

LEADERSHIP PRACTICES OF NON-TRADITIONAL STUDENTS PURSUING A
BACHELOR'S DEGREE: A PREDICTIVE STUDY

By

Michael Edward Ammons

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

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ABSTRACT

This non-experimental, regression study examined the relationship between leadership practices and academic achievement for a non-traditional student population. The study was conducted at a small, four-year private college in Eastern North Carolina. The sample consisted of $N=146$ (73 male, 73 female) non-traditional students enrolled in an accelerated bachelor's degree program. Volunteer participants completed the survey which consisted of the Leadership Practice Inventory-Self (LPI) (Kouzes & Posner, 1998) assessment and a demographic questionnaire. Kouzes and Posner's (2007) model of Transformational Leadership Theory is used to explain the leadership practices of non-traditional students. The results of the survey were analyzed using hierarchical multiple regression statistics. The analysis showed the strength of the relationship between the predictor variables (leadership practices) and the criterion variable (GPA) while controlling for demographic and academic data. The results of this study suggest that the leadership practice of Enable Others to Act did have a statistically significant negative relationship on the participants' GPA.

Keywords: leadership practices, non-traditional students, academic achievement, GPA

Dedication/ Acknowledgments

This dissertation is dedicated to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who not only gave me the desire to pursue a doctoral degree but also for helping me through each step of the process. I would also like to dedicate this dissertation to my wife Dana and daughter Ava who have supported me and have made it possible for me to achieve my educational goals. I am thankful for my parents, Tommy and Brenda, my sister Miranda and brother-in-law Roy. I would also like to thank my best friend Eartle for his support and words of encouragement. I am thankful for my church family and friends for their prayers and support. A special thanks goes to Pastor Dr. Randy Simmons, Donald, and Prentice Jacobs. I would also like to thank Dave Rendall for believing in me and for casting a vision in my life not based on what I was but what I could become. The following people must be thanked and recognized for their contributions. Committee chair Dr. Anita Fauber, committee member Dr. Amy McLemore, and research consultant Dr. Rockinson-Szapkiw for their service and guidance. Thanks go to Dr. Guo Wei for pointing me in the right direction and helping me to understand the fundamentals of quantitative research. Lastly, I would like to thank Ryan Bradshaw for being an encourager, mentor, and friend.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

In higher education, there has been a steady increase in the number of non-traditional students who are pursuing undergraduate degrees (National Statistics for Education Statistics, 2012) (NCES). Reports indicate that non-traditional students are the fastest growing segment in higher education in the United States (Hillman, 2008). The percentage of undergraduate students over the age of 24 increased from 28% to 42 % from 1979 to 2009 (NCES, 2012). This increase is expected to continue through 2019 by an average of 40% (NCES, 2012; Rood, 2011). Many of these non-traditional students are seeking a college degree to acquire the necessary skills to be marketable in the workforce and to transition into new roles. One of the goals of higher education is to prepare college graduates for leadership roles and to help foster effective leadership skills through coursework and activities outside of the classroom (Patterson, 2012). The demand for leadership skills is increasingly evident as organizations are seeking self-directed people who can improve bottom-line indicators such as productivity and quality (Singh, 2013). As non-traditional students continue to enroll in undergraduate degree programs, it is important for faculty members and administrators in higher education institutions to understand students' leadership behaviors and how leadership is influencing students' academic achievement.

Leadership is a skill that has always been in high demand, and this is especially true today with advancements in technology and the emerging growth of the global economy. Yukl (2012) asserts, "The essence of leadership in organizations is influencing and facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives" (p.67). While there is no single unified definition of leadership, the basic concept of leadership is that leaders have the distinct ability of not only achieving high levels of success for

themselves but are also capable of motivating and inspiring others to achieve specific goals. Dvir, Eden, Avolio, and Shamir (2002) describe leadership as influencing followers by expanding and elevating their goals and building up their confidence in a way that enables them to perform beyond their expectations. Kouzes and Posner (2007) state, “Leadership is not a gene, and it’s not a secret code that can’t be deciphered by ordinary people. The truth is that leadership is an observable set of skills and abilities that are useful whether one is in the executive suite or on the front line, on Wall Street or Main Street, in any campus, community, or corporation” (pp.339 – 340). Kouzes and Posner (2007) have discovered that effective leadership consists of five observable practices, which they describe as exemplary leadership. These practices include: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). Kouzes and Posner’s (2007) Transformational Leadership Theory model is one of the most widely used and accepted methods of measuring leadership practices. This theory of leadership has proven to be effective in a variety of settings, ranging from business to education, and from the profit and non-profit sectors of society (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Background

