequally. Furthermore, Yukl (2006) maintains that leadership is “a process whereby intentional influence is exerted by one person over other people to guide, structure, and facilitate activities and relationships in a group or organization” (p. 3). In addition, there are four common definitions of leadership that Yukl and Gardner (2020) defined such as

- Leadership is a process—it is not a property or characteristic of the leader, but a transaction between the leader and the followers. Defining leadership as a process makes it available to everyone, not just a select few born with it.
- Leadership involves influence—influence is the effect a leader has on followers. Without influence, leadership does not exist. Leadership encompasses the ability to influence subordinates, peers, and bosses in work or organizational contexts.
- Leadership occurs in groups—Leadership involves influencing a group of individuals, the members of which have a common purpose. Leadership entails one individual influencing a group of others to accomplish common goals.
- Leadership involves common goals—the leaders and followers have a mutual purpose. Leadership is guiding a group of individuals toward the completion of a task or the attainment of a goal through a variety of ethically justifiable techniques.

In the context of higher education institutions and the process of change, a plethora of different leadership models can be utilized; however, there are four primary theories of leadership used in universities: the behavioral, the situational, the transactional, and the transformational models.

### ***Behavioral Leadership***

The study of leadership employs behavioral leadership theories because they emphasize the roles, styles of conduct, leadership philosophies, and duties connected with leadership. Planning, mentoring, and fundraising are just a few of the actions that are crucial to understanding leadership, according to studies of behavior done in higher education. In order to determine which action is more effective at work, behavioral leadership studies look at how leaders are inclined toward tasks or connections. The actions are often universal and may be used by various leaders and organizations. As with attribute theories, behavioral theories center their leadership knowledge only on leaders (Teixeira & Shin, 2020).

### ***Situational Leadership***

Situational leadership is a model that necessitates a leader to analyze situations for critical variables, then use the leadership style that best fits the situation (Hiebert & Klatt, 2001). “Situational leadership theory proposes that effective leadership requires a rational understanding of the situation and an appropriate response” (McCleskey, 2014, p. 116). According to the premise that the optimal pattern of behavior for a leader will vary depending on the circumstances, successful leaders should communicate by using a combination of directive and supporting behaviors that are appropriate for the developmental stages of their followers (Yukl & Gardner, 2020).

### ***Transactional Leadership***

According to Burns (2010), most relationships between leaders and followers are based on switching goods and services. These “leaders approach followers with an eye to exchanging one thing for another: jobs for votes, or subsidies for campaign contributions. Such transactions comprise the bulk of the relationships among leaders and followers, especially in groups,

legislatures, and parties” (p. 13). “Transactional leadership involves practical, give-and-take exchanges, such as pay for performance” (Bolman & Deal, 2017, p. 133). Transactional leadership encompasses contingent rewards, passive management by exception, active management by exception, and laissez-faire leadership (Bass, 1985a).

Yukl and Gardner (2020) stated the component behaviors for the majority of theories are a combination of a few relationship-oriented actions, such as developing and maintaining relationships; a few change-oriented actions, such as expressing an alluring vision and encouraging creative thinking; and a few additional behaviors. Other behaviors include leading by example, talking about personal ideals, and making sacrifices for the group or organization. The theories of charismatic leadership also identify some of these traits that charismatic leaders exhibit.

### ***Transformational Leadership***

The concept of transformational leadership refers to a style of management that can be implemented in settings ranging from narrowly focused on persuading individual followers to those broad in scope and seeking to influence entire organizations or even entire cultures. According to Berkovich (2016), the transformational leadership theory has been one of the most influential leadership models in education throughout the past several decades. While more complex than behavioral, situational, and transactional, transformational leadership is more effective. A prospective follower’s current need or desire is identified by the transformational leader, who then capitalizes on it. Beyond that, the transformational leader involves the whole follower and attempts to satiate greater wants. A connection of mutual stimulation and elevation that transforms followers into leaders and perhaps transforms leaders into moral agents is the outcome of transformed leadership (Burns, 2010).

The word transform means to change the appearance or character of something or someone completely, especially so that that thing or person is improved. The goal of transformation is to unearth or create a new kind of paradigm with an eye toward the future. The transformation process is much less predictable, and as a result, it entails an appreciably increased level of danger (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.). In the context of leadership, transformational leadership—also referred to as visionary leadership or inspirational leadership—is a well-known leadership style that was developed in the 1980s (Bass, 1985a).

Jensen et al. (2019) stated, “Transformational leadership refers to directing and inspiring individual efforts by transforming (and motivating) employees. This leadership strategy thus conceptualizes behaviors that seek to satisfy employees’ higher order needs to engage them in attaining the organizational goals” (p. 5). The primary component of transformational leadership is the intention of the leader to activate higher order needs in followers. Followers of a transformational leader are motivated to go above and beyond what is often expected of them as a result of the leader's influence. It includes understanding the reasons behind why the followers act in the manner that they do, catering to their requirements, and considering them as whole individuals. Despite the vital role the transformational leader plays in sparking change, followers and leaders are closely entwined in the transformation process. Beginning with the influential book *Leadership* by political scientist Burns (1978), it evolved into a fundamental leadership tactic. Burns (1978) defined leaders as those who comprehend follower motivations better to attain the goals of both leaders and followers. According to Burns, leadership is quite different from power since it is inexorably related to the demands of followers.

Burns (2010) established that transforming “leadership occurs when one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of



motivation and morality” (p. 33). According to Yukl (1999), Burns claims that both the operations of businesses and the lives of people undergo significant change as a result of the transformational technique. Views, attitudes, expectations, and objectives of the workforce are revised.

As attested by Burns (2010), a transformational leader raises the profile of the intended outcomes and the means to achieve them. A transformational leader can inspire their followers to prioritize the group’s goals above their own and help them progress up Maslow’s (1954) hierarchy of requirements from the more basic needs of survival to the more complex needs of growth and self-actualization. Under transformative leadership, the follower gets more mature, has more values, and cares more about the well-being of other people, the organization, and society as a whole. The elements that are significant to their followers are taken into account by transformational leaders who are adaptable. Instead of using force to get close to their people, they use moral leadership. They transform people, groups, organizations, and societies as a whole.

Bass (1985a) made a multidimensional transformational and transactional leadership theory out of Burns’ transformational leadership theory. He then used descriptions of military leaders and leaders in the general public to test his theory. Because of Bass’s multidimensional leadership theories, Burns agreed that transactional and transformative leadership were not two extremes of the same dimension but different dimensions (Bass & Bass, 2008).

Bass (1985a) used ideas first developed by Burns (1978) for use in political contexts to apply transactional and transformational leadership notions to commercial organizations. The term transactional leader was used to describe a group of leaders who understood the demands of their followers and traded incentives for correspondingly high levels of effort and performance.

Bycio et al. (1995) elaborated that the idea behind transformational leadership was to go beyond transactions to raise followers' knowledge of desired results by enhancing and elevating their needs and motivating them to put aside their own interests. According to Bass's factor-analytic research from 1985, transformational leadership may be theoretically arranged along four associated dimensions: (a) charismatic leadership, (b) inspirational leadership, (c) intellectual stimulation, and (d) individualized consideration (Bass & Bass, 2008).

The behavior of transformational leaders enables them to act as role models for their followers, according to Bass and Riggio (2006). People look up to, respect, and trust the leaders. Transformational leaders encourage and exhibit open and honest communication while simultaneously building a culture of trust among their followers. Because they connect with the leaders and desire to be like them, followers attribute great qualities, perseverance, and drive to the leaders. These leaders are regarded as role models either because they exhibit certain personal characteristics or charisma or demonstrate certain moral behaviors. Such leaders are often seen as being high on morality, trust, integrity, honesty, and purpose (Cetin & Kinik, 2015). Additionally, Jensen et al. (2019) posit that three behaviors from transformational leaders are necessary: (a) formulate the organizational goals as a desirable future vision, (b) share this understanding with employees, and (c) sustain the vision in the long run. Moreover, Jensen et al. (2019) contend the activities intended to create, communicate, and uphold an organizational vision are seen as logical segments of a single underlying idea that represents the efforts to get employees to share organizational goals and put aside their own self-interest.

### ***Idealized Influence and Charismatic Leadership***

Early in the 20th century, German sociologist Max Weber sought to comprehend bureaucracy, and in 1947 he applied the historically religious idea of charisma to the study of

leadership and organizations (Weber et al., 1947). Weber et al. (1947) understood that organizational coordination needs authority, whether conventional, charismatic, rational-legal, or any combination. The study attracted attention in the sociological analysis of social and political movements and the psychoanalytical interpretations of historical leadership (Bass & Bass, 2008).

According to Weber et al. (1947), charisma described a particular personality attribute that distinguished a person from others and made them seem to possess superhuman, supernatural, or at the very least, noticeably extraordinary talents or qualities. These things are beyond the average person's reach yet are seen to be divinely inspired or exemplary, and because of them, the person in question is viewed as a leader. According to Yukl and Gardner (2020), a charismatic leader appears in the middle of a societal crisis with a bold vision that offers a resolution and attracts followers who share the vision. This leader attracts those who share their vision as followers. After a few successes that make the vision appear achievable, the followers start to have positive opinions of the leader.

The notion of idealized influence emerged from research on charismatic leadership, which is defined by remarkable leaders who often appear in times of crisis or significant change (Yukl & Gardner, 2020). Transforming leaders are idealized because they are moral exemplars of working to benefit the team, organization, and community. Through the leader's idealized impact, formerly described as charisma, intellectual stimulation, and personalized concern, followers are transformed and motivated. In addition, this leader encourages followers to come up with new and unique ways to challenge the status quo and alter the environment to support success (Yukl, 1999).

According to House (1976), charisma is a term often used in sociology and political science literature to describe leaders who can have a strong and notable influence on followers as

a result of their distinctive personal attributes. Along with requiring the followers' loyalty and dedication to the leader, these outcomes involve convincing them to obey the leader's commands without doubt, inquiry, or consideration of their own interests. "The term charisma, whose initial meaning was 'gift,' is usually reserved for leaders who by their influence are able to cause followers to accomplish outstanding feats" (House, 1976, p. 4). A leader is considered charismatic if they have a variety of effects and influences on their followers, including their confidence in their beliefs, unwavering submission to and acceptance of them, identification with them, emotional investment in the mission, heightened goals, self-efficacy, and group efficacy.

According to J. Conger and R. Kanungo (1998), a charismatic leader is nonetheless susceptible to the fundamental requirements of leading people. These requirements include a heightened awareness to environmental possibilities and limits, as well as follower capabilities. The charismatic leader, as maintained by J. Conger and R. Kanungo (1998), is unique from other leaders because of "their desire to challenge the status quo and to act as reformers or agents of radical forms" (p. 121).

J. Conger and R. Kanungo (1989) highlighted the charismatic leader's actions as radical, unconventional, risk-taking, visionary, entrepreneurial, and exemplary. A charismatic leader is one who seeks for weaknesses in the status quo in an aggressive manner. They take advantage of business opportunities that have not yet been explored or launch campaigns that successfully question the norms or conventions that are generally accepted. They bring up complaints about the deficiencies that exist inside the company. A charismatic leader is essential in any situation that exposes unexplored market opportunities or needs considerable change. Furthermore, charismatic leaders are seen as entrepreneurs or change agents since they are aware of the shortcomings in their environment (Conger & Kanungo, 1998).

To further elaborate on charisma, Bass and Bass (2008) stated, “The charismatic leader is likely to be transformational, but it is possible to be transformational without being charismatic” (p. 874). Charismatic people radiate confidence, power, a sense of purpose, and the ability to express objectives and concepts for which followers are psychologically equipped. The response from the followers is even more powerful. It is both cognitive and emotional, faithful and unshakable, as well as both rational and emotive. The followers of charismatic leaders are immensely influenced by them and are given a sense of moral motivation and purpose. The adherents perceive a magnetic affinity that is beyond their typical experience. They turn out to be devotees and fanatics. In times of crisis, charismatic leaders often appear as potential saviors who will satisfy the unfulfilled emotional demands of their blindly obedient, unduly reliant, and subservient followers by virtue of their miraculous abilities. If effective, charismatic leaders may bring about profound reforms in their groups, organizations, or civilization.

Additionally, Shamir et al. (1993) maintain charismatic leaders inspire their followers in the following ways: (a) increasing the intrinsic valence of effort, (b) increasing effort-accomplishment expectancies, (c) increasing the intrinsic valence of goal accomplishment, (d) instilling faith in a better future, (e) creating personal commitment. Moreover, Cetin and Kinik (2015) described that leaders have idealized influence when they take risks with their followers to boost the organization’s performance, act consistently, and display dependability. In this approach, leaders in companies build trust and create a positive environment in that followers feel trust. Charismatic leaders can stir their followers’ motives to go beyond their own self-interests for the team’s sake via inspirational appeals and emotive discussions (Bass, 1985a). Furthermore, according to Bass (1985a), leaders exhibit charisma and inspiring motivation when they see an admirable future, explain how to get there, set an example that others may follow,

establish high expectations for performance, and exhibit tenacity and confidence.

### ***Inspirational Motivation***

The term inspirational motivation refers to leaders who are able to inspire followers to support the organization's mission. Additionally, Hinkin and Tracey (1999) asserted, "inspirational motivation is based on communication of expectations and followers' confidence in the leader's vision and values" (p. 4). According to Bass (1998), transformational leaders exhibit behaviors that inspire others, arouse passion, and provide challenges to followers. These leaders are committed to their objectives and a common vision, and they express expectations in a clear and concise manner. Bass and Riggio (2006) further elaborated that inspirational leaders often possess the ability to communicate a future vision that their followers may embrace and work toward. Transformational leaders give their followers' work purpose and motivation by modeling behaviors that inspire and encourage others around them. There is a feeling of cohesion, enthusiasm, and optimism shown. Leaders encourage followers to envision ideal future states, set clear expectations that followers want to meet, and demonstrate commitment to the group's shared goals.

Many times, transformational leaders are successful in lifting the standards of their followers, empowering them to go beyond what they or others had previously thought possible. Significant characteristics of this style include the capacity to present a future outlook that is both optimistic and attainable, the capacity to shape expectations and forms, the capacity to use straightforward language to distill complex ideas into their most basic considerations, and the capacity to convey a sense of urgency and purpose (Kirkbride, 2006).

### ***Intellectual Stimulation***

Yukl and Gardner (2020) stated, “Intellectual stimulation is behavior that influences followers to view problems from a new perspective and look for more creative solutions” (p. 610). Additionally, when it comes to intellectual stimulation, Bass (1985a) added that the transformational leader “stimulates followers to perform beyond the level of expectation” (p. 32). Intellectually stimulating leaders perceive themselves as participants in a collaborative creative process (Brown, 1987, as cited in Bass & Bass, 2008). They imagine other alternatives because existing answers do not constrain them. Orientations are changed, knowledge of the conflicts between ideals and reality is raised, and experimentation is promoted (Fritz, 1986, as cited in Bass & Bass, 2008).

Intellectually stimulating transformational leaders continually seek out new information, share it with others, provide examples, and encourage everyone in the company to come up with innovative solutions to challenges (Avolio & Bass, 2002; Bass & Bass, 2008). Additionally, Bass and Riggio (2006) stated that intellectually stimulating leaders are often empowering, and it is an intellectually exciting task to convince a group to employ any of these ways and to instruct it on how to do so. Intellectually stimulating leaders give their team instructions to disregard certain problems in favor of concentrating on others and ascribe a pattern to a sequence of events to reduce the complexity and variety of what is happening. Intellectual stimulation may aid subordinates in escaping the thought ruts they have developed by rephrasing the problem that has to be solved.

By challenging assumptions and authority, presenting problems in fresh ways, and using novel approaches to familiar situations, intellectually stimulating transformational leaders encourage their people to be imaginative and creative with new ideas and ways to accomplish

things. It is encouraged to be creative and out of the box. Additionally, the mistakes committed by the followers receive no public commentary or criticism. Followers are involved in the process of addressing issues and finding answers, and they are asked for fresh perspectives and innovative problem-solving approaches. Followers are encouraged to experiment with all possible ideas, and their opinions are not disparaged because they diverge from those of the leader (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Yukl (1999) described intellectual stimulation as a function of how often a leader questions presumptions, takes calculated risks, and solicits input from followers. This kind of leader encourages and stimulates the inventiveness of their people. Independent thinkers are fostered and developed by them. “For such a leader, learning is a value and unexpected situations are seen as opportunities to learn. The followers ask questions, think deeply about things, and figure out better ways to execute their tasks” (Yukl, 1999, p. 2). Day (2014) asserted that intellectually stimulating leaders can foster an environment that fosters creativity by consistently articulating professionally challenging missions, encouraging positive interpersonal interaction around these missions, and providing followers with intellectual stimulation related to these missions. “Leader actions in this regard, in turn, create perceptions of a climate where creative work, creative work being accomplished in well-functioning teams, is expected” (Day, 2014, p. 771).