Changing demographics in higher education and shifting positions in the marketplace have resulted in an increase in the number of non-traditional students enrolled in undergraduate degree programs (Shillingford & Karlin, 2013). There has been a steady shift in the workplace where employees are working beyond the retirement age of 65 and are also changing career fields numerous times throughout their work history (NCES, 2009). As a result, these individuals may need supplemental training and skills to accommodate work-related demands. Additionally, this will be the first time in the

history of the United States where there are four generations of workers who are employed in the workforce (NCES, 2009). These generations include: Pre-Baby Boomers (born before 1943), Baby Boomers (born between 1943 and 1960), Generation-X (born between 1961 and 1981), and Millennials (born after 1982) (De Meus & Mlodzik, 2010).

Non-traditional students are seeking undergraduate degrees to not only advance in their career field but also to possibly change career fields (Milheim, 2005). Scott and Lewis (2011) state the following factors that have influenced the increase in enrollment among non-traditional students: a) students see the value of education as an opportunity to advance their career; b) retirement benefits have allotted more time for leisure learning or enhancing intellectual capacity; and c) job loss has led non-traditional students to seek out other trades and disciplines to find employment. Non-traditional students may be identified as working adults or adult students because these students do not share the same characteristics as traditional students. Non-traditional students are defined as having some or all of the following attributes: having delayed entry between high school and college, being enrolled full or part-time, working full or part-time, being age 25 years or older, and being financially independent (NCES, 2009). Some researchers have defined non-traditional students by age and enrollment status. Jonas, Weimer, and Herzer (2001) classify a student as either traditional or non-traditional based on enrollment in degree program (traditional versus accelerated). The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (2009) report from 2006 to 2017 states there will be a steady increase of enrollment of non-traditional students by nearly 20 percent. Non-traditional students are more diverse in comparison to traditional-aged students, for non-traditional students typically assume additional roles beyond their role of student to include: parent, spouse, employee, leader, and volunteer.

Academic achievement is a critical component of completing a degree program in higher education. There are numerous methods by which to measure the academic performance of college students including: persistence, degree completion, critical thinking skills, and writing ability. The most commonly used measurement is the student's grade-point-average (GPA) (Stater, 2009). GPA is a reflection of the knowledge learned and the academic effort displayed by the student. In order to successfully complete a degree program, a student must maintain a minimum GPA of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale, which equates to a "C" or better average (United States Department of Education, 2012).

While there have been numerous studies that examined the variables that impact academic achievements, there have been limited studies conducted on the non-traditional student population. Studies that have been conducted primarily focus on factors such as administration leadership, teacher leadership, learning styles, motivation, instructional methods, and course modality (Mansfield, Pinto, Parente, & Wortman, 2009). Prior studies have demonstrated that leadership is related to performance and academic achievement, but few studies have examined the influence of the student's leadership behaviors on academic achievement (Bolkan & Goodboy, 2009; Choi, 2010; Walumbwa, Avolio, & Zhu, 2008). Some research has suggested that leadership has positive influences on students' academic achievements (Frendendall, Robbins, & Moore, 2001; Ponder, 2008; Posner, 2009). Shah, Rahman, and Ithnain (2011) conducted a study that compared the leadership practices of community college students related to academic performance, and the results indicated that students who rated themselves higher on specific transformational leadership practices, scored higher on their GPA. The results support the findings of Louis, Dretzke, and Wahlstrom (2010) whose study revealed that

leadership variables are positively related to student learning. In a previous study conducted by Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2004) using a meta-analysis, the researchers examined the effect of school leadership on student achievement. In a sample consisting of 2,894 schools, 14,000 teachers and 1.1 million students, the results indicated that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between student academic achievement and school leadership.