The fundamental function of leaders is to solve problems. Because it is their responsibility as leaders to reduce issues, they must have the fortitude to address them head-on before external pressures compel them. In order to establish and maintain momentum for the business and its customers, leaders must be resilient. There is a direct correlation between intellectually stimulating leadership and workers’ performance and dedication. Research shows that when leaders use intellectually stimulating leadership, their employees are more devoted and



less stressed. Additionally, it was shown that intellectually stimulating leadership positively impacts organizational performance, employee motivation, and levels of commitment, loyalty, and satisfaction (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Quinn and Hall (1983) asserted that followers have four possible intellectual inspirations: rational, existential, empirical, or ideological. Transformational leaders with rational inspiration strongly emphasize aptitude, independence, and effort. They try to convince people to tackle problems that the group or organization is confronting logically and reasonably. Existentially oriented leaders try to persuade others toward a creative synthesis via casual interactions with individuals and their common issues. Empirically oriented leaders encourage an emphasis on externally generated data and the quest for the optimal solution utilizing a variety of sources. Idealists encourage making snap decisions and using intuition that is internally produced. “They gather only a minimum amount of data before reaching a conclusion” (Quinn & Hall, 1983, as cited in Bass & Bass, 2008, p. 876). Additionally, Kirkbride (2006) asserted other traits of transformational leaders who exhibit intellectual stimulation include reevaluating presumptions, spotting patterns that are difficult to imagine, being amenable to putting out or entertaining ridiculous ideas, inspiring followers to review challenges, and developing readiness for shifts in thinking.

Furthermore, intellectual stimulation encompasses much more than merely disseminating original ideas; it also includes knowledge development. Knowledge is a crucial intangible asset in any organization, since it is a valuable source of a company’s capacity to generate, transfer, and appropriate value. Since it is essential, intellectually stimulating leaders look for methods to foster communication inside and across departments. If knowledge is not shared internally, it cannot be fully used and may impede an organization’s ability to function and reduce performance (Carmeli et al., 2010).

### *Individual Consideration*

Leaders who take an individual consideration approach serve as mentors and counselors to their team members and motivate them to achieve mutually beneficial objectives for both the team and the company. Carmeli et al. (2010) further elaborated, “Transformational leaders exhibit such behaviors as individualized consideration, through which the follower feels that his or her personal expectations and needs are cared for” (p. 260). Additionally, transformational leaders who care about their followers’ needs for success and growth pay great attention to them. New opportunities for learning are created in addition to promoting a welcoming atmosphere. It is accepted that each person has unique needs. Leaders serve as coaches and mentors for their followers. For followers, advancing through even more advanced phases of development is facilitated. There are more opportunities for learning when there is a helpful environment. Avolio and Bass (2002) stated, “Followers and colleagues are developed to successively higher levels of potential. Individualized consideration is practiced as follows: New learning opportunities are created along with a supportive climate. Individual differences in terms of needs and desires are recognized” (p. 3). Moreover, Avolio and Bass stated that the leader’s actions show that they are conscious of and cognizant of individual variations, such as that some workers benefit from more encouragement, some from greater autonomy, others from stricter standards, and yet others from greater job structure. Both one-way and two-way communication is prioritized, and management by doing is used in exchanges designed to appeal to the followers, such as when the leader recalls prior discussions, is mindful of personal issues, and views the followers as a full person rather than as just subordinates. In order to foster two-way communication and personalize relationships, the leader is expected to become familiar with the responsibilities of everyone in the units that are at least two levels below them in the

organizational hierarchy (Avolio & Bass, 2002).

Additionally, they are expected to learn the names of everyone in those units. The ability to listen well is a strength of the transformative leader. The leader will delegate roles and tasks in order to attract and retain followers. The goal of monitoring given duties is to determine if the followers need more guidance or support and to assess their progress; nevertheless, the followers should not feel as though they are being watched (Avolio & Bass, 2002).

### ***Deconstruction of Transformational Leadership***

Transformative leadership's charismatic component is used interchangeably with idealized influence. The idealized form of influence is a mixture of two aspects of leadership that a leader demonstrates, namely specific attributes and certain actions (Avolio et al., 1991). Furthermore, Avolio et al. (1991) claimed that by treating followers with respect, having trust in them, having confidence in them, and seeing them as unique individuals, transformational leaders may build deep personal ties with them and have considerable influence. Idealized leadership behaviors are those that make followers feel proud of the leader. Between leaders and followers, these actions often promote an associational feeling of pride. Pride comes from a leader's optimism, which enables a productive work atmosphere. If a leader is successful in bringing their idealized impact to life, it will raise people's respect for them, their adoration for them, and their desire to follow in their footsteps.

As it helps people share a common vision, idealized influence is often considered a suitable forerunner to the aspects of transformational leadership. Charismatic leaders are regarded to have an exceptional communication style that includes a captivating voice tone, establishing direct eye contact, and presenting animated facial expressions. They also have a powerful, confident, and dynamic engagement style. Avolio et al. (1991) asserted, "Idealized

influence is, to a large degree, a culmination of the other three I's coupled with a strong emotional attachment to and identification with the leader. Such leaders are emulated by followers and often labeled charismatic" (p. 15).

According to Avolio et al. (1991), a leader's degree of inspiring motivation is further reinforced if colleagues or followers share a vision or simply state the purpose of where the group is headed. "As other means of generating excitement and confidence, inspirational leaders often set an example of hard work, give 'pep' talks, remain optimistic in times of crisis, and search to reduce an employees' duties and workloads by using creative work methods" (Avolio et al., 1999, p. 14).

Development, definition, and communication of a team's vision or goal using relatable metaphors or emotional justification are some of the components of inspiring motivation. Maintaining an overall attitude of optimism and enthusiasm is also important. High expectations should be set, as should the use of straightforward language, symbols, and images. By using their honed communication skills, charm, ability to serve as an example, and past successes, leaders who motivate others to follow them may persuade others to behave in a way that is consistent with the group's goals. The leader is in charge of helping others grow their sense of opportunity, value, and confidence. They convey expectations that go above and beyond the bare minimum in an effort to motivate and inspire the group of people they are charged with leading. One of the key components of inspiring inspiration is follower growth. Current research results indicate that the dynamic between intellectual motivation and customized attention determines the degree of success that may be attained when inspiring motivation. Additionally, care for the person, intellectual stimulation, and the behavioral components of inspired motivation all coincide, enhancing emotions of opportunity and worth (Avolio et al., 1991).

Intellectual stimulation is much more than a matter of broadcasting good ideas (Bass & Bass, 2008). In contrast to habitual following, which is characterized by blind faith in charismatic leaders and loyalty to them, Bass and Bass (2008) felt that intellectual stimulation promotes the growth of a subordinate's individuality and autonomy while discouraging habitual following. Bass and Bass (2008) stated the main goals of intellectual stimulation are to promote the development of intelligence, clever problem-solving, creative thinking, and the refutation of preconceptions. Transformational leaders spend a lot of effort convincing their followers to embrace new perspectives on pressing issues, alter how they see all sorts of issues, and look for novel approaches to problem-solving. A group of followers who persistently oppose the dominant paradigm and are driven, energetic, hopeful, and enthusiastic will benefit from intellectual stimulation. A group that is being challenged intellectually has the potential to do better than one that is not.

According to Avolio et al. (1991), a leader may also demonstrate individualized concern by acting as the employee's personal defender by "going to bat" for the worker when required (p. 13). The individual is given the support and tools required to accomplish current objectives by a leader who takes action. Individualized consideration also emphasizes taking into account team or group members as unique people in addition to being part of the team or group. When employing personalized analysis, the individual is recognized as both a means to an end and an essential part of it. This appreciation goes beyond only seeing the person as a tool to achieve a goal. The leader takes the time and makes an effort to get to know each follower personally, learning about their objectives, areas of strength, and areas where they believe they still have space for improvement. The leader takes the time and makes an effort to satisfy the needs of the specific person in the issue. The relationship between a mentor and a protégé is commonly

utilized to compare the particular respect element. A mentor may gain an understanding of the student's strengths and areas for growth in addition to fostering self-assurance and the development of abilities (Avolio et al., 1991).

The well-being and satisfaction of a manager's workforce and the attainment of successful outcomes at work depend greatly on how they engage with their employees. Transformational leaders show gratitude and care for their employees, which may increase the perceptions of their followers that they are being treated decently, respectfully, and equally. Followers feel that their leader respects them as persons when they perceive that their engagement in carrying out a vision is real and when such participation is polite and respectful. When followers get sincere support and encouragement in their attempts to strive toward the creation of new knowledge and the realization of their potential, it may also be seen as a show of respect and trust on the side of the leader. In addition, when followers feel their leaders are treating them respectfully and abstaining from making offensive or discriminatory comments to them throughout their contact, they will respond by putting forth greater effort to enhance their individual performance (Thompson et al., 2021).

To understand further the factors that influence transformational leadership, Antonakis (2001) articulated that vision is the characteristic that encompasses a transformational leader. Birnbaum (2002) stated that these leaders have a vision and can use their positions within the university to turn their vision into reality. As a result, a university or college president could be seen more favorably as a storyteller than a visionary. Because it connects the institution's history, present, and promise for the future, a captivating story that is often shared on campus may motivate students. Nicholson (2007) felt that since the story is the main tool for persuasion, the best ones show the leader's morals, beliefs, and goals. A leader creates not only the logical

and physical parts of an organization, such as its structure and technology, but also the legends, philosophies, beliefs, rituals, and symbols that show the institution's future direction. To provide additional insight, Poutiatine (2009) suggested nine principles of transformational leadership that provide a framework for leaders to follow in order to get a more in-depth understanding of what transformational leadership entails, drawing on previous work in the field:

- Transformation is not synonymous with change.
- Transformation requires assent to change.
- Transformation always requires second-order change.
- Transformation involves all aspects of an individual's or organization's life.
- Transformational change is irreversible.
- Transformational change involves a letting go of the myth of control.
- Transformational change involves some aspect of risk, fear, and loss.
- Transformational change always involves a broadening scope of worldview.
- Transformation is always a movement toward a greater integrity of identity—a movement toward wholeness. (p. 190)

### ***Power Theory***

Cartwright (1978) defined “power in terms of influence, and influence in terms of psychological change” (p. 260). The ability to influence people is a definition of power. A person has power when they are able to affect the beliefs, attitudes, and actions of others. This notion of power revolves around one's ability to exert relative control (van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003). Power, according to Yukl (2006), refers to “the capacity of one party (the agent) to influence another party (the target)” (p. 146). For an agent to become a leader, he or she must be able to persuade a target to follow. As a result of the fluid nature of this process, the influencer as well

as the influenced, might switch places at any given moment. Consequently, one's status as either a leader or a follower is subject to transformation at any given moment. Therefore, leadership is developed not via the possession of a certain attribute or a rank in the hierarchy, but rather through the interactions that individuals have with one another (Yukl, 2006).

Raven and French (1958) broke down personal and positional power into the five relationships between the leader and follower of power that affect the potential to influence: reward, coercive, legitimate, referent, and expert power. Reward power is based on the perception that the leader is able to mediate some reward for the follower. The foundation of coercive power is the capacity to provide incentives or punishments that affect other people's behavior. In an organization, legitimate power, which results from a position or title, is the formal authority given to a person. Referent power, which is connected to the leader's connection with the follower, is the kind of influence that comes through adoration and popularity. The sources of expert power include skill, aptitude, and subject-specific knowledge. The perception that a leader has unique knowledge or expertise is referred to as expert power.

Sturm and Antonakis (2015) asserted that power is "having the discretion and the means to asymmetrically enforce one's will over others" (p. 139). Power has three characteristics, according to Sturm and Antonakis (2015), which are (a) discretion (agency) to act and (b) the means (innate, position) to (c) enforce one's will.

The origins of power are categorized by structural, cognitive, and physical elements by Rucker et al. (2011). One example of a structural aspect is a social role, which, should there be a momentary adjustment in the structure, might result in a different perception of who has the power. Cognitive factors suggest that power is already present within individuals and can be activated through semantic priming, for instance, by asking participants to decipher phrases



containing terms connected to power. The acquisition of power by a person may also be influenced by environmental or physical variables (Sturm & Antonakis, 2015). Furthermore, Stum and Antonakis (2015) maintain

Power is ubiquitous and is usually concentrated at the very top of social hierarchies. Individuals gain power in various ways, sometimes because they seek it, other times because institutions or collectives believe that they will use it responsibly, and sometimes because of chance or other factors. (p. 158)

Learning about the different leadership philosophies helps one appreciate the value of transformational leadership and how its application may have a big impact on the advancement of the university. This research emphasizes transformational leadership, which is the more common and potent approach choice after understanding the nuances and interconnections. When it comes to higher education, understanding leadership styles, particularly transformational leadership and the methodology behind it, may help with comprehending the obligations that come with being a student and how these leaders' decisions impact mobility. These requirements, which may be broken down into categories such as portability, accessibility, and affordability, are only some of the factors that contribute to the mobility of students in society.

### **Mobility**

Joye & Falcon (2014) claimed, "The concept of social mobility refers to the phenomenon of shifting from one social position to another, either in comparison with family background or with previous employment" (p. 6123). In general, as contended by Wright (2005), the term social mobility refers to the process of moving from one socioeconomic position to another. Someone is said to have high social mobility if they are able to move freely across different social classes in a given country. The concept of social mobility can be summed up in one word: class mobility. This is true even though the social sciences as a whole make use of a variety of class classifications, each of which is founded on a certain school of theoretical thought.

To further delve into the meaning of social mobility, Waal and Koster (2014) declared that intragenerational mobility is the move from one employment to another inside one's own life span, while intergenerational mobility is the change when compared to one's parents. Transitions between jobs at different hierarchical levels are referred to as vertical mobility, while changes between occupations at the same level are referred to as horizontal mobility.

When it comes to social mobility and education, academic success and degree completion have taken over the fundamentals of social stratification in society, including personal social mobility, delegitimizing earlier methods of status gratification. It may be claimed that mass education is a fundamental social revolution of modernity with increasing influence on the postmodern world because of the widespread effects of formal education on postindustrial society (Baker & Halabi, 2014).

Haveman and Smeeding (2006) postulated higher education is meant to support the idea of social mobility and to provide everyone with the necessary skills and drive the chance to achieve. Colleges and universities must look for aptitude, drive, and readiness wherever possible to fulfill this duty effectively. Additionally, Haveman and Smeeding (2006) declared that colleges and universities are required to provide their students with the best possible educational services. Education is widely employed as a social mobility tool since it is usually believed both to promote and reflect people's qualities and talents. Education, thus, promotes social mobility since it enables social selection to be based on acquired traits of individuals rather than predetermined attributes (Encyclopedia Britannica, n.d.-e).

Upward and downward social mobility are indexical indicators of the effectiveness of an education-based meritocracy: individuals join the occupational ladder based on their own accomplishments and merit, as indicated in their educational credentials, rather than depending

on their social backgrounds. As a result, social mobility is an essential platform for galvanizing public support for cultivating skills and acquiring work (Cowen et al., 2009).

### *Accessibility*

American society benefited socioeconomically from mass education. Tavares et al. (2022) maintain that the shift that the United States made from mass secondary education to mass postsecondary education after World War II is generally seen to have been the primary driver behind the “massification” of other national systems of higher education during the preceding 25 years (p. 47). Moreover, the United States of America has many policies and practices that merit praise, such as its nationally competitive funding of academic research, its management and governance of research universities, and its structure and collaborative organization of doctoral research programs leading to broader accessibility. It is more debatable whether the country’s current policies that regulate access to higher education are effective. The differences in economic inequality and access to higher education that are evident in the United States are a result of a number of intricate issues. Steely and Heller (2002) defined five ways to look at the accessibility of higher education institutions. These include:

- Financial accessibility: Does the student have the financial resources necessary to attend college?
- Geographic accessibility: How far does a potential student have to travel to attend college?
- Programmatic accessibility: Is the academic program that the student wants available?
- Academic accessibility: Has the student had the proper academic preparation in her

or his precollegiate years?

- Cultural/social/physical accessibility: Do precollege students receive the necessary encouragement and support to attend college from parents, families, peers, schools, and others? Do some policies (either de jure or de facto) prohibit or encourage the enrollment of students from particular groups, such as racial minorities or older, non-traditional college students? Are there physical barriers to attendance, especially for students with a disability that limits their mobility?