Gomez (2013) used a logistic regression analyses to test whether critical thinking, effective leadership behavior, Master's GPA, gender, application summary source, and psychological type were positively related with academic achievement as defined as degree completion and retention. The findings from this study suggest that the leadership behavior of Model the Way was a significant predictor of academic achievement among online doctoral leadership students. In another study, Rawls and Hammons (2012) examined the differences in academic achievement—where achievement is defined by the variables of critical thinking, oral and written communication, and cultural and global understanding— between traditional and accelerated degree students. The data suggests that significant differences were reported in the leadership behaviors of students enrolled in the accelerated degree program.

Some studies have been conducted to determine how demographic variables such as age, gender, ethnicity, and experience influence academic achievement and leadership behaviors. A study consisting of 147 undergraduate nursing students, researchers examined the differences in academic achievement between males and females. Demographic and academic data were collected on the participants in addition to language acculturation and professional identity. Based on the results of regression analyses, gender was the only significant predictor of academic performance ($\beta = -.44$, p

< 0.001) (Wan Chik, Salamonson, Everett, Ramjan, Attwood, Weaver, & Davidson, 2012). In a study that investigated the relationship of demographic variables such as age, gender, and ethnicity with academic performance among community college students ($N = 320$), the results from the linear hierarchal regression analyses indicate that age, gender, and ethnicity were not significant predictors of academic performance (Jost, Rude-Parkins, & Githens, 2012). Other studies have also suggested that demographic data is not related to academic achievement. Wisner (2011) suggests that due to their diversity, more research needs to be conducted on the non-traditional student population to better understand what factors predict student achievement.

In a study using hierarchal multiple regression, the researchers investigated the relationship between leadership preparation practices, self-rated leader behavior, the school learning environment, and student achievement. When controlling for demographic variables, the variance was statistically significant between preparation practices and leadership behaviors ($R^2 = 5\%$); preparation practices and student achievement ($R^2 = 5\%$); preparation practices and leaders instructional knowledge ($R^2 = 6\%$); and leader's instructional knowledge and instructional practices in schools ($R^2 = 5\%$). The findings suggest that students' achievement is impacted by leadership behaviors when controlling for demographic data (Braun, Gable, & Kite, 2011). Researchers conducted a study to determine the ability of student's preadmission academic variables to predict osteopathic medical school performance and the significance that gender, major, or undergraduate institution contribute to performance. The data was analyzed with Pearson product moment correlation coefficients and multivariate linear regression analyses; all preadmission academic variables were statistically significant predictors of

performance. No statistically significant differences were found in school performance based on major (Dixon, 2012).

Some studies suggest that academic variables such as degree program, educational level, and enrollment status impact academic achievement. In a study that used multiple regression analyses, the data indicated a strong relationship between high school grades, conscientiousness, verbal ability, first and second year performance, and overall academic achievement (de Koning, Loyens, Rikers, Smeets, & van der Molen, 2012). In a second study consisting of 829 first-time students enrolled in a large higher education institution, the results concluded that learning efficacy, goal orientation, high school grades, and number of credits taken in the first academic school year, had a direct relationship with academic achievement (Lemmens, du Plessis, & Maree, 2011).

Additionally, in a study conducted by Raffo and Pender (2011), results demonstrated that students who minored in leadership scored higher on the leadership practices of Inspiring a Shared Vision and Enabling Others to Act.

In one study consisting of 71 graduating psychology majors, 18 men and 53 women, researchers examined the relationship among extracurricular involvement in psychology-related activities, satisfaction, and academic achievement; involvement was related to satisfaction and GPA (Strapp & Farr, 2010). In a second study that examined the role of academic performance factors and personality with academic success and retention of undergraduate majors, the data revealed that ACT score and high school GPA were significantly related to the second semester GPA for both male and female students (Haemmerlie & Montgomery, 2012). Huffman (2011) examined the performance of students enrolled in an undergraduate real estate course and discovered that cumulative GPA and choice of academic major are associated with higher

performance. In addition, class size, number of males in the course, and class level affected student performance.

Upon reviewing the literature, the research suggests that there is limited empirical data related to academic achievement and leadership practices of non-traditional students enrolled in undergraduate degree programs. While there have been a few studies that examined the variables that impact academic achievements, there have been limited studies conducted on the non-traditional student population. Studies that have been conducted examined factors such as administration leadership, teacher leadership, learning styles, motivation, instructional methods, and course modality (Mansfield, Pinto, Parente, & Wortman, 2009). Previous studies have demonstrated that leadership has an impact on academic achievement (Bolkan & Goodboy, 2009; Choi, 2010; Walumbwa, Avolio, & Zhu, 2008). Additional studies have suggested that leadership practices are positively related with various aspects of academic achievement (Frendendall, Robbins, & Moore, 2001; Ponder, 2008; Posner, 2009).

Transformational Leadership Theory

This study examined the relationship between leadership practices and academic achievement among non-traditional college students. Prior studies have been conducted that have examined the concept of leadership using the theoretical framework of Transformational Leadership Theory (Antonakis, Cianciolo, & Sternberg, 2004; Bass & Bass, 2008). Transformational Leadership Theory is considered by many researchers to be the most accurate assessment for describing leadership (Antonakis, Cianciolo, & Sternberg, 2004; Bass & Bass, 2008). One of the most widely used and accepted models of transformational leadership is the framework created by Kouzes and Posner (2007). According to Kouzes and Posner's (2007) Transformational Leadership Theory, the

frequency in which an individual engages in the following five leadership practices, the more effective they are in achieving positive outcomes: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart.

Therefore, this theory was the theoretical framework that guided this study.

This model of Transformational Leadership Theory has been utilized by researchers to examine the leadership experiences of individuals in manufacturing, government, business, education, healthcare, community service, entertainment, profit, and nonprofit (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). This instrument has been used extensively in a variety of settings and is considered to be practically sound (Strack, Fottler & Kilpatrick, 2008). Kouzes and Posner's (2007) Transformational Leadership Theory has been affirmed in prior studies that examined the impact of leadership behaviors with academic and non-academic variables related with college students. In one study, the results indicate that the variables of academic major, leadership experience, and the number of hours working, were related to college students' leadership behaviors. In addition, the researchers discovered that there is a positive relationship between non-academic factors and leadership (Lin, 2003). In another study that examined the leadership behaviors of undergraduate management students, the data indicated that seniors reported higher scores on the leadership practice of Challenge the Process and Enable Others to Act (Langbein, 2010). These results are similar to another study of principals in Jordanian schools in which the participants reported higher scores in the leadership practice Enable Others to Act. In this same study, the data indicated that gender was not a predictor of leadership behaviors (Abu-Tineh, Khasawneh, & Al-Omari, 2008). The literature review, variables, and the results of this study are based within the framework of Kouzes and Posner's (2007) Transformational Leadership Theory.

Problem Statement

Over the last couple of decades, post-secondary institutions have developed academic programs that are suited for the needs of the non-traditional student (Matkin, 2004). These programs consist of seated courses that are offered in the evening or weekend in addition to distance education where students have little or no face-to-face interaction with their professors (Spaid & Duff, 2009). A better understanding of the factors that contribute to and help to predict academic achievement, particularly among non-traditional students, would be helpful in providing the programs and services needed for this student demographic. Therefore, transformational leadership may be an important predictor of academic achievement among non-traditional students. In my review of the literature, the research between correlating the relationship between leadership and academic achievement has shown positive results among traditional college students, students in primary and secondary grades, and graduate students. The literature has identified that there is limited research among the undergraduate non-traditional student population and has suggested that further research be conducted to fill the gap (Jinkens, 2009; Kasworm, 2003; Scott & Lewis, 2011; Shillingford & Karlin, 2013). This study seeks to fill the gap in the literature.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this non-experimental, regression study was to test the Transformational Leadership Theory as identified by Kouzes and Posner's (2007) while controlling for demographic and academic variables. The theory indicates that effective leadership consists of five observable leadership practices: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart

(Kouzes & Posner, 2007). As applied to my study, this theory holds that I would expect my predictor variables to influence or explain my criterion variable grade-point-average (GPA) because prior studies have indicated that effective leadership behaviors are related to higher-levels of achievement (Wan Chik, Salamonsen, Everett, Ramjan, Attwood, Weaver, & Davidson, 2012; Mohammed, Othman, & D'Silva, 2012). This study consisted of non-traditional undergraduate students enrolled at a small, four-year private college in Eastern North Carolina. Students were enrolled in an accelerated bachelor's degree program in business (business management, human resource management, health care management, management of information systems, and accounting) and non-business majors (early childhood education, criminal justice and criminology, psychology, history, religion, and general studies). The criterion variable, GPA, was generally defined as the total number of credits achieved divided by the total number of quality points on a 4.0 scale. The predictor variables, leadership practices, will be generally defined as "Leaders who demonstrate the following practices: modeling the way, inspiring a shared vision, challenging the process, enabling others to act, and encouraging the heart" (Kouzes & Posner, 2007, p. 12). Demographic variables were defined by gender, age, ethnicity, marital status, employment, and leadership experience. Academic variables were defined as academic major, educational level, and enrollment status.