Additionally, under the U.S. federal government structure, the 50 states are primarily responsible for organizing and supporting primary and secondary education, and in the majority of states, local property taxes supply the majority of school revenue. Consequently, the quality of schools in low-income neighborhoods in the United States is worse. Heckman (2000) stated, “State and local governments heavily subsidize primary and secondary education. Virtually all direct operating costs are completely subsidized through high school; only the opportunity cost of the students’ time remains unsubsidized” (p. 176). Throughout the last 2 decades, state funding declines and tuition revenue increases placed a growing burden on students to fund public higher education. In 2021, 42.1% of total education revenue came from tuition (State Higher Education Executive Officers Association, 2021).

Another factor that affects the accessibility of higher education is that the United States does not have a national curriculum or assessments for primary or secondary education; For one thing, Zusman (2005) stated that sometimes students from low-income families, underrepresented racial and ethnic minorities, and first-generation students are enrolled in schools with fewer academic resources. Because of the disparities in the resources available to such districts, the quality of education provided to students in wealthy and impoverished school

districts differs significantly. As a consequence of the lack of a standardized educational program at the national level, the pupils in schools with fewer resources could have a lesser level of intellectual preparation, and as a result, their academic objectives and test results may also be lower (Zusman, 2005). Despite the disparity in education curriculum, standardized exams created by the independent College Board, SAT exam, and ACT exam may be utilized in all 50 states to determine a student's college admission eligibility (Tavares et al., 2022).

Furthermore, Tavares et al. (2022) ascertain that US college and university admissions decisions are primarily the responsibility of each public and private institution. Each university has its own set of admission requirements, and recent court cases involving the wealthy's access to American higher education institutions have highlighted issues with the nation's lack of college admittance standards. In a few instances, affluent parents' attempts to persuade test-takers and members of college admissions committees to assure their children's entrance to prestigious, selective research colleges have been made public in court proceedings. Moreover, other court cases that revealed discriminatory admissions practices that favored athletes chosen to play for college sports teams, children of college alumni, and children of institutional staff members were used as support for in-depth research on admissions to prestigious US colleges and universities. Concerns about the equity and fairness of access to higher education in the US today are legitimately raised by the disparities in admission standards for elite institutions and universities (Tavares et al., 2022).

According to Tavares et al. (2022), the rising demand for higher education will collide with forces that limit enrollment, further complicating the admissions practices of universities. These forces include increased public willingness to see higher education as a private benefit and resulting cutbacks in public support for higher education. Additionally, Governments are already

under pressure to balance their budgets while trying to satisfy other social needs, affecting public universities' funding. Public institutions are subject to demands to limit the number of graduate students enrolled in their programs and reject admission to students who need remedial help to increase the number of students they can enroll with the same amount of financing (Zusman, 2005).

Furthermore, Zusman (2005) adds that many private and public higher education schools operate in a seller's market that allows them to be more selective. By giving more of their limited resources to relatively wealthy, tuition-paying students, more schools may be able to increase the effectiveness of their financial assistance programs. Increased selectivity, enrollment limits, and targeted admissions replace applicants with applicants who are higher income or more qualified, who then enroll at schools with lower selectivity levels until those at the bottom have nowhere to go (Zusman, 2005). Moreover, the cost of attending college continues to rise. "Tuition at private colleges has increased 800 percent since 1980 and 230 percent at public universities since 1988" (Paterno, 2022, para. 5). Since 2000, private colleges' average total tuition, fees, room and board increased from \$32,965 to \$49,210, and public colleges increased from \$11,402 to \$19,374 in 2020 (Digest of Education Statistics, 2020).

### *Cost*

Steely and Heller (2002) stated, "Concerns about paying for college are prevalent throughout U.S. society. Media reports regularly trumpet the rising cost of higher education, including one article that proclaimed the arrival of the '\$1,000-a-week price tag' for college" (p. 1). Furthermore, he stated that access to affordable higher education may be evaluated in a number of different ways (Steely & Heller, 2002). Examining the prices is perhaps the least complicated option. Nevertheless, the price of higher education has a number of ramifications for

the industry as a whole. The first thing that must be considered is what needs to be included in the cost. Almost all students are required to pay some kind of tuition, which may be referred to as fees at their respective institutions. No matter how they are referred to, these fees often include the cost of the courses and any connected services. Most bachelor's degree-granting institutions in the U.S. participate in a competitive market. Therefore, almost all such colleges and universities charge student tuition and housing and meal fees for those living on campus, which affects some students, particularly those living in residence halls that the university supplies (Steely & Heller, 2002).

Many students believe that they will be responsible for their own subsistence costs regardless of whether they enroll in college; therefore, they include the room and board fees to the total cost of attending college in their calculations (Steely & Heller, 2002). Consequently, Steely and Heller (2002) contended that these costs are real for the students and their families who are compelled to pay them and that they often contribute to the sticker shock that individuals contemplating going to college suffer.

In addition to tuition, room, and board, many schools charge supplementary fees for various products and services. A college may ask all students to pay an athletic fee to assist in subsidizing the expense of interscholastic and intramural sporting activities. Required technology fees to assist in funding the cost of computer and network infrastructures also have grown in popularity. Students enrolled in scientific courses may be required to pay laboratory fees for using laboratory equipment and materials. Most college students are also required to buy other products or services, textbooks, that may add hundreds of dollars to the cost of education. Students attending a distant university may incur hefty transportation expenses. Moreover, Steely and Heller (2002) asserted that the role of financial aid, a crucial element of the college financing

model in the United States, should be considered while examining the price of education. As with many other products and services, a college education is often reduced below the sticker price shown in college catalogs, admissions brochures, and bursar bills (Steely & Heller, 2002).

Steely and Heller (2002) contended

[The] discount is provided in the form of financial aid, which typically consists of (1) grants or scholarships, which directly reduce the sticker price; (2) loans, which help defray the initial cost of college but must be repaid at a later date; and (3) work study, in which the student agrees to provide services to the college in exchange for hourly wages. The federal government, state governments, private sources, commercial financial institutions, and schools and universities themselves may all provide financial help. (p. 15)

Steely and Heller (2002) further asserted that higher education is a product, a service, and a lifelong investment that must be acquired and paid for, much like other commodities and services.

### ***Student Aid***

Students who want to continue higher education but cannot afford to do so are often compelled to make less-than-ideal financial decisions, such as taking out student loans. Contrary to their better judgment, many college students take out student loans to finance their education. This is not because they are assured of the financial return on their investment but because they are convinced that their life chances and those of their families would be diminished if they do not invest (Goldrick-Rab & Steinbaum, 2020).

Many states have created merit-based support programs for their residents in response to the steadily rising costs of pursuing higher education in the United States (Page & Scott-Clayton, 2016). The bulk of the growth in financial aid spending by the U.S. government during the previous 20 years has gone to these state programs. For students who have met particular secondary school grade point average requirements or received a certain SAT or ACT test score,



several programs provide full tuition coverage at in-state public institutions regardless of the applicant's financial need. Overall, full tuition coverage programs effectively increase the number of college students, their academic performance, and the number of individuals who graduate. However, Tavares et al. (2022) argued that these tax-based financial aid rules for merit-based state assistance are similarly unfair since many of the in-state students who receive them would otherwise attend college and come from middle- or upper-class families that can readily afford higher education.

Federal, state, and institutional funds provide financial assistance to students in the form of scholarships and grants, student loans, and student work-study funds (Barr, 2009). The majority of financial aid in the U.S. is allocated to students with demonstrated financial need, illustrating vertical equity and mobility. Additionally, Zusman (2005) asserted that governmental, state, and corporate financial aid programs, as well as those provided by institutions, have also shifted away from grants and assistance based on financial needs during the last quarter century. All 50 U.S. states' higher education institutions, according to Giancola and Kahlenberg (2016), also provide non-need-based assistance, such as student scholarships based entirely on academic excellence and athletic prowess. The number of U.S. undergraduates getting non-need-based help increased from 13% to 19% between 1999 and 2011, whereas the number of students in the lowest income quartile receiving such aid scarcely moved from 9% to 10% (Giancola & Kahlenberg, 2016).

The American higher education system, according to Tavares et al. (2022), is already unique because of the presence of colleges and universities that impose variable tuition and fees, a market that is competitive for student enrollment, and institutions that enjoy a considerable level of autonomy in terms of admissions policy. Nonetheless, the income disparity is often

widened by the current government financial assistance distribution system. In the U.S., applying to college is strongly correlated with having parents with a specific level of education and experience, whereas children from lower-income households are far less likely to have parents with a postsecondary degree. As a result, these parents could be less likely to take on debt and less willing to face the possibility of suffering a financial loss to their and the higher education expenditures connected with their children attending college. Likewise, students from low-income households in the United States and their parents who have less education may sometimes find applying for financial assistance for college intimidating and onerous (Tavares et al., 2022). Furthermore, relatively few of these students will enroll in universities and 4-year colleges without receiving major aid.

Tavares et al. (2022) contended that if low-income students do not get adequate financial help, increasing tuition expenses may deter them from enrolling in college or finishing their degrees there. In 2003, the entire cost of attendance at 4-year public schools for kids whose families were in the lowest 25% of family income earners was more than 70% of a family's income (Tavares et al., 2022).

The American higher education system does not provide students from high- and low-income households equal opportunity, despite its professed objectives and frequent assertions. Instead, Haveman and Smeeding (2006) postulated that the existing admissions, enrollment, and graduation procedures for schools and universities are a factor in economic inequality measured by wealth and income. Thus, the system seems to accentuate and support disparities in economic position. Even if college enrollment rates are rising and college graduation rates for American students are slowly, if at all, growing, changes in the makeup of the populations who are eligible for and graduate from college seem to have maintained already-existing class inequalities

(Haveman & Smeeding, 2006).

The total U.S. undergraduate student aid in 2020–2021 represented \$234.9 Billion from the following sources: 41% federal loans, 30% institutional grants, 16% federal Pell Grants, 6% federal education tax benefits, 5.4% state grants, 7% private and employer grants, and 6% federal veterans' benefits (College Board, 2021).

### ***Growing Graduate Market***

Compared to 20 or 30 years ago, according to Zusman (2005), the employment market for new doctorate graduates is less secure. One indicator is the proportion of doctorate holders who have employment after completing their studies. Although the situation was better than in the early 1990s, when the Ph.D. market was at its lowest point, professional association polls do not reflect the considerably larger proportion of positions secured within 6 months of earning the degree. However, Zusman (2005) noted that it does not include the increasing percentage that chooses postdoctoral research over work, and yet it offers a broad picture. She also asserted that the growing proportion of new doctorate graduates employed in postdoctoral positions is another sign of the growing graduate job market, particularly in the sciences. More than 75% of recent graduates with a Ph.D. in biochemistry, more than 50% of physicists, and more than one third of psychologists sought employment in postdoctoral study positions in 2002. The length of time spent in these positions appears to be increasing, according to Zusman (2005), which leads to a decrease in the number of employment opportunities available.

### ***Call for Leadership in Higher Education***

Changes in the many factors affecting higher education have made leadership a necessary need. “We are in the midst of a monumental shift in the value placed on higher education by nations and citizens of the world, and in the quality and structure of national systems” (Douglass,

2011). The demands of society and the institutions established to address those needs are changing in the modern world as a result of a wide range of strong social, economic, and technical factors. The social compact between the university and the country has to be reexamined, and government legislation and action will likely be needed to reshape this relationship (Duderstadt, 1999).

Higher education is currently faced with the challenge of reevaluating and realigning its public agenda to serve a time when educated individuals, the knowledge they generate, and the innovative thinking and entrepreneurial skills they possess have emerged as the keys to economic growth, public safety, and social well-being. The imperatives of increasing access to higher education at all levels, conducting world-class research, and producing outstanding scientists, engineers, physicians, teachers, and other knowledge professionals in a world where competition is on the rise will only call for significant changes in university leadership and governance while also challenging their most fundamental structure and purpose (Duderstadt, 2009).

Douglass (2011) contended, “in the United States, developing human capital for both economic and social benefit is an idea as old as the nation itself and led to the emergence of the world’s first mass higher education system” (p. 1). Currently, most other countries are vying to increase access to higher education institutions and their social impact. Higher education’s significance for creating an aspirational culture, which in turn fosters the development of human capital, fosters social mobility, and determines the competitiveness of the national economy, is expanding significantly. Lo et al. (2020) declared that the changes that are needed are “the result of internationalization and trans-nationalization of higher education, which inevitably lead to new forms of competition and reform within universities at different regional, national, and

international levels” (p. 2). Because of rising competition among research institutes, the focus point of this conflict shifted from the national to the international level. Most colleges still compete inside their respective states and nations, but the wealthiest ones increasingly do so on a global rather than a national level. Musselin (2018) maintained that their curriculum now aims to create “citizens of the world,” not simply countrymen (p. 662). Because they have been able to acquire additional financing resources, typically from the tuition paid by their international students, and because the nationality of their professors is changing, they are less reliant on national funding and authority. Instead of focusing on internal concerns, their work also takes a global perspective (Musselin, 2018).

As a result of the various factors, higher education institutions must change how they function, adjust to the expectations imposed on them, and change the environment in which they operate. Higher education in the United States is going to go through a period of significant change during the next 10 years as a result of a variety of factors, some of which include the following: the emergence of a knowledge-based global economy, changes in demographics, notably in the young population; the financial constraints faced by the federal and state governments; the improvements in education seen in other countries; the rapidly rising education technology and tech sector; and other unknown factors (d’Ambrosio et al., 2007). For these reasons and others, d’Ambrosio et al. (2007) asserted that colleges and universities are increasingly seeking strategies to boost enrollment, make the most of their capacity to provide flexible course offerings, and maintain sufficient budgetary management of tax monies from public and private contributions. Many higher education institutions are discovering that hybrid and online learning models are compatible with the business strategy required to maintain profitability and sustainability.

As a consequence of the critical developments in the higher education industry, the role of the university president is continuously evolving, and there are higher expectations. For this reason, Goolamally and Ahmad (2014) asserted that leadership is “a main indicator in determining the success of an organization” (p. 123). In times of ambiguity, leaders must be willing to face new difficulties. It is critical to push the boundaries of the process, promote innovation, and absorb lessons from errors. According to Mercer (2016), school leaders can help schools transition from what has historically worked to what will be necessary for the future. They are essential to maintaining a sustainable education reform. The capacity to sway other people’s opinions and behaviors is a prerequisite for effective leadership in implementing this transformation. The transformational leadership model of teaching and learning allows university leaders to reimagine the teaching and learning process to serve students better (Sparks, 2021). According to Kotter (2012), change leadership is more closely related to giving the whole change process a boost and enabling it to move more quickly, intelligently, and effectively.

## **Conclusion**

While it is not a cure-all, education is a potent intervention that benefits virtually everyone who receives it. A well-educated populace is necessary for a strong democracy, economy, and society. Even though there are obviously personal advantages for individuals from education, the tremendous public benefits are the primary justification for government spending. Unquestionably, the United States has had the strongest higher education system in the world since World War II and has served as a model for popular support of universal access. While this is the case, Tierney (2021) claimed that, among other important factors, privatization, declining public financing, and the casualization of academic employment have prompted worries about the future of higher education. Because of the unpredictability that surrounds the world of higher

education, there is an absolute need for leadership in this sector.

### **Chapter 3: Methodology**

This qualitative study uses a narrative methodology and approach to research. According to Pepperdine University IRB website (n.d.), this study is classified as nonhuman subject research. This study focuses on the leaders in the academic realm that U.S. public higher education institutions employ. The leaders within the academic realm hold leadership or management positions for at least two years, with titles related to leadership, such as president, chancellor, vice president, provost, dean, and chair. Additionally, seven to ten leaders from doctorate-granting and higher Carnegie category U.S. public universities are selected, with the highest-ranking leader from each university selected. The leadership strategies are gathered from publicly available and accessible sources, such as books, websites, journals, and news articles.

#### **Background**

The COVID-19 pandemic has extraordinarily impacted the American higher education sector. Most educational institutions have changed course as a result of the pandemic. In addition to campuses converting to online learning immediately, universities are abruptly encountering significant financial challenges as the local and global economies seem to be heading for a catastrophic recession. Universities have many different stakeholders as a result of the various facets that are represented. As with small towns, universities have their own police departments, power plants, sports complexes, and other municipal agencies. Universities are also important local employers and contributors to the local and regional economies. Additionally, many universities oversee hospitals, which places them at the top of the local healthcare system. The COVID-19 pandemic impacted many financial streams U.S. higher educational institutions used, including tuition, grants, endowment, and athletic event ticket sales.