As applied to this study, Kouzes and Posner's Transformational Leadership Theory states that leadership is not a position but a collection of practices and behaviors (Abu-Tineh, Khasawneh, & Omary, 2008). Educational researchers are still trying to determine the variables that contribute to student's academic achievement. Each of the variables for this study has shown, in other studies, to have some impact on participants'

leadership behaviors and academic achievement (Wan Chik, Salamonson, Everett, Ramjan, Attwood, Weaver, & Davidson, 2012; Mohammed, Othman, & D'Silva, 2012). Based on the results of these studies, researchers have recommended that further studies be conducted so that more can be learned about the specific impact that these variables have on student's academic achievement. The relationship between the predictor and criterion variables, whether positive or negative, will identify the impact

Significance of the Study

While there continues to be growing numbers of non-traditional students enrolled in higher education academic programs, there is still relatively little academic research on the non-traditional student population. Current research on the relationship between leadership and academic achievement has shown positive results, with several studies focusing on public schools, traditional college students, and graduate students. This study empirically contributes to this topic since several studies have identified this as a limitation and have suggested that further research be conducted to fill this gap (Jinkens, 2009; Kasworm, 2003; Scott & Lewis, 2011; Shillingford & Karlin, 2013). The Transformational Leadership Theory model as developed by Kouzes and Posner (2007) provided a framework to test the relationship between leadership practices and academic achievement among non-traditional students. By filling the empirical gaps, the results can be utilized in future research, which seeks to examine relationships between these topics.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The purpose of this non-experimental regression study was to test the Transformational Leadership Theory as identified by Kouzes and Posner's (2007) and academic achievement, while controlling for demographic and academic variables.

RQ1: Will there be a statistically significant relationship between the leadership practices of non-traditional student enrolled in an accelerated bachelor's degree program and grade-point-average (GPA) while controlling for demographic variables (i.e. gender, age, and ethnicity) and academic variables (i.e. enrollment status, academic major, and education level)?

H₁: There will be a statistically significant relationship between the leadership practices of non-traditional student enrolled in an accelerated bachelor's degree program and grade-point-average (GPA) while controlling for demographic variables (i.e. gender, age, and ethnicity) and academic variables (i.e. enrollment status, academic major, and education level).

H_{1a}: Demographic variables (i.e. gender, age, and ethnicity) will statistically contribute to the predictive model for GPA.

H_{1b}: Academic variables (i.e. enrollment status, academic major, and education level) will statistically contribute to the predictive model for GPA.

H_{1c}: Leadership variables (i.e. Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart) will statistically contribute to the predictive model for GPA.

H₀₁: There will be no statistically significant relationship between the leadership practices of non-traditional students enrolled in an accelerated bachelor's degree program and grade-point-average (GPA) while controlling for demographic variables (i.e. gender, age, and ethnicity) and academic variables (i.e. enrollment status, academic major, and education level).

H_{01a}: Demographic variables (i.e. gender, age, and ethnicity) will not statistically contribute to the predictive model for GPA.

H_{01b}: Demographic variables (i.e. gender, age, and ethnicity) will not statistically contribute to the predictive model for GPA.

H_{01c}: Leadership variables (i.e. Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart) will not statistically contribute to the predictive model for GPA.

Identification of Variables

The criterion variable for this study was the GPA of non-traditional students enrolled in an accelerated degree program. Research has suggested that GPA is an accurate tool in assessing the knowledge learned and the effort displayed by the student (Stater, 2009). GPA is one of the most commonly used measurements of academic achievement. The educational institution for this study uses a 4.0 grading scale for undergraduate degree programs. This study used the GPA scores on its participants to measure academic achievement.

The predictor variables for this study were the five transformational leadership practices as determined by Kouzes and Posner (2007): Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. For this

study the leadership practices were self-reported and the survey measured how often the participants engaged in the leadership behavior.

In addition to these variables, demographic and academic data were identified as the moderating variables. A moderate variable is a “Variable that affects the direction and/or strength of the relationship between an independent or predictor variable and a dependent variable or criterion variable,” (Baron & Kenny, 1986, p.1174). In a correlational analysis, a moderator is a third variable that impacts the zero-order correlation between two other variables (Baron & Kenny, 1986). The demographic variables included age, gender, ethnicity, marital status, work status, and leadership experience. In previous studies, these variables were found to have an affect on the predictor variable of transformational leadership and the criterion variable of academic achievement (Jost, Rude-Parkins, & Githens, 2012; Wan Chik, Salamonson, Everett, Ramjan, Attwood, Weaver, & Davidson, 2012). The gender variable was self-reported and classified as male or female. Leadership experience was defined as years of experience and/or training, either 0-2, 3-5, 6-10, and 10 or more. Academic variables included major, education level, and enrollment status. These variables were selected as moderating variables based on the results of previous students that have demonstrated a relationship with the predictor variable of transformational leadership and the criterion variable academic achievement (Haemmerlie & Montgomery, 2012; Huffman, 2011; Strapp & Farr, 2010).

Academic major was the degree program in which the student was enrolled: business management, human resource management, health care management, management of information systems, accounting, early childhood education, criminal justice and criminology, psychology, history, religion, general studies, and other. The

education level variable was determined by the number of credit hours completed in the degree program, categorized as freshman (1 – 26), sophomore (27-59), junior (60-91), and senior (92-126). Each of the predictor variables were grouped with demographic and academic variables, which demonstrated the type of relationship each block had with GPA.

The following predictor variables will be used to predict academic achievement.

- a. **Model the Way** is a leadership practice in which the leader clarifies his/her personal values and affirms shared values that others can embrace. Leaders set the example in achieving small wins (Kouzes & Posner, 2007).
- b. **Inspire a Shared Vision** is a leadership practice in which the leader creates a vision of the future that is better than today and is able create enthusiasm for this vision in the lives of others. The leader envisions an uplifting future and enlists others in a common vision (Kouzes & Posner, 2007).
- c. **Challenge the Process** is a leadership practice in which the leader is open for ideas and seeks out the best method to create positive change. The leader searches for opportunities and is willing to experience and take risks (Kouzes & Posner, 2007).
- d. **Enable Others to Act** is a leadership practice in which the leader fosters collaboration in achieving positive change. Leaders foster collaboration and strengthen people (Kouzes & Posner, 2007).
- e. **Encourage the Heart** is a leadership practice in which the leader uplifts others by celebrating accomplishments by linking rewards with accomplishments. The

leader recognizes individual contributions and celebrates team accomplishments (Kouzes & Posner, 2007).

Each of the five leadership practices has six questions associated with the behavior statements. The participants were asked to score thirty questions on a 10-point Likert scale with responses ranging from 1 = Almost Never to 10 = Almost Always. The Leadership Practice Inventory (LPI) instrument will measure the transformational leadership practices reported by the respondents (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). The following criterion-referenced variables will be measured in this study.

- a. **Academic Achievement** is the level at which a student demonstrates his/her comprehension of course material as measured by grade-point-average (GPA) on a 4.0 scale (0.0 – 4.0).
- b. **Grade-point-Average (GPA)** is the total number of credits achieved divided by the total number of quality points on a 4.0 scale (0.0 – 4.0).

Definitions

The following is a list of the operational definitions presented to provide an understanding of the terms within this paper:

Transformational Leadership Theory is defined as how often an individual engages in the five leadership practices: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Encourage the Heart, and Enable Others to Act (Kouzes & Posner, 2007).

Academic achievement is measured by a student's GPA which "Is calculated by dividing the number of credits attempted by the sum of grade points a student has earned in post-secondary school, divided by the number of course. The most common system of assigning numbers to grades counts four points for an A, three

points for a B, two points for a C, one point for a D, and no points for an E or F. Unweighted GPA's assign the same weight to each course" (Mount Olive College, 2012).

Non-traditional student is defined as a student with the following attributes: at least 21 years old, enrolled in an accelerated bachelor's degree program, delayed enrollment in college or university since high school, previous and/or current full-time work history, and financially independent (Jonas, Weimer, & Herzer, 2001; Mount Olive College, 2012; NCES, 2009).