Universities have had to close their physical campuses and switch to online learning. On top of financial difficulties, many universities have presented their students with unprecedented challenges and multiple stressors related to the lockdown and distance learning and enrollment (Passavanti et al., 2021). Therefore, the uncertainty around enrollment makes the problem with cash flow even more difficult. “About 1.5 million fewer students are enrolled in college than before the pandemic” (Belkin, 2022, para. 2). Colleges and universities may encounter unexpected and unprecedented attrition if students are unable to return to campus. These students may be unsatisfied with their distance learning experience or find it difficult to pay tuition in the present economic situation. Additionally, some students could decide to remain closer to home in uncertain times. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic led to a 3.0% drop in student full time enrollment from 2020 to 2021. The loss of 323,952 students marks the 10th consecutive year of enrollment declines and is the largest decline in net full time enrollment (State Higher Education Executive Officers Association, 2021). Short-term unanticipated expenses and longer-term enrollment declines would likely pose a danger to institutions that were already struggling financially or running deficits before the pandemic. The budgets of higher education institutions have been affected by the financial and economic disruption brought on by COVID-19, according to Blankenberger and Williams (2020), and this fiscal picture will only grow worse if the disruption brought on by the pandemic prolongs. As a result, many institutions could be forced to consolidate or shut down.

Leadership was a vital success element for enabling curricular transition during the first 6 months of COVID-19 (Lalani et al., 2021). In order to manage huge educational communities during the COVID-19 epidemic, academic leaders in higher education had to make choices swiftly and attend to the requirements of both society and the students, professors, and staff.

According to Morris et al. (2020), leaders are crucial in creating a positive working culture in educational institutions. Some examples of this culture include a greater focus on professional development and learning, higher levels of job satisfaction, and more successful application of pedagogical strategies (Lalani et al., 2021). While there are numerous elements that might cause a university to undergo significant change, the goal of this research is to comprehend how university leaders use transformational leadership to change the university environment.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this qualitative study is to get a more in-depth understanding of the transformational leadership strategies that university leaders are using to change the environments at their various institutions. Although there is a wealth of research on the theoretical foundations of transformational leadership, very little is known about how higher education leaders implement transformational leadership in today's rapidly evolving global economy.

By having a greater grasp of transformational leadership and how it can contribute to the transformation of university environments, university leaders will be better equipped to lead their teams and steer their organizations in the age following the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Research Questions**

It has been shown that transformational leadership, a style of leadership that is often advocated for in the context of higher education, has a favorable impact on performance, collaborative behavior, and goal attainment (Lamm et al., 2021). This study aims to understand how university leaders transform their universities. The main question for this study is What transformational leadership strategies do university leaders use to transform university environments?

The subquestions are derived from the theoretical framework:

- RQ 1: What transformational leadership strategies are practiced by university leaders to influence others?
- RQ 2: What transformational leadership strategies are practiced by university leaders to motivate others?
- RQ 3: What transformational leadership strategies are practiced by university leaders to stimulate creativity?
- RQ 4: What transformational leadership strategies are practiced by university leaders to create individualized consideration?

### **Methodological Approach and Study Design**

This research uses Bass's (1985a) transformational leadership model as the theoretical framework to examine how university leaders regularly use transformational leadership strategies to change their academic landscapes. The research uses narratives to gather data in a qualitative manner. While there is a body of research on higher education, some of which relates to leadership, less is published on transformational leadership style in the higher education sector in the 21st century to adapt university settings, supporting the choice to employ a qualitative technique. A method known as narrative inquiry is used to assist in the process of identifying leadership strategies that correspond with the results of the research. The research analyzes the themes derived from the data to determine whether they are congruent with the transformational leadership identified in the literature study.

### **Data Sources and Data Gathering Procedures**

According to the Pepperdine University IRB, this study complied with federal regulations as nonhuman subjects research. This research acquired all of its information from publicly accessible and available sources. There was no human-subject contact.

In developing data collection methods, the researcher aims to provide a clear and exact

document so that readers may comprehend the study's methodology step-by-step (Roberts & Hyatt, 2019).

The researcher gathered extensive data from a number of publicly available and accessible sources, including books, websites, journals, and news articles. The researcher considered the number of sources adequate to find detailed accounts of the participant's experiences (Roberts & Hyatt, 2019).

In a narrative study, documents are one way that researchers gather information, according to Creswell (2018). In order to gather information on the topic of this dissertation and try to find answers to the research questions, this study used a deliberate criteria sampling technique to collect publicly available and easily accessible documents and data. It is more likely that relevant data will be found by purposeful, criterion-based research, leading to a knowledge of the research challenge and shedding light on the phenomena it is investigating (Creswell, 2018).

The following criteria were applied:

- university leaders who have leadership or management roles, with the highest-ranking leader at each institution selected;
- university leaders employed by universities headquartered in the U.S.;
- university leaders who have at least 2 years of experience in leadership roles;
- universities with the categorization of doctoral granting or higher; and
- universities with hybrid or online doctoral programs.

### **Limitations**

The capacity of a researcher to generalize their results may be hindered by the presence of limitations. Limitations may entail aspects of a study over which the researcher has little or no

influence (Roberts & Hyatt, 2019). Only leaders currently employed by organizations located in the United States were included in the study's sample population for analysis. As a consequence, the researcher was unable to draw generalized conclusions from the study results since the sample group did not contain a varied range of viewpoints and practices from university officials all over the globe.

The study employed a qualitative approach employing a narrative procedure, in which the researcher presented the results made from qualitative data obtained from generally accessible and available sources.

### **Credibility, Dependability, Reliability**

Credibility, according to Korstjens and Moser (2018), is the degree of trust that may be expressed in the veracity of the study results. Credibility supports the idea that the study results are a legitimate interpretation of the participants' original views and whether they reflect believable information derived from the participants' original data. Dependability is the ability to provide outcomes consistently throughout time. The process through which the researcher evaluates the findings, interpretations, and suggestions made by the study to make sure that each of these is supported by the information received from the participants is referred to as reliability (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). According to Roberts and Hyatt (2019), the dependability element helps the reader to believe the data analysis, while the credibility factor in qualitative research demonstrates the extent to which an instrument really measures what it purports to measure (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). "In qualitative research, reliability often refers to the stability of responses to multiple coders of data sets" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 345).

The consistency of the results was supported by the use of several freely accessible and publicly available sources. By incorporating multiple different data sources, the study's

conclusions obtained additional credibility. A second reviewer was used to check the themes independently for consistency using the same coding technique as the researcher to confirm the found themes' reliability. In addition to the themes the researcher had supplied, the second reviewer was requested to identify additional themes they had independently discovered from the data and to compare how these varied from the themes the researcher had provided. Using manual comparison, the researcher and the second reviewer independently examined the data against the codes to guard against definition drift. They checked the analysis notes when they were done to make sure the coding process was trustworthy. The method was established using Hyatt's (2021) precise 10-step approach, which also serves to bolster the of this research.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Denzin and Lincoln (2018) stated, "Ethical considerations are paramount" (p. 921). A researcher's major obligations are to do rigorous research using sound techniques and displaying high ethical standards. Protecting data sources, gathering data, analyzing and interpreting data, respecting the study site, and disseminating the findings are all crucial areas for ethical concern in research (Roberts & Hyatt, 2019). The researcher successfully completed the CITI program's Human Subjects Training course as part of the preparatory procedure and to obtain further training in research procedures (see Appendix A).

An important ethical consideration in this experiment was maintaining the subjects' anonymity. No names, titles, or organization names were used in this study by the researcher. The subjects' anonymity was protected. Instead, throughout the research, the author referred to the participants as university leaders. This study defines university leaders as those in senior leadership or management positions.

### ***Beneficence***

A second ethical idea that is closely tied to research is beneficence, which is characterized as doing good for others and avoiding inflicting damage to others, according to Orb et al. (2001). The research included measures to reduce participant risks by outlining specific activities to preserve the anonymity of any identifying information. By allocating a numerical number to each investigated leader, the researcher obscured the data that were collected from open, accessible sources. For the purpose of answering the first research question, for instance, the first source utilized to gather information was denoted as source A1, the second as source A2, the third as source A3, and so on. The list of sources was kept only by the researcher in an electronic folder maintained on a private, password-protected computer that was locked away when not in use and destroyed after the study was completed.

### ***Justice***

Allocating the benefits and risks of participating in a research study fairly and equally is necessary to uphold justice. Moreover, avoiding the exploitation and abuse of participants is one of the essential and distinguishing aspects of this approach. In addition, justice prohibits putting one group of individuals at risk because of the study to benefit another group. Recognizing the participants' vulnerability and their contributions to the study demonstrates the researcher's comprehension and implementation of the concept of justice in qualitative research investigations (Orb et al., 2001). The idea of justice includes using fair selection methods based on the benefits of research for a population as a whole and the topic being studied (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

To ensure that the selection process of subjects is equitable, the researcher drew candidates from a large pool of nationwide leaders from multiple publicly available and

accessible sources, including published books, websites, journals, and news articles. Each research question was substantiated with a minimum of seven sources.

The study's findings are intended to add to the body of knowledge on transformational leadership theory, specifically to how leaders in the higher education industry practice this leadership style to transform a university environment. By bringing theory and practice together, the researcher aimed to add to the body of knowledge for transformational leadership in the higher education industry.

### **Data Analysis Processes**

The goal of the data analysis method was to interpret the text and data obtained during the study process (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In accordance with Creswell and Creswell's (2018) five-step paradigm, the following procedures were performed for data analysis:

- Prepare the data for analysis by organizing it. All study data must be arranged, transcription, and cataloged at this stage. The final report includes written notes as a narrative.
- Read and examine all the information. The purpose of this stage is to assess the broad view that the leaders who have been studied are expressing. Transcripts are archived with any observational notes found in the margins.
- Data coding in this stage, individual phrases, and paragraphs from the responses of chosen leaders are segmented into groups using text data from studied sources. Each category is given a unique descriptive name as a code.
- Establish themes and descriptions. Not all data can be utilized in a qualitative investigation since text data is anticipated to be dense (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The researcher will, thus, compile the data into a select few topics. Each subject is



supported by many quotes drawn from reliable sources.

- Illustrative of the themes and description. The results of the analysis are presented in a narrative section. The narrative of the leaders who have been well-studied provides detailed descriptions of the themes. Data tables are used to show interconnected topics.

### **Means to Ensure Internal Study Dependability**

Following the researcher's assessment of the data to ensure anonymity, a comprehensive record of any written research notes was compiled, evaluated, and shared with a second reviewer. According to Roberts and Hyatt (2019), dependability in qualitative studies “demonstrates support for the conclusions” (p. 149). Hyatt's (2021) 10-step process was applied to establish interviewer dependability and trustworthiness:

- The primary researcher analyzed the data and then met with the second reviewer to review the coding process.
- The primary researcher selected a transcript to familiarize the reviewer with the coding process.
- The researcher maintained the highlighted, analyzed version of the transcript.
- The second reviewer was provided with a clean (noncoded) copy of the selected transcript.
- Prior to analysis, the researcher and reviewer read the transcript to familiarize the reviewer with the data from the transcripts and answer any questions.
- The researcher assisted the reviewer in completing the analysis of one selected transcript by reading the text, deciphering the general idea, assessing the fit for the research question, and identifying a relevant and appropriate theme.

- The researcher and reviewer engaged in the coding process independently from each other, utilizing the collectively completed transcript as a guide to increase coding consistency among coders. An interviewer comparison sheet was created on a shared Excel sheet by the researcher. The codes were entered under the researcher's and reviewer's separate columns.
- The additional reviewer applied the same process to the remaining transcripts independent of the primary researcher.
- After completing all transcripts, the primary researcher and reviewer reconvened and reviewed identified findings, discussed differences, and agreed on the conclusions. Conclusions of agreement or disagreement between the researcher and reviewer were entered into the right column. In case of a dissent, agreed-upon codes were finalized and entered into the last column of the document.
- Criteria for significant themes were agreed upon when most participants provided supportive data for the themes.

### **Researcher and Reflexivity**

The primary focus of the research is transformational leadership. Through qualitative research, the objective is to comprehend the transformational leadership approaches employed by university leaders to improve their respective university environment. Creswell and Creswell (2018) defined qualitative research as interpretative research in which the researcher typically does a drawn-out and in-depth data examination. Reflexivity, as defined by Olmos-Vega et al. (2022), is a multifaceted and continuous practice in which researchers critically reflect upon and evaluate how their own subjectivity and contextual factors influence the research processes. Through the course of the study and the data collection process, the framework developed by

Srivastava and Hopwood (2009) was implemented to reduce the amount of implicit bias toward the subject of the study and the data interpretation. The framework takes an iterative reflexive approach with three questions to glean the results' meaning. Question 1 is, what are the data telling me? Question 2 is, what do I want to know, connecting research aims, questions and points of interest? Question 3 asks what the dialectical relationship is between what the data are telling me and what I want to know. This question helps to focus further and link back to the study's research questions (Srivastava & Hopwood, 2009).

Bias is another element that is considered throughout the research. Mantzoukas (2005) argued, "Bias in such studies is not something that needs to be, or can be, eliminated" (p. 291); moreover, Creswell and Creswell (2018) asserted that continual assessment of oneself as a researcher throughout the process and the personal connection to the study's subject is necessary for combating possible biases. Preconceptions and presuppositions will need to be identified via reflection by the reflective and reflexive researcher, who will also need to show how these preconceptions and presuppositions affect the decisions made (Mantzoukas, 2005). In order to include reflective thinking in the study, the researcher took notes while the data were being collected and considered how individual experiences could have influenced how the results were interpreted. A comprehensive and in-depth self-evaluation was done throughout the examination.

### **Summary**

Chapter 3 provided a comprehensive overview of the qualitative research methodology employed in the present study. Following the problem statement, research questions, and methodological approach, the chapter featured a variety of sub-sections. These parts comprised the data sources and data collection strategies, constraints of the study, credibility and

dependability of the research, ethical issues, recommended data processing processes, measures to assure internal study dependability, and researcher reflexivity.

The results of the study are discussed in the next chapter, and then Chapter 5 delves further into the implications and conclusions drawn from the previous chapters, as well as makes some suggestions for more research.

## Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results

This qualitative study was created to examine the transformational leadership strategies used by university leaders to change university environments. A university environment in this study is defined as an organizational culture and structure designed to adapt to changes while being financially sustainable and efficient to optimize the results for its students, professors, staff, and the larger knowledge-driven community (Duderstadt, 2009). The study examined individuals who occupy leadership or managerial positions within universities, encompassing roles such as president, chancellor, vice president, provost, dean, and chair. The selection process prioritized those with the highest level of organizational authority.

This research seeks to comprehend how university leaders modify their organizations. This study employs Bass's (1985a) transformational leadership model as the foundation for the theoretical framework to explore the main research question: What transformational leadership strategies do university leaders use to transform university environments?

The literature reviews surrounding the transformational leadership model of the Bass model comprise four main central tenets. Transformational leadership is measured on four dimensions: (a) idealized influence, sometimes referred to as charisma; (b) inspiring motivation; (c) intellectual stimulation; and (d) individual consideration (Bass, 1985a).

The following research questions were developed based on the theoretical framework:

- RQ 1: What transformational leadership strategies are practiced by university leaders to influence others?
- RQ 2: What transformational leadership strategies are practiced by university leaders to motivate others?
- RQ 3: What transformational leadership strategies are practiced by university leaders to stimulate creativity?
- RQ 4: What transformational leadership strategies are practiced by university leaders

to create individualized consideration?

The method of data gathering used in this study was qualitative in design and made use of narratives. The decision to use a qualitative methodology was supported by the dearth of research on how leaders in the higher education industry apply transformational leadership tactics to change the university environment. Narrative inquiry has emerged as a valuable research method for exploring various leadership approaches. This study employed narrative inquiry to examine four research questions pertaining to leadership in the university context. The data sources utilized in this investigation were widely accessible and publicly available, thereby enhancing the methodological rigor of the study. The data were collected and analyzed in accordance with the study's purpose, and key themes emerged pertaining to the strategies implemented by university leaders to effectuate change within their respective environments. The findings of this study hold significant implications for the practice of leadership within university settings.

### **Chapter Structure**

Chapter 4 offers a comprehensive overview of the data analysis discussion and the outcomes emanating from the study. Commencing with a reiteration of the study's objectives, the methodological approach deployed, alongside the research questions, are reiterated. This is then followed by a succinct summary of the data sources and the methodology used for data collection. Furthermore, the data analysis procedures and the techniques implemented to ensure verification and trustworthiness are underscored. After presenting the study's findings based on the research questions, a chapter summary is provided to encapsulate the salient points of the discussion.

## **Data Sources and Data Gathering Procedures**

Transformational leadership techniques were gathered for this nonhuman subject research from a range of publicly available and accessible sources, such as books, websites, journals, and news stories. This study employed a planned criteria sampling strategy to acquire publicly available and freely accessible documents and data in order to learn more about the subject of this research and attempt to discover answers to the research questions. The following criteria were applied when selecting the sources:

- university leaders who have leadership or management roles, with the highest-ranking leader at each institution selected;
- university leaders employed by universities headquartered in the U.S.;
- university leaders who have at least 2 years of experience in leadership roles;
- universities with the categorization of doctoral granting or higher; and
- universities with hybrid or online doctoral programs.

Keeping the individuals' identities secret was a crucial ethical factor in this investigation. The researcher did not utilize any names, titles, or company names in this study. Anonymity of the subjects was maintained. The participants were instead referred to by the author as university leaders throughout the inquiry. According to this survey, university leaders are those who hold high leadership or management roles.

The information needed to answer each study question was gleaned from seven different data points derived from sources that were open to the public and easy to obtain. The researcher obscured the data to protect the privacy of any personally identifiable information by adjusting the wording of the gathered material without substantially altering its meaning and assigning a number value and an alphabetical letter to each data item.

## **Limitations**

The capacity of a researcher to generalize their results may be hindered by the presence of limitations. Limitations may entail aspects of a study over which the researcher has little or no influence (Roberts & Hyatt, 2019). Only leaders presently employed by United States–based organizations were included in the sample group for analysis. As a result, the researcher was unable to make generalizations from the study findings, since the sample group did not include a diverse variety of perspectives and behaviors from university authorities throughout the world.

## **Data Analysis**

In accordance with Creswell and Creswell’s (2018) five-step paradigm, the following procedures were performed for data analysis:

- prepare the data for analysis by organizing it;
- read and examine all the information;
- data coding;
- establish themes and descriptions; and
- illustrative of the themes and description.

The deductive method was used, which enables the researcher to test or verify a theory rather than building it as the data is coded (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). According to Saldaña (2015), deductive coding is “a process of applying pre-existing codes to the data set with the goal of validating, testing, or extending preconceived theoretical constructs” (p. 105). Similarly, Miles et al. (2014) defined deductive coding as “a process of applying a predetermined set of codes, categories, or themes to the data, usually based on existing theory or research questions” (p. 23). The four central themes for transformational leaders are idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.



In addition, the inductive coding was used, which made it possible to construct a generalized model or theory by building up from the facts to more general themes. According to Thomas (2006), inductive coding is “a way of grouping similar chunks of data together to create categories or themes that emerge from the data, rather than imposing preconceived categories on the data” (p. 167). Similarly, Charmaz (2006) defined inductive coding as “a process of identifying themes, patterns, and categories in data through careful and repeated readings” (p. 42). The four themes, according to Bass and Avolio (1994)

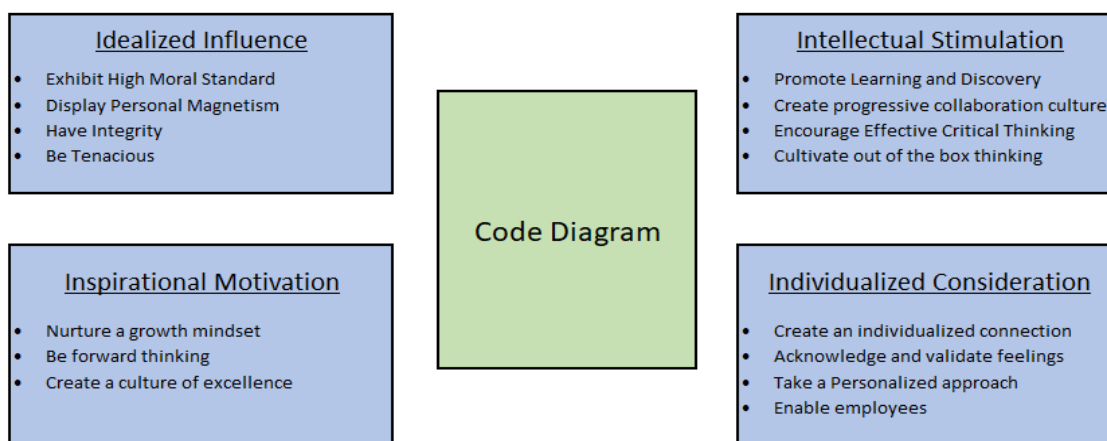
- **Idealized Influence:** Transformational leaders act as role models for their followers and gain their trust and respect through their personal attributes, such as honesty, integrity, and ethical behavior. They inspire followers to emulate their values and behaviors, creating a sense of shared vision and purpose.
- **Inspirational Motivation:** Transformational leaders inspire and motivate their followers to achieve a common goal. They communicate a compelling vision of the future, set high expectations, and provide meaning and purpose to followers’ work.
- **Intellectual Stimulation:** Transformational leaders encourage innovation, creativity, and critical thinking among their followers. They challenge the status quo and promote an environment of continuous learning and growth.
- **Individualized Consideration:** Transformational leaders treat each follower as an individual with unique needs, strengths, and weaknesses. They provide personalized support, coaching, and mentoring, and empower followers to achieve their full potential.

The results of the current analysis showed that, despite a preponderance of evidence on the four key themes for transformational leaders, not all leaders had concrete strategies to share.

The criteria developed in this research required that the majority of website material provide information for the specified topics in order to meet the requirements for important themes. A code diagram was produced to aid the researcher in demonstrating which codes were discovered for each topic (see Figure 1).

## Figure 1

### *Code Diagram for Transformational Leadership Strategies*



## Methods for Verification and Trustworthiness

After conducting a meticulous review of the data to safeguard the confidentiality of the participants, a comprehensive record of any written notes stemming from the research endeavor was meticulously documented, scrutinized, and subsequently shared with the second reviewer. According to Roberts and Hyatt (2019), dependability in qualitative studies “demonstrates support for the conclusions” (p. 149). Hyatt’s (2021) 10-step process was applied to establish interviewer dependability and trustworthiness:

- The primary researcher analyzed the data and then met with the second reviewer to review the coding process.

- The primary researcher selected a transcript to familiarize the reviewer with the coding process.
- The researcher maintained the highlighted, analyzed version of the transcript.
- The second reviewer was provided with a clean (noncoded) copy of the selected transcript.
- Prior to analysis, the researcher and reviewer read the transcript to familiarize the reviewer with the data from the transcripts and answer any questions.
- The researcher assisted the reviewer in completing the analysis of one selected transcript by reading the text, deciphering the general idea, assessing the fit for the research question, and identifying a relevant and appropriate theme.
- The researcher and reviewer engaged in the coding process independently from each other, utilizing the collectively completed transcript as a guide to increase coding consistency among coders. An interviewer comparison sheet was created on a shared Excel sheet by the researcher. The codes were entered under the researcher's and reviewer's separate columns.
- The additional reviewer applied the same process to the remaining transcripts independent of the primary researcher.
- After completing all transcripts, the primary researcher and reviewer reconvened and reviewed identified findings, discussed differences, and agreed on the conclusions. Conclusions of agreement or disagreement between the researcher and reviewer were entered into the right column. In case of a dissent, agreed-upon codes were finalized and entered into the last column of the document.

- Criteria for significant themes were agreed upon when most participants provided supportive data for the themes.

Table 1 contains an example of the interviewer comparison sheet used in the study.

**Table 1**

*Interviewer Comparison Sheet*

Interviewer Comparison Sheet					
Leader	Primary Coder	Second Coder	Agreement	Disagreement	Final Subtheme
A1	Intentional	Intentional	1	0	Intentional
A2	Authentic	Authentic	1		Authentic
A3	Role model	Role model	1		Role model
A4	Charismatic	Role model		1	Charismatic
A5	Charismatic	Role model		1	Role model
A6	Authentic	Exemplary		1	Exemplary
A7	Authentic	Authentic	1		Authentic

The simple agreement approach was used in the qualitative research to assess the reliability of the transcript intercoder in interviewer discussions. The proportion of data units on

which two independent coders agreed was computed after comparing their coding choices. Based on the characteristics of the data and the setting of the study, the threshold for agreement between the coders was chosen.

According to Stemler (2004), one strategy that is often used to evaluate the reliability of intercoder in qualitative research is the simple agreement method. This method involves “simply reporting the percentage of data units the coders agree upon” (p. 2). Although this technique has several drawbacks, it does provide a helpful and workable approach to assessing the degree to which different coders adhere to the same coding judgments.

According to Landis and Koch’s (1977) recommendation, the required level of agreement among programmers should be at least 70%. Additionally, according to Landis and Koch (1977), a value between 0.41 and 0.60 indicates a moderate level of agreement, whereas a value between 0.61 and 0.80 indicates a high level of agreement.

In this study, a threshold of .81 agreement was set to indicate strong intercoder reliability. The final subthemes were identified based on the agreed-upon codes and the frequency of their occurrence in the data. Moreover, the use of the simple agreement method, along with the recommended threshold for agreement between coders, ensured the verification and trustworthiness of the research findings. The results demonstrated a high level of intercoder reliability, and the final subthemes accurately represented the perspectives of the interviewees.

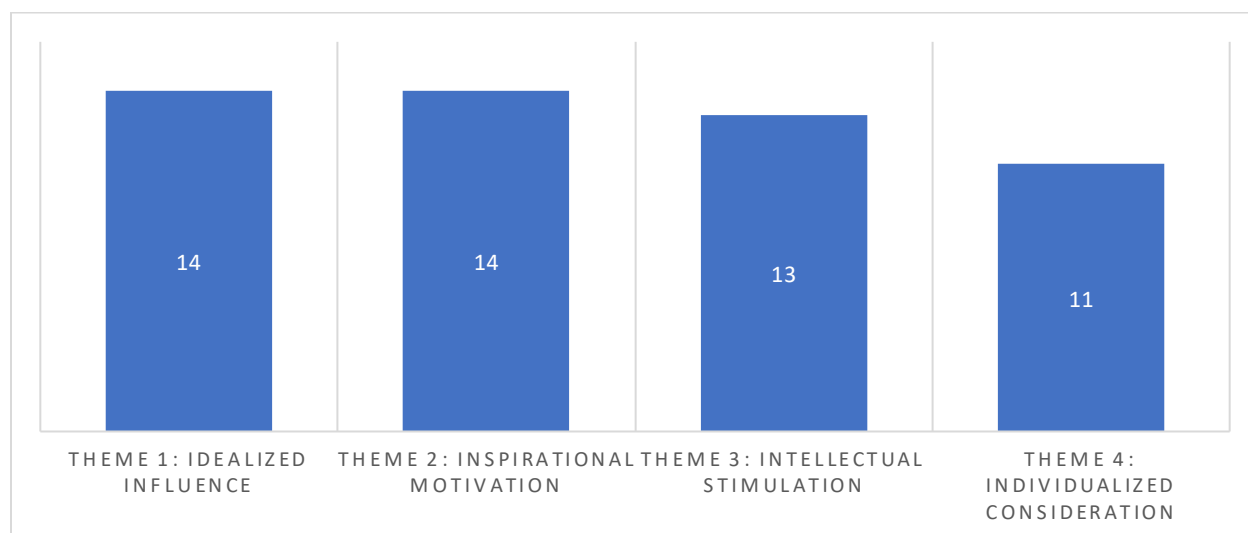
## **Research Results**

The primary objective of the study was to investigate how transformational leadership is used by university leaders. The main question was: What transformational leadership strategies do university leaders use to transform university environments? The study sought to investigate this objective by establishing four research questions. From the data analysis, 52 themes were

identified to indicate various transformational strategies, which were then analyzed against the central themes of transformational leaders: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. Figure 2 shows the number of themes identified for each research question.

**Figure 2**

*Number of Initial Themes for Each Research Question*



### ***Research Question 1 and Data***

RQ 1: What transformational leadership strategies are practiced by university leaders to influence others? This research question correlates to the theme of transformational leaders as idealized influence. For the purposes of this research, leaders with idealized influence are those who serve as role models for their followers and earn their trust and respect with personal characteristics such as honesty, integrity, and ethical conduct. They create a feeling of shared vision and purpose by motivating followers to adopt their ideals and conduct (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Here are examples of data captured in this category.

- It all began with a day in a field when I was 9 years old. I was given the task to pick cotton, but my mind was wandering, marveling at how this green plant could create a

- fluffy white ball. It was a moment of realization that set me on the path of becoming an agronomist. I pursued degrees from various universities and eventually landed a 34-year career in academia (A1).
- My experience as a young woman pursuing a degree in engineering in the 1970s makes me think that this is significant. Because I never had a female instructor for any of my basic scientific, mathematical, or engineering courses, it took me a while to grasp that I, too, could become a professor (A2).
  - In appreciation of the professor's leadership of the faculty council as well as their attendance here today, I would like to express my gratitude to them. During my time as chair of the graduate assembly, I had the opportunity to serve on the Faculty Council Executive Committee and witness firsthand the effort put into their role. I appreciate their willingness to take on such responsibilities. It's fascinating to consider how an idea can impact the world (A3).
  - One thing that has always struck me is the importance of leading with courage during turbulent times. If anyone understood this concept as a resident of this state, it was someone who was known for their exceptional ability to reconcile and bring people together. They were not afraid to work across party lines to accomplish significant goals. This individual is remembered for their unwavering convictions and steadfast guidance (A4).
  - We have an outstanding leadership team that champions our faculty, staff, and students, but collectively we know that it is each of you who define the spirit and ensure that we continue to live out our mission to transform lives in addition to those individuals (A5).

- I want to start off by sincerely thanking everyone who has donated before I get started with my thoughts today. All of the people in our community, including the instructors and staff, the present and former students, the alumni, and friends, deserve our thanks. You have shown steadfast dedication, and I appreciate that. I appreciate your tenacious work and tenacious tenacity, and I thank you. You have my sincere appreciation for the superb service you rendered (A6).
- I'm always a little bit intimidated when I see these super intelligent chess players come out who can plot courses and make things move in new ways. It's always very impressive (A7).

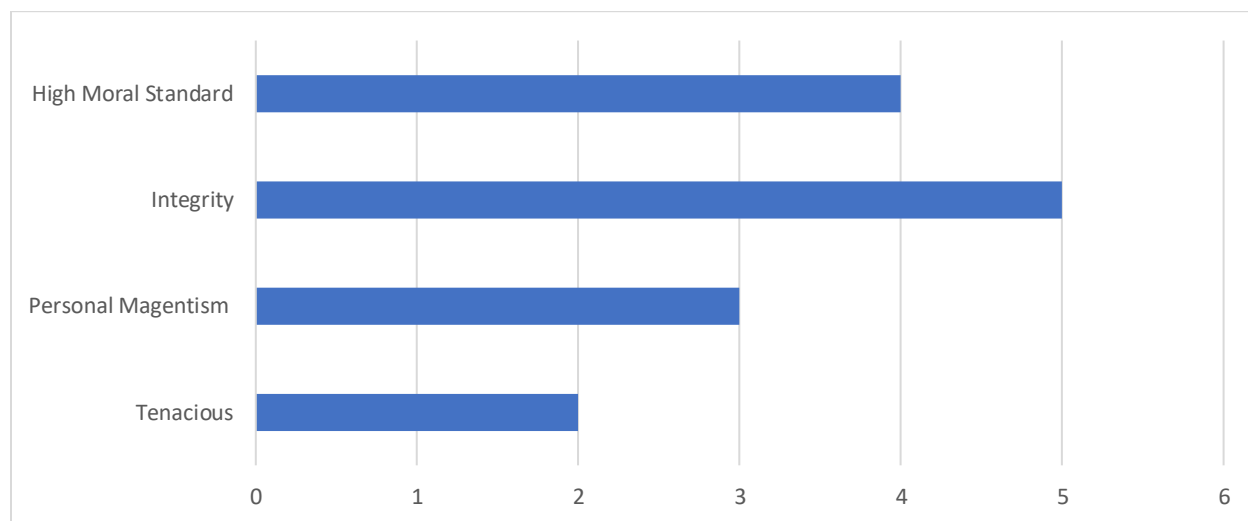
Upon analysis of the data content, notable patterns were observed. The researcher and interviewer identified 14 original subthemes from seven sources related to the first research question. The data revealed the content could be classified into four significant subtheme categories, namely, (a) exhibiting high moral standards, encompassing four subthemes; (b) displaying personal magnetism, comprising three subthemes; (c) integrity, which comprised five subthemes; and (d) tenacity, encompassing two subthemes.

Analyzing the frequency of the subthemes within the associated categories offered more notable patterns. The data indicated the most frequently occurring subthemes were encompassed in high moral standards and personal magnetism. Within the high moral standards subtheme category, the most frequently used subtheme was role model comprising 14 occurrences, followed by exemplary with 10 occurrences. Within the personal magnetism subtheme category, the most frequently used subtheme was authentic with 15 occurrences, followed by charismatic with nine occurrences. Figure 3 shows the number of themes identified for each research question.