Choice of academic program consists of business majors (business management, human resource management, health care management, management of information systems, and accounting) and non-business majors (early childhood education, criminal justice and criminology, psychology, history, religion, and general studies).

Education level is measured as the completion of the following semester credit hours: freshman (1 – 26), sophomore (27 – 59), junior (60 – 91), and senior (92 – 126) (Mount Olive College, 2012).

Research Summary

This research study will be conducted using hierarchal regression analyses to determine the relationship between the predictor variables (leadership practices) and the criterion variable of GPA while controlling for demographic and academic variables. (Kerlinger, 2000). Mertler and Vannatta (2005) state that regression analysis is designed to test the existence of predictable relationships between a set of variables. Hierarchal regression analysis is beneficial in educational research as it allows the researcher to

observe the natural occurrence of the predictor variables to determine if these variables help predict the score of the criterion variable (Field, 2009). For the purposes of this study, the researcher seeks to determine if there is a relationship between leadership practices and academic achievement while controlling for demographic and academic variables. A correlational study was selected as this type of design enables the researcher to measure multiple variables and the relationships that these variables may have to one another (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007a). This research is critical to add to the existing knowledge of the transformational leadership theory and academic achievement among the non-traditional student population. Upon reviewing the literature, there were a limited number of studies that examined the relationship between the student's leadership behaviors and academic achievement. Additionally, there were no cited studies that researched the relationship between leadership behaviors and academic achievement among the non-traditional student population across multiple academic disciplines in accelerated degree programs.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter will provide a review of the literature regarding models of transformational leadership, the non-traditional student, and academic achievement in education. The first topic to be discussed is transformational leadership. The study of leadership has a long history with numerous definitions and theories to explain this phenomenon, but the model of transformational leadership is considered to be the most relevant. This review utilized the Transformational Leadership Theory of Kouzes and Posner (2007). Other models of transformational leadership were also studied to include frameworks developed by Burns and Bass. The second topic will identify the characteristics of the non-traditional student in higher education. In the final topic, the literature will look at how academic achievement is related to leadership practices while also examining the impact of demographic and academic variables.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework designed for this study is based on the Transformational Leadership Theory of Kouzes and Posner (2007). Based on this theory, there are five practices of transformational leadership: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). Model the Way is described as a leader's ability to model the behavior that is to be emulated in others. Inspire a Shared Vision is a leader's ability to create enthusiasm in others for the dream. Challenge the Process is a leader's ability to take on new challenges. Enable Others to Act is the leader's ability to create teamwork and to build trust. Encourage the Heart is described as the leader's encouragement of others to

enable followers to continue when they are exhausted and/or frustrated and a willingness to celebrate accomplishments (Kouzes & Posner, 2007).

Literature

The study of transformational leadership has made considerable contributions to the field of education, political science, management, and leadership over the last couple of decades; however, the theory of transformational leadership has not been vastly studied among the non-traditional student population. Specifically, this theory has not been researched from the student's perspective and how leadership practice relates to academic achievement in higher education. Connecting research that is known on transformational leadership and academic achievement with developing research can help to fill the gap of transformational leadership among non-traditional students who are pursuing undergraduate degrees in higher education.

Transformational Leadership

Leadership is a phenomenon that has been studied for centuries dating back as early as Plato until the present day. Despite the years of inquiry and research, there are still numerous definitions and theories that have been developed to describe this concept. Plato asserted, "Knowledge is the gateway to leadership," (Adair, 2002, p.11). Blanchard and O'Connor (1977), in agreement with the assessment of Plato, describe leadership as a journey where the individual must have a willingness to grow, learn, and change and to influence others to join.

Despite the numerous ways in which leadership has been conceptualized, these are the following central components of this phenomenon: a) leadership is a process; b) leadership involves influence; c) leadership occurs in a group context; and d) leadership

involves goal attainment (Burns, 1978, p. 3). (p.19). Bass and Bass (2008) have defined leadership as the following:

Leadership is an interaction between two or more members of a group that often involves a structuring or restructuring of the situation and of the perceptions and expectations of the members. Leaders are agents of change, whose acts affect other people more than other people's acts affects them. Leadership