**Figure 3**

*Summary of the Subthemes Generated from RQ1*



### ***Research Question 2 and Data***

RQ 2: What transformational leadership strategies are practiced by university leaders to motivate others? This research question correlates to the theme of transformational leaders as inspirational motivation. In this research, inspirational motivating leaders are those who inspire and motivate their followers to attain a shared objective. They convey a compelling future vision, establish high standards, and give their followers' efforts meaning and purpose (Bass & Avolio, 1994). The following are some examples of the kinds of data that were gathered under this theme.

- I believe we need to find ways to make the story of success and upward mobility possible for everyone, regardless of their starting point, their family background, or the pace of technological, economic, and political changes. We also need to find ways to make education a lifelong journey rather than just a 4- or 5-year experience (B1).
- Throughout the course of its existence, our educational establishment has relied on research initiatives that have promoted support for either faculty-proposed, curiosity-

- driven projects or research themes identified by senior leaders. These research initiatives have been implemented in a variety of ways. I contend that we should strive to attain the most optimal outcomes by procuring funding to bolster both research domains on a recurring basis. In accordance with this position, the advisory committee, which is comprised of distinguished faculty members holding positions such as eminent scholar or university distinguished professor, as well as senior administrators, has recommended the establishment of the presidential research excellence fund. Over the next 10 years, the purpose of this fund is to support two separate categories of research initiatives (B2).
- Drawing upon the collective insights and perspectives of numerous accomplished and multifaceted individuals, we have embarked on a potent, decade-long strategic plan that commences at present. This roadmap represents a tangible manifestation of our aspirations, which we endeavor to transform into tangible outcomes. To this end, the strategic plan enjoins us to attract and empower the most exceptional students, faculty, and staff; leverage our institutional strengths and geographical location; and nurture an environment that facilitates the flourishing of ideas, ultimately culminating in transformative change on a global scale (B3).
  - This represents a mere inception, and there is still an immense amount of work that must be undertaken. The issues at hand are complex and deeply entrenched, thereby rendering them difficult to comprehend at times and challenging to redress. It is acknowledged that we will not always be successful in our endeavors. Nevertheless, in our quest to emerge as an institution characterized by courage and leadership that is resolute, we must shed any inhibitions that hinder our efforts to advance. To this end,

we must fearlessly scrutinize and reformulate our ideas, actions, and behaviors.

Despite the myriad of obstacles and disruptions brought about by the past 8 months, wherein issues of public health and social justice have been at the forefront of our thoughts and emotions, we have persevered with our institutional pursuits (B4).

- As we all know too well, we collectively experienced many changes and challenges throughout the pandemic that could have paused our trajectory forward as a premier public research university and as a leading national university. But what I know to be true is that we have amazing students, faculty, staff, alumni, and supporters who helped ensure that we continue on such a path with the spirit of resiliency and renewal (B5).
- It's up to all of us to continue this momentum and build on our successes, ensuring that every student has access to the resources they need to succeed. Together, we can create an even brighter future for our university and for the state we serve (B6).
- Let me just put into perspective that what we're really trying to do is before your very eyes do something that's extremely difficult, which is to birth a new kind of public university, create a new kind of public university, empower that university with every tool that humans can develop, and find a way in which that university can now engage in its true public mission, which is the success ultimately of the democracy (B7).

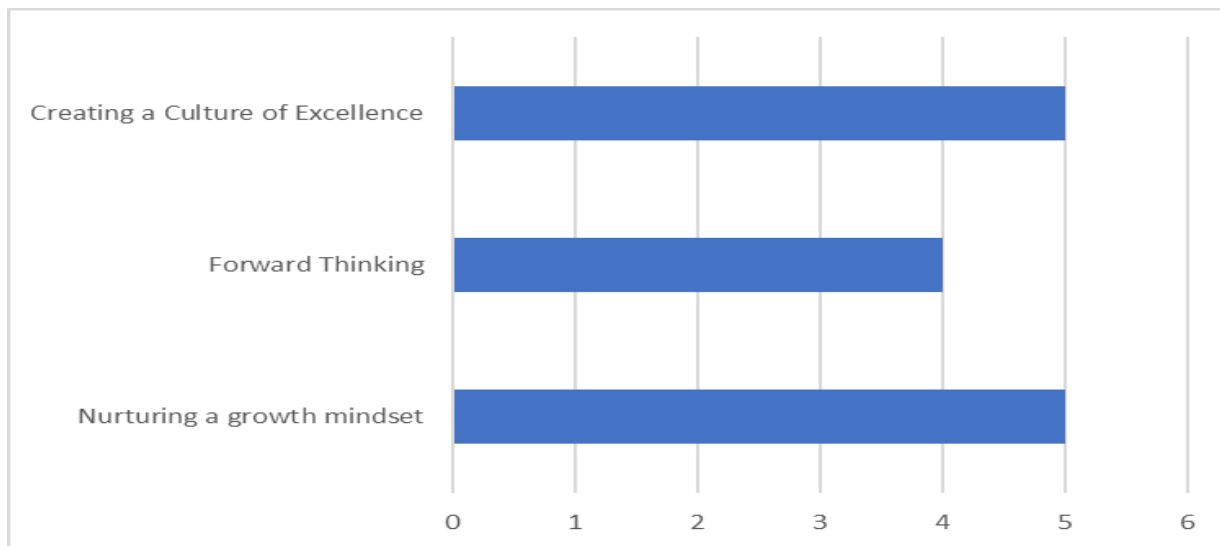
According to the analysis of the data content, notable patterns surfaced. The researcher and interviewer identified 14 distinct subthemes derived from seven sources associated with the second research question. The data revealed the content could be classified into three significant subtheme categories, namely, (a) creating a culture of excellence, which encompassed

five subthemes; (b) forward-thinking, comprising four subthemes; and (c) nurturing a growth mindset, comprising five subthemes.

Analyzing the frequency of the subthemes within the associated categories offered more notable patterns. The data indicated the most frequently occurring subthemes were encompassed in nurturing a growth mindset and forward-thinking. Within the nurturing a growth mindset subtheme category, the most frequently used subtheme was positivity comprising 36 occurrences, followed by encouragement with 22 occurrences. Within the forward-thinking subtheme category, the most frequently used subtheme was future-oriented with 36 occurrences, followed by visionary with 33 occurrences. Figure 4 shows the number of themes identified for each research question.

#### **Figure 4**

*Summary of the Subthemes Generated from RQ2*



#### ***Research Question 3 and Data***

RQ 3: What transformational leadership strategies are practiced by university leaders to stimulate creativity? This research question correlates to the theme of transformational leaders as intellectual stimulation. According to this study, intellectually stimulated leaders inspire their

followers' innovation, creativity, and critical thinking. They question the status quo and encourage a culture of constant learning and development (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Some samples of the information collected in this field are shown below.

- As a leader in the field of education, I believe that it is important to be responsive to the needs of our community. However, that doesn't mean we have to adhere to traditional ways of thinking. This is an opportunity for us to push the boundaries of education and embrace innovation. We have a long history of being pioneers in the world of invention and discovery, and I believe that together, we can redefine what it means to be a great public research university (C1).
- I believe that there are many opportunities for us to explore the potential of artificial intelligence in various fields, such as health care, education, and the arts and humanities. With the help of AI, we can gather and analyze vast amounts of data, and even provide empirical evidence to support theories of style or attribution. Let's work together to develop innovative and effective AI applications that can make a significant impact on our society (C2).
- The center for oncology is employing novel models and modeling approaches to create digital twins for each patient to predict breast cancer tumor responses to chemotherapy. This study shows how we can solve complicated problems using Newton's abilities and computational AI, machine learning, and data science (C3).
- Our institution uses its skills and resources to improve our neighborhood and beyond. We are improving rural mental health and STEM education via research and innovation. We also strive towards disability-inclusivity. Our Chancellor's

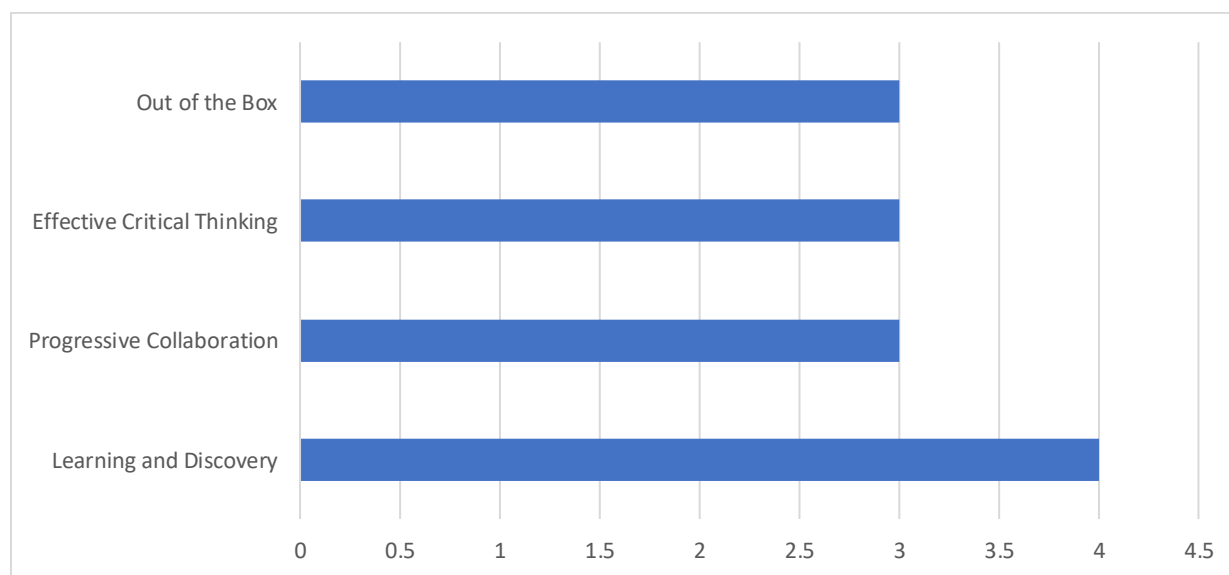
- Commission for Disabilities is one example of our efforts to eliminate obstacles and provide equitable education and employment (C4).
- Each of us has an important role in providing a positive and supportive environment for our students. To that end, there are some key efforts we are undertaking as part of our enrollment growth strategy. We have been modifying or developing new academic programs over the past 4 years in order to best meet the demands of our students and also to address the needs of the workforce and business sectors (C5).
  - As a leader of an educational institution, I am always looking for ways to improve and make our university even stronger. Today, I am announcing several measures that will help achieve that goal. First, I am excited to announce a 5-year, \$6 million initiative to expand active learning on our campus. Active learning is a teaching method in which instructors guide students to actively construct knowledge and think critically about what they are learning, rather than as the head of a university, I'm constantly searching for methods to strengthen our institution. I'm announcing a number of actions today that will assist in achieving that objective. I'd want to start by announcing a \$6 million, 5-year plan to increase active learning on our campus. Instead of merely remembering information, active learning encourages students to actively develop knowledge and think critically about what they are learning rather than just memorizing facts (C6).
  - We believe in the power of group learning, group engagement, group empowerment, and group creativity. Our faculty members are able to operate in multiple spaces in multiple ways, and we are excited about all the possibilities (C7).

Upon review of the data content, significant patterns surfaced. A total of 13 distinctive subthemes were identified through collaborative efforts of the researcher and the interviewer based on seven sources discovered to address the third research question. There were four significant subtheme categories: (a) learning and discovery, comprising four subthemes; (b) progressive collaboration, comprising three subthemes; (c) effective critical thinking, comprising three subthemes; and (d) out-of-the-box, comprising three subthemes.

Analyzing the frequency of the subthemes within the associated categories offered more notable patterns. The data indicated the most frequently occurring subthemes were encompassed in out-of-the-box and progressive collaboration. Within the out-of-the-box subtheme category, the most frequently used subtheme was innovation comprising 50 occurrences, followed by creativity with 20 occurrences. Within the progressive collaboration subtheme category, the most frequently used subtheme was growth with 36 occurrences, followed by open-minded with 14 occurrences. Figure 5 shows the number of themes identified for each research question.

### **Figure 5**

#### *Summary of the Subthemes Generated from RQ3*



### *Research Question 4 and Data*

RQ 4: What transformational leadership strategies are practiced by university leaders to create individualized consideration? This research question correlates to the theme of transformational leaders as individualized consideration. According to this study, leaders who exhibit individualized consideration treat each follower as an individual with unique needs, strengths, and weaknesses. They provide personalized support, coaching, and mentoring, and empower followers to achieve their full potential (Bass & Avolio, 1994). The following are some examples of the kinds of data that were gathered under this theme.

- In these times of uncertainty and change, it's important to consider how we can make a positive impact on the world around us. We have a unique opportunity to show others that there are different ways to approach challenges and create positive change. By examining our own beliefs and values, we can reevaluate the systems and structures that have been in place for so long and work towards a more equitable and just society. It's up to each of us to take the initiative and contribute to this important work (D1).
- Throughout this past year, I have witnessed incredible resilience and dedication from those around me, including our students who have shown remarkable civic-mindedness and goodwill in keeping our community safe. I am grateful for all the efforts made by everyone, especially our essential workers who have shown tremendous commitment and dedication during these challenging times. Through all the difficulties, I have learned the importance of coming together and supporting each other, and I believe we are all wiser for this experience (D2).



- As someone who deeply cares about this university and its mission, I want to express my gratitude to everyone who has played a role in making it such a special place. To our talented faculty and staff, thank you for your unwavering commitment to providing an exceptional education and experience for all of us. To the lawmakers and officials who have supported us over the years, we could not have achieved all that we have without your backing. And to our alumni, donors, and the broader community, your ongoing investment in this institution is what enables us to keep pushing forward. But most of all, I want to thank our incredible students—it is your passion, curiosity, and drive that truly make this university shine (D3).
- I want to express my gratitude to the leaders who have been steadfast in their guidance during these challenging times. Their leadership has allowed their teams to thrive and innovate despite the obstacles we have faced. It is remarkable how much has been accomplished, and I know that this success would not have been possible without the tireless efforts of our staff members who work behind the scenes to support our mission (D4).
- As a leader, I believe in the importance of investing in our team's hard work and dedication. That's why we committed to including merit raises and adjustments in this year's budget, based on careful planning and considerations of equity and market trends. It's been fulfilling to see those commitments come to fruition with the implementation of merit raises, and I'm excited about the upcoming focus on equity. Additionally, we recognize the value of professional development and are investing in programs to help our faculty and staff continue to grow and thrive (D5).

- As a leader, I believe it is important to prioritize the mental health and well-being of our students. Graduate students are particularly vulnerable to the stresses and pressures of academia, and we must do more to support them. I am committed to expanding mental health and well-being offerings on campus and have tasked the Vice President for Student Affairs with leading this effort. Additionally, I am investing \$1 million in private funds over the next 2 years to further expand support for mental health services and promote a culture of wellness on campus. Our graduate students are integral to the success of our university, and it is our responsibility to ensure they have the resources and support they need to thrive (D6).
- More than half of the people who start science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education in the United States at an American college or university don't even stay in it. Twice as many people want to be trained in science and engineering than are able to attain it in our educational system, except for the most elite and gifted high school students and naturally three-dimensionally thinking individuals who can capture and understand complex subjects. It's a difficult process, and many people end up feeling defeated. That's why we're interested in this technology platform, a learning platform that can change the way we learn not just science, but many subjects. We call it activating a whole new way of learning, by adding back the notion of emotional engagement to learning through exploration. By turning the learner into the exploring scientist in an environment where everyone is engaged, even if they've never tried it before (D7).

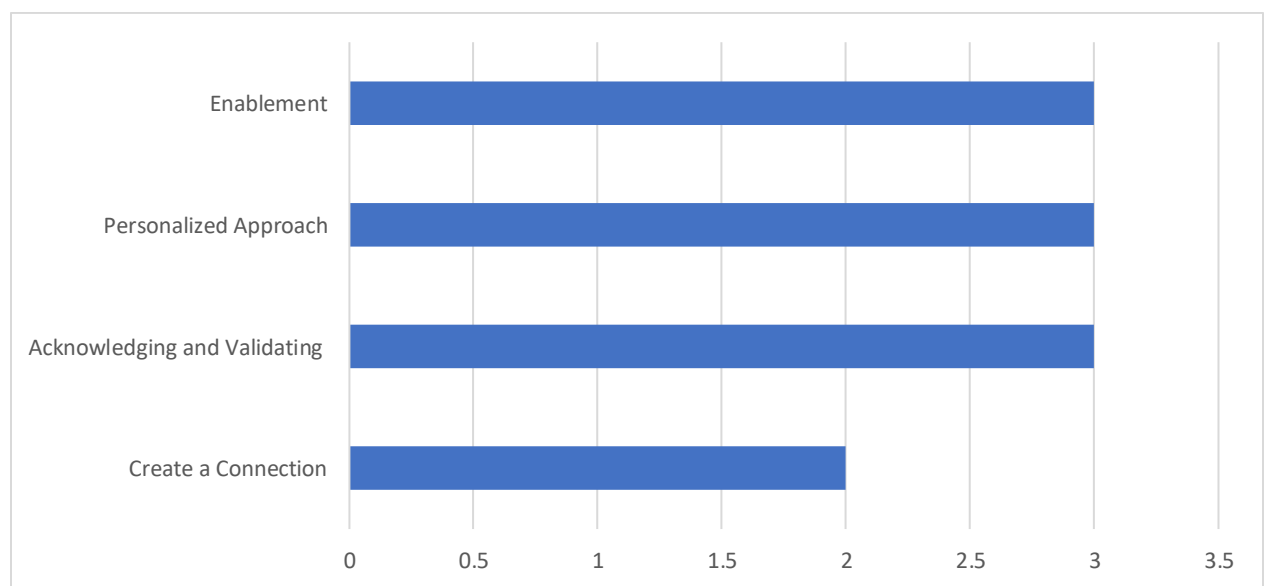
Upon examination of the data content, significant patterns were identified. There were 11 original subthemes determined between the researcher and the interviewer derived from seven

sources identified for the fourth research question. There were four significant subtheme categories where the data mapped into: (a) enablement, comprising three subthemes; (b) personalized approach, comprising three subthemes; (c) acknowledging and validating, comprising three subthemes; and (d) create a connection, comprising two subthemes.

Analyzing the frequency of the subthemes within the associated categories offered more notable patterns. The data indicated the most frequently occurring subthemes were encompassed in acknowledging and validating, and personalized approach. Within the acknowledging and validating subtheme category, the most frequently used subtheme was supportive comprising 35 occurrences, followed by recognizing with 16 occurrences. Within the personalized approach subtheme category, the most frequently used subtheme was unique needs with 17 occurrences, followed by personalized with 14 occurrences. Figure 6 shows the number of themes identified for each research question. Table 2 shows the research questions and their correlating significant subthemes.

**Figure 6**

*Summary of the Subthemes Generated from RQ4*



**Table 2***Research Questions and Significant Subthemes*

Theme	Research Question	Subthemes
Idealized Influence	RQ 1: What transformational leadership strategies are practiced by university leaders to influence others?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exhibit High Moral Standard</li> <li>• Display Personal Magnetism</li> <li>• Have Integrity</li> <li>• Be Tenacious</li> </ul>
Theme	Research Question	Subthemes
Inspirational Motivation	RQ 2: What transformational leadership strategies are practiced by university leaders to motivate others?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nurture a growth mindset</li> <li>• Be forward thinking</li> <li>• Create a culture of excellence</li> </ul>
Theme	Research Question	Subthemes
Intellectual Stimulation	RQ 3: What transformational leadership strategies are practiced by university leaders to stimulate creativity?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote Learning and Discovery</li> <li>• Create progressive collaboration culture</li> <li>• Encourage Effective Critical Thinking</li> <li>• Cultivate out of the box thinking</li> </ul>
Theme	Research Question	Subthemes
Individualized Consideration	RQ 4: What transformational leadership strategies are practiced by university leaders to create individualized consideration?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create an individualized connection</li> <li>• Acknowledge and validate feelings</li> <li>• Take a Personalized approach</li> <li>• Enable employees</li> </ul>

**Summary**

In Chapter 4, the present study's data analysis process and results were presented, aiming to examine the transformational leadership practices of university leaders in transforming the university environment. Following Creswell and Creswell's (2018) five-step data analysis framework, a general guideline was used during the data analysis process. To enhance the study's reliability, the 10-step interviewer process suggested by Hyatt (2021) was also incorporated. Moreover, to promote transparency in the coding process and ensure the trustworthiness of the analysis, the transcripts' intercoder reliability was calculated.

This chapter concludes with a presentation of research findings that address the research questions. A total of seven sources were identified for each research question, sourced from publicly available and accessible materials. The data analysis yielded a summary of

transformational leaders' practices that were grouped under four main themes, namely idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.

Further analysis of these main themes led to the development of various central subthemes. First, to influence others, transformational leaders exhibit high moral standards; in their presence, they display personal magnetism; they have integrity, and are tenacious in their pursuits. Second, to motivate others, the leaders nurture a growth mindset, they are forward thinking and looking, and they create a culture of excellence. Third, to stimulate creativity, transformational leaders promote learning and discovery, create progressive collaboration cultures, encourage effective critical thinking, and cultivate out-of-the-box thinking.

Last, to create individualized consideration, transformational leaders create an individualized connection, they acknowledge and validate feelings, take a personalized approach, and they enable employees. In the concluding chapter, a discussion and overview of the principal results, conclusions, and applications are provided.

## Chapter 5: Findings and Conclusions

The COVID-19 pandemic has extraordinarily impacted the American higher education sector. Most educational institutions have changed course as a result of the pandemic. In addition to campuses converting to online learning immediately, universities are abruptly encountering significant financial challenges as the local and global economies seem to be heading for a catastrophic recession.

Universities have had to close their physical campuses and switch to online learning. The budgets of higher education institutions have been affected by the financial and economic disruption brought on by COVID-19, according to Blankenberger and Williams (2020), and this fiscal picture will only grow worse if the disruption brought on by the pandemic prolongs. On top of financial difficulties, many universities have presented their students with unprecedented challenges and multiple stressors related to the lockdown, distance learning, and enrollment (Passavanti et al., 2021). As a result, many institutions could be forced to consolidate or shut down.

Leadership was a vital success element for enabling curricular transition during the first 6 months of COVID-19 (Lalani et al., 2021). In order to manage huge educational communities during the COVID-19 epidemic, academic leaders in higher education had to make choices swiftly and attend to the requirements of society and the students, professors, and staff. According to Morris et al. (2020), leaders are crucial in creating a positive working culture in educational institutions. While there are numerous elements that might cause a university to undergo significant change, the goal of this research is to comprehend how university leaders use transformational leadership to change the university environment.

A university environment in this study is defined as an organizational culture and

structure designed to adapt to changes while being financially sustainable and efficient to optimize the results for its students, professors, staff, and the larger knowledge-driven community (Duderstadt, 2009).

## **Chapter Structure**

This chapter's objective is to provide a synopsis of the research results and to draw inferences from those findings. This chapter starts out with an overview of the study by restating the problem statement, objective, theoretical framework, and research questions from the previous chapter. Next, the design, methods, and ethics of the research are restated. Following an explanation of the processes involved in data analysis, the results, conclusions, and implications of the research are discussed. The chapter ends with suggestions for more study, followed by the final summary.

## **Overview of the Study**

### ***Review of the Problem***

The state of higher education in the United States is facing numerous challenges, including decreased public funding, rising costs, market restrictions on tuition increases, decreased private giving, declining endowment income, and a shift to online education. The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated the challenges faced by the academic sector. To adapt to these changes, colleges and universities must reform and transform their traditional academic role, with a need for transformational leadership. The role of traditional academic disciplines is changing, and the corporatization of research, the decline in public funding, and competition from new educational institutions have further impacted higher education.

Tierney (2021) highlights the instability and disruption of the higher education system, with around 5% of postsecondary institutions predicted to close, and the closure of 200

institutions does not represent the extent of the problem. Full-time instructors are viewed as ineffective, and the promotion of diversity and equality is viewed as having less significance than they once did. The chance of obtaining a job after graduation has decreased rather than increased, and the democratic advantage of a college education has all but disappeared. Thus, transformational leadership is essential to transforming the academic sector and addressing these challenges.

Furthermore, as state funding for higher education declines and becomes unpredictable, it is critical that colleges and universities have access to private funding sources. Private colleges are also experiencing severe financial difficulties, making it imperative for academic leaders to adopt transformational leadership and adapt to the changing landscape of higher education. The future of universities is at risk, and unless they transform their traditional academic roles, they will not be able to assist future generations effectively. According to Duderstadt (1999), academic leaders must reflect on and build consensus around changes required to transform the academic sector. Transformational leadership is necessary for the academic sector to address the challenges of today and tomorrow effectively.

University leaders have had to adapt to the post-COVID-19 climate in order to meet the new demands and challenges presented by the pandemic. However, despite the need for transformational strategies, there appears to be a lack of research and dialogue during these transitional times on how transformational leadership strategies are implemented post-COVID-19 and how they create change in their university environments. According to Morris et al. (2020), leaders are crucial in creating a positive working culture in educational institutions. Some examples of this culture include a greater focus on professional development and learning, higher levels of job satisfaction, and more successful application of pedagogical strategies



(Lalani et al., 2021). While there are numerous elements that might cause a university to undergo significant change, the limited research on the implementation of transformational leadership strategies in post-COVID-19 times is concerning. Because of this, it is important to understand better how university leaders may use transformational leadership strategies more effectively to change the university environment.

### **Restatement of Purpose**

The objective of this qualitative research is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the implementation of transformational leadership strategies by university leaders to initiate change in their respective institutions. Despite extensive literature on the theoretical foundations of transformational leadership, there is a dearth of knowledge on how higher education leaders apply these strategies in the current rapidly changing global economy. A better understanding of transformational leadership and its role in transforming university environments can empower university leaders to lead their teams more effectively and navigate their organizations through the post-COVID-19 era.

### **Review of the Theoretical Framework**

The transformational leadership model proposed by Bass (1985a) originated from military training, in which commanders impart their prior knowledge to followers and encourage their action using several techniques, ranging from motivational speeches to careful consideration of each individual's circumstances. Fundamentally, transformational leadership is a method through which a leader may affect followers by changing their perception of what is significant. It is not merely a collection of qualities or traits; instead, it is a dynamic, constantly evolving way of being concerned with oneself, other people, the circumstance, and the overall context. Others are motivated by transformational leaders to produce what would be seen as

outstanding outcomes. Leaders and followers interact with one another, encourage one another, and inspire one another. Value systems, emotional intelligence, and an awareness of each person's spiritual side are all components of transformational leadership. It recognizes the organization's humanity and connects with the organization's fundamental essence.

Transformational leadership raises "human conduct and ethical aspirations of both the leader and the led and, thus, has a transforming effect on both" (Burns, 2010, p. 31). According to Bass (1985b), transformational leadership inspires organizations to persevere in tough, stressful, and unexpected circumstances.

An aim to build a common understanding among staff members of how the company should contribute to what is seen as good results is what distinguishes transformational leadership behaviors. As a result of the leader's ambition to activate employees' higher-order demands, transformational leadership conceptualizes activities that seek to satisfy employees' higher-order wants to include them in accomplishing the organization's goals.

Even though additional studies keep advancing the theory of transformational leadership, this study focuses on the Bernard Bass model of transformational leadership. The literature reviews surrounding the transformational leadership model of the Bass model comprise four main central tenets. Transformational leadership is measured on four dimensions: (a) idealized influence, sometimes referred to as charisma; (b) inspiring motivation; (c) intellectual stimulation; and (d) individual consideration (Bass, 1985a).

### **Research Questions Corresponding to Reviewed Theory**

The main question for this study was What transformational leadership strategies do university leaders use to transform university environments?

Subquestions are as follows:

- RQ 1: What transformational leadership strategies are practiced by university leaders to influence others?
- RQ 2: What transformational leadership strategies are practiced by university leaders to motivate others?
- RQ 3: What transformational leadership strategies are practiced by university leaders to stimulate creativity?
- RQ 4: What transformational leadership strategies are practiced by university leaders to create individualized consideration?

### **Methods Overview**

The university leaders chosen for the study hold leadership or management positions with titles related to leadership, such as president, chancellor, vice president, provost, dean, and chair, with the subsequent selection of those with the highest organizational rank. Moreover, the study's sampling criteria, outlined in Chapter 3, intends to take a holistic view of transformational leadership strategies with the selection of seven U.S. public university leaders from the doctorate granting and higher categorizations. Because this is a nonhuman subject study, transformational leadership strategies were collected from a variety of publicly available and accessible sources, including books, websites, journals, and news articles.

The research uses narratives to gather data in a qualitative manner. While there is a body of research on higher education, some of which relates to leadership, less is published on transformational leadership style in the higher education sector in the 21st century to adapt university settings, supporting the choice to employ a qualitative technique. A method known as narrative inquiry is used to assist in the process of identifying leadership strategies that correspond with the results of the research. The research analyzes the themes derived from the data to determine whether they are congruent with the transformational leadership identified in

the literature study.

### **Ethical Considerations Overview**

An important ethical consideration in this experiment was maintaining the subjects' anonymity. No names, titles, or organization names were used in this study by the researcher. The subjects' anonymity was protected. Instead, throughout the research, the author referred to the participants as university leaders. This study defines university leaders as those in senior leadership or management positions.

For the purpose of answering the first research question, for instance, the first source utilized to gather information was denoted as source A1, the second as source A2, the third as source A3, and so on. The list of sources was kept only by the researcher in an electronic folder maintained on a private, password-protected computer that was locked away when not in use and destroyed after the study was completed.

### **Data Analysis Overview**

#### ***Content Analysis***

The data analysis followed Creswell and Creswell's (2018) five-step model:

- prepare the data for analysis by organizing it;
- read and examine all the information;
- select text data from researched sources and segmented specific words and sentences into similar categories;
- establish themes and descriptions; and
- the analysis results are presented through detailed descriptions of themes in a narrative section with the use of data tables to illustrate interconnected topics.

### *Interviewer Reliability*

This study used Hyatt's (2021) 10-step process to establish interviewer data analysis:

- The primary researcher analyzed the data and then met with the second reviewer to review the coding process.
- The primary researcher selected a transcript to familiarize the reviewer with the coding process.
- The researcher maintained the highlighted, analyzed version of the transcript.
- The second reviewer was provided with a clean (noncoded) copy of the selected transcript.
- Prior to analysis, the researcher and reviewer read the transcript to familiarize the reviewer with the data from the transcripts and answer any questions.
- The researcher assisted the reviewer in completing the analysis of one selected transcript by reading the text, deciphering the general idea, assessing the fit for the research question, and identifying a relevant and appropriate theme.
- The researcher and reviewer engaged in the coding process independently from each other, utilizing the collectively completed transcript as a guide to increase coding consistency among coders. An interviewer comparison sheet was created on a shared Excel sheet by the researcher. The codes were entered under the researcher's and reviewer's separate columns.
- The additional reviewer applied the same process to the remaining transcripts independently of the primary researcher.
- After completing all transcripts, the primary researcher and reviewer reconvened and reviewed identified findings, discussed differences, and agreed on the conclusions.

Conclusions of agreement or disagreement between the researcher and reviewer were entered into the right column. In case of a dissent, agreed-upon codes were finalized and entered into the last column of the document.

- Criteria for significant themes were agreed upon when most participants provided supportive data for the themes.

The simple agreement approach was used in the qualitative research to assess the reliability of the transcript intercoder in interviewer discussions. The proportion of data units on which two independent coders agreed was computed after comparing their coding choices. Based on the characteristics of the data and the setting of the study, the threshold for agreement between the coders was chosen.

In order to ensure the validity and reliability of research findings, Landis and Koch (1977) suggested a minimum level of agreement of 70% among coders. Furthermore, they propose that values between 0.41 and 0.60 indicate moderate agreement, while values between 0.61 and 0.80 indicate high agreement. In this study, a threshold of 0.81 was set to establish strong intercoder reliability. The final subthemes were determined based on the agreed-upon codes and their frequency in the data. The use of the simple agreement method, in conjunction with the recommended threshold for agreement, guaranteed the credibility of the research outcomes. The results revealed a high level of intercoder reliability, and the identified subthemes accurately represented the perspectives of the interviewees.

## **Key Findings**

### ***Conclusion 1***

Research Question 1 asked: What transformational leadership strategies are practiced by university leaders to influence others? The major subthemes related to transformational leaders

as idealized influence that emerged from the data were (a) exhibit high moral standards, (b) have and display a sense of personal magnetism, (c) have integrity, and (d) be tenacious. The strategies of exhibit high moral standards, having and displaying personal magnetism, having integrity and being tenacious in their pursuits were evident. Below are some examples of these strategies:

- Strategy (a): During the COVID-19 pandemic, our university was fortunate to have dedicated leaders who worked tirelessly to ensure the safety and well-being of our students. The dean of our college of public health, as well as the head of our campus and advisory group, expanded their contact tracing team to effectively monitor and contain the spread of the virus. Additionally, the senior vice president for college life set up support services and made plans for nearby hotels to house ill students in secure isolation and quarantine. Additionally, while working closely with state authorities to battle the epidemic, our research and clinical officers from the medical center contributed invaluable knowledge on diagnostic tests and immunization (A2).
- Strategy (b): When I was serving as chair of graduate assembly, I had the privilege of being a part of the committee, and it gave me an inside look into the role of a professor. I deeply appreciate the effort and dedication that goes into this role. It's amazing how an idea can bring about significant change, and the university is a prime example of this. From a simple idea enshrined in the state constitution, it has now become a leading institution of higher education. It's extremely exciting to consider how this concept was first brought to life by a small group of professors and students in an incomplete structure, and how the campus is now blessed by a towering monument of its history (A2).

- Strategy (c): We are dedicated to supporting the important work of our valued colleagues and have taken concrete steps to demonstrate this commitment. Our organization made a firm commitment last year to prioritize merit raises and adjustments based on market compression and equity, and we are pleased to report that we have successfully achieved these objectives through meticulous budget planning. Merit raises have been implemented, and we are actively working towards greater equity in compensation. Additionally, we recognize the value of investing in the growth and development of our faculty and staff and have allocated resources towards professional development programs. You can trust that we remain steadfast in our commitment to supporting and empowering our colleagues (A5).
- Strategy (d): In times of uncertainty, it can be challenging to remain adaptable, especially when one is a part of a large institution with numerous policies and many individuals. However, I am proud to say that we have shown that we can be nimble even in such circumstances. I'm looking forward to a time when we can get together in groups once more without hiding behind masks or being afraid. Throughout wars, civil unrest, natural disasters, and pandemics, our institution has served the people for over 2 centuries, and we have always been a shining example of perseverance. As a leader in our field, we will continue to navigate these unprecedented times with unwavering determination, confident in the knowledge that we have learned invaluable lessons that we will carry with us into the future (A4).

### ***Conclusion 2***

Research Question 2 asked: What transformational leadership strategies are practiced by university leaders to motivate others? The major subthemes related to transformational leaders as



inspirational motivation that emerged from the data were (a) nurturing a growth mindset, (b) be forward thinking, and (c) creating a culture of excellence. Below are some examples of these strategies:

- Strategy (a): As an institution, we strive to cultivate a growth mindset, and it's gratifying to see our efforts recognized. It's with great pride that I share that we've been featured on the list of top universities by a prestigious magazine for the fifth time, and we eagerly await their announcement of the latest honorees. Our university has made significant progress in recent years, and we are committed to continuing this upward trend. Our dedication to academic excellence and innovative thinking has led to our highest-ever ranking among public universities in a national survey of over 1,600 institutions. I'm excited to share that I've had a sneak peek at this year's rankings, and I'm confident that we will continue to climb higher (B5).
- Strategy (b): It's always fantastic to watch our team members working together to advance things. While the work we are doing now is important, we also need to think about the future and how we might lead the way in innovation. I'm reminded of the science fiction novel, which described a platform for universal education. Even while it may have appeared impossible at the time, we are now working on the creation of a platform that is comparable. It's incredible to consider the opportunities that technology of this caliber may open up, and I'm happy to be a part of a team that is dedicated to dismantling obstacles and ushering in the future (B7).
- Strategy (c): This past year has been a testament to our collective potential, and I'm confident that we can achieve great things. It's time for us to strive for excellence and become the absolute model of what a top-tier institution should be in the 21st century.

Let's aim to be the very best, setting a new standard for others to follow. With a culture of excellence ingrained in everything we do; I know that we can reach new heights and achieve our biggest goals (B2).

### ***Conclusion 3***

Research Question 3 asked: What transformational leadership strategies are practiced by university leaders to stimulate creativity? The major subthemes related to transformational leaders as idealized influence that emerged from the data were (a) fostering a culture of learning and discovery, (b) progressive collaboration, (c) effective critical thinking, and (d) out-of-the-box thinking. The strategy of fostering a culture of learning and discovery, progressive collaboration, effective critical thinking, and out-of-the-box thinking were evident. Below are some examples of these strategies:

- Strategy (a): Let me share with you some exciting developments in our astronomy program that are focused on research and discovery. At our university, we have a strong emphasis on learning through research, and this is evident in our astronomy program. Our school of earth and space exploration has a growing number of students pursuing degrees that are exploration-oriented, and the number of students majoring in astronomy has also increased (C7).
- Strategy (b): It is essential that we work together to create opportunities for everyone, regardless of their background or circumstances, to pursue their dreams and achieve success. This entails coming up with novel ways to adjust to the quick changes in technology, economy, and politics as well as making sure that education is still a lifelong endeavor rather than a one-time event. We must collaborate to build a future

where everyone has the chance to write their own story, no matter where they begin or where their journey takes them (C1).

- Strategy (c): Focusing on advanced manufacturing and with investments in sustainable materials and manufacturing, we have the potential to lead a Renaissance in manufacturing. However, it's crucial to recognize that the best jobs will go to the most highly educated workforces. That's why our office of academic affairs is working on creating innovative academic programs that can quickly respond to the demands of the labor market. These programs will offer certifications and other just-in-time learning possibilities for cutting-edge skills, as well as avenues for working students to acquire their initial degree. The emphasis is on critical thinking and adaptability to meet the needs of a rapidly evolving workforce (C2).
- Strategy (d): Innovative approaches to cancer care are underway, as evidenced by the center for oncology at our institution. This center is using novel models and techniques to generate digital twins for each patient, enabling personalized prediction of tumor response to treatments like chemotherapy. This research demonstrates the promise of tackling complicated problems using cutting-edge technologies like computational AI, machine learning, and data science. Our objective has traditionally included advancing technology-driven solutions in the areas of life science and health care, and we are now working to speed up the process. To this end, plans are in place to establish a district that will attract top talent to work in startup-oriented spaces, explore emerging technologies, create jobs and companies, and ultimately bring new discoveries and therapies to market. By embracing this new frontier, we can make

significant strides towards achieving patient care outcomes and innovations that were once thought impossible (C3).

#### ***Conclusion 4***

Research Question 4 asked: What transformational leadership strategies are practiced by university leaders to create individualized consideration? The major subthemes related to transformational leaders as idealized influence that emerged from the data were (a) create a connection, (b) acknowledge and validate feelings, (c) take a personalized approach, and (d) enablement. It was clear that the strategies of establishing a connection, accepting and validating sentiments, personalizing an approach, and enablement were being used. Below are some examples of these strategies:

- Strategy (a): The addition of new leaders to our executive team, with their unique skills and perspectives, has been a valuable asset in driving progress and achieving success. We recognize and appreciate the contributions of all members of our staff, who work tirelessly to support our mission and help us reach our goals. Thank you for being an integral part of our community and for your unwavering commitment to our shared vision (D4).
- Strategy (b): It's important to recognize that mental health is a critical component of overall well-being, and we must work together as a community to support and uplift one another. We are aware of the pressure and worry that students are under, and we want to make sure they have the tools and assistance they require to succeed. The completion grants program and other initiatives are just a few examples of how we're committed to helping our students succeed not just academically, but also emotionally

and mentally. We value the whole student and are dedicated to creating an environment that supports their growth and well-being (D6).

- Strategy (c): With the help of long-term vision and unmeasured support, we are on our way to becoming the nation's premier public urban research university. We are dedicated to constructing a refreshed academic core on our north campus that will benefit future generations of students and further our purpose to engage the community via teaching, research, and outreach. In order to foster a more unified and cooperative academic environment, we are moving the school of social work and the college of education to our north campus as part of this initiative (D5).
- Strategy (d): We must empower every individual to achieve their own unique story, regardless of their background, circumstances, or the pace of societal changes. It's crucial that we provide accessible opportunities for lifelong learning, so that everyone can continuously develop and adapt their skills to succeed in a constantly evolving world (D1).

### **Overview of Results**

This study used Bass's (1985a) transformational leadership model as the theoretical framework to examine how university leaders regularly use transformational leadership strategies to change their academic landscapes. In the research, narratives from publicly available and accessible sources, such as books, websites, journals, and news articles, were used to gather data in a qualitative manner. The data cleaning and organization process was carefully conducted to ensure that the data aligned with the research questions of the study. This involved sorting through large amounts of data and identifying relevant information that would provide insight into the research questions. To increase credibility, the data were analyzed by the researcher and

a second reviewer, following Hyatt's (2021) 10-step model. The data were then carefully coded and analyzed to identify patterns and themes that emerged. Through this rigorous process, the researcher was able to gather valuable insights and draw meaningful conclusions from the data. For each study question, main subthemes were found using the majority similarity criterion, and seven data sources were gathered for each theme.

The data analysis revealed a total of 15 strategies utilized by transformational leaders to transform university environments. Notably, the theme of idealized influence was found to be manifested in four out of the 15 subthemes identified from the data sources. Moreover, the theme of inspirational motivation was observed in three subthemes derived from the data sources. The theme of intellectual stimulation was also evident in four subthemes obtained from each of the respective data sources. The collective results suggested the data points concurred with the strategies identified for the four principal themes of transformational leadership. These strategies are highlighted in Table 3.

**Table 3**

*Transformational Leader Strategies for Transforming University Environments*

Idealized Influence	Inspirational Motivation	Intellectual Stimulation	Individualized Consideration
Exhibit High Moral Standard	Nurture a growth mindset	Promote Learning and Discovery	Create an individualized connection
Display Personal Magnetism	Be forward thinking	Create progressive collaboration culture	Acknowledge and validate feelings
Have Integrity	Create a culture of excellence	Encourage Effective Critical Thinking	Take a Personalized approach
Be Tenacious		Cultivate out of the box thinking	Enable employees

Bass's (1985a) theory of transformational leadership is shown to have a clear correlation with the techniques used by transformational leaders in transforming university environments, as revealed by this study's emerging themes. The study identifies seven strategies that align with the tenets of idealized influence and inspirational motivation, as conceptualized by Bass (1985a).

These strategies focus on the leader's personal style and characteristics, such as exhibiting high moral standards, displaying personal magnetism, having integrity, being forward-thinking, and demonstrating tenacity. Leaders who exhibit high moral standards and integrity are seen as trustworthy and credible, which helps to inspire and motivate followers toward achieving a shared vision. Additionally, leaders who display personal magnetism are often seen as charismatic and inspirational, which can motivate followers to strive for excellence. Tenacity is crucial for leaders who are focused on achieving challenging goals and overcoming obstacles along the way. Leaders exhibiting inspirational motivation foster a culture of excellence by inspiring their followers to strive for greatness and promoting a growth mindset. They anticipate future trends and identify opportunities, positioning their organization for long-term success.

The seven strategies identified in idealized influence and inspirational motivation emphasize the importance of the leader's personal style and characteristics in inspiring and motivating followers toward achieving a shared vision. These strategies are consistent with the relational perspective of transformational leadership theory, which highlights the importance of building strong relationships and creating a positive work culture that supports growth and development.

Additionally, the study identifies eight strategies that correspond with the themes of intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration, as established by Bass (1985a). These strategies include promoting learning and discovery, progressive collaboration, encouraging effective critical thinking, cultivating out-of-the-box thinking, creating a connection, acknowledging and validating feelings, taking a personalized approach, and enabling employees to take ownership of their work.

Leaders can establish a culture that is consistent with the theme of intellectual stimulation by fostering an environment that promotes effective critical thinking, progressive collaboration, learning and discovery, and cultivating out-of-the-box thinking among individuals. This strategy can lead to improved decision-making, problem-solving, innovation, and long-term success for the organization.

Additionally, leaders can build strong relationships with their followers, consistent with the theme of individualized consideration, by creating an individualized connection, acknowledging and validating feelings, taking a personalized approach, and enabling employees. When leaders create a connection, take an individualized approach, acknowledge and validate employees' feelings, and enable employees, it can lead to improved performance, job satisfaction, communication, collaboration, creativity, and innovation. This strategy creates a positive work environment, fostering trust, accountability, and ownership, ultimately resulting in increased productivity and better outcomes for the organization.

In conclusion, there is not a one size fits all transformational leadership strategy approach. The results of the analysis revealed that the university leaders' strategies varied in subtheme categories derived from Bass's (1985a) transformational leadership model compared to others and that transformational leadership strategies to inspire and motivate followers must vary based on the institution and the leadership level. The study's results highlight the significance of adapting transformational leadership strategies to the environment, community, and leadership levels within a public university. The transformational strategies discovered in the study from the four tenets of transformational leadership, idealized influence, inspiring motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, may be implemented at various levels of leadership within a public institution, but their application may vary based on the scope of their



goals and the methods used to attain them. Additionally, the strategies employed may rely on the department's or division's requirements and objectives. Moreover, transformational leadership strategies may vary among colleges based on their size, culture, and mission. A university's unique objectives and priorities may also determine the most effective transformative strategies for attaining success.

To effectively implement transformational leadership in universities, university leaders must establish strategies that are linked with the context and demands of their community and the degree of leadership within the institution. To successfully apply transformational leadership strategies, the leader must have a grasp of the difficulties and possibilities presented in the institution's environment, as well as the capacity to change leadership tactics in accordance with these circumstances. By tailoring transformational leadership strategies, university leaders can inspire and motivate their followers to achieve their full potential and contribute to the success of the organization.

### **Implications for the Study**

The investigation of transformational leadership strategies implemented by university leaders to effectuate organizational change in accordance with Bass's (1985a) theory has noteworthy implications for the broader societal context.

By shedding light on the application of transformational leadership to promote positive change within academic institutions, the research can make significant contributions to the field of leadership. This research might lead to better academic performance and higher student success rates, which could further the advancement of society.

Furthermore, the research can provide a theoretical framework for understanding the role of leadership in cultivating a culture of innovation, collaboration, and continuous improvement

within academic institutions. As noted by Bass and Riggio (2006), transformational leaders “create a vision for the future and inspire followers to share that vision and work toward its achievement” (p. 20). The implications of such a framework extend beyond academia and can inform leadership practices in various organizational contexts. As argued by Yukl (2010), “Transformational leadership has been found to be effective across a wide range of settings, including business, government, and non-profit organizations” (p. 281).

In addition, the research can provide valuable insights into the specific leadership methods and practices that are most effective in achieving transformative change in academic institutions. These insights can contribute to the establishment of guidelines and best practices for university leaders and administrators, resulting in more effective and efficient leadership processes within academic institutions.

In underlining the importance of effective leadership in generating positive change and achieving social progress, the study has substantial implications for society as a whole. The findings can enrich public policy debates and conversations concerning the role of leadership in molding society, as well as contribute to the establishment of leadership training programs and initiatives across multiple industries.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Drawing on the theoretical framework of transformational leadership, this study examines the strategies employed by university leaders to transform their institutions. Specifically, the study focuses on four themes of transformational leadership: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Using a narrative inquiry approach, publicly available data were analyzed to identify 15 unique strategies practiced by university leaders to transform their universities.

Further research on the practical application of these transformational leadership strategies in universities could lead to additional insights into how these strategies can be effectively implemented. Additionally, comparative studies of transformational leadership in universities across different countries and cultural contexts could expand the understanding of how these strategies may be adapted to diverse settings. Future research might use quantitative or mixed-methods approaches to investigate the efficacy of these tactics in bringing about transformative change inside universities, given the qualitative character of the present investigation. In the end, these results have important ramifications for the creation of efficient leadership techniques that may propel good change and innovation in the field of higher education.

### **Summary**

The objective of this qualitative study was to provide a thorough understanding of how university leaders employ transformational leadership tactics to effect change within their organizations. Despite the abundance of literature on the theoretical underpinnings of transformational leadership, there exists a significant gap in the knowledge of how these strategies are practically applied in the present-day rapidly evolving global economy. A deeper understanding of transformational leadership and its influence on transforming university environments can provide university leaders with the ability to lead their teams more effectively and steer their institutions through the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Drawing on Bass's (1985a) transformational leadership theory, the present study expands on the themes of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration by exploring 15 distinct transformational strategies that university leaders may employ to effect change within their institutions. By identifying these strategies, this

study contributes to the extant literature on transformational leadership in the higher education sector.

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## APPENDIX

## CITI Program Completion Certification



Completion Date 15-Dec-2022

Expiration Date 15-Dec-2027

Record ID 52635499

This is to certify that:

**Jason Hardman**

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

Not valid for renewal of certification through CME.
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**GSEP Education Division**

(Curriculum Group)

**GSEP Education Division - Social-Behavioral-Educational (SBE)**

(Course Learner Group)

**1 - Basic Course**

(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

**Pepperdine University**

**CITI**  
Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

Verify at [www.citiprogram.org/verify/?wa8b4bb18-29c2-4a30-a2b2-b25b636f846f-52635499](http://www.citiprogram.org/verify/?wa8b4bb18-29c2-4a30-a2b2-b25b636f846f-52635499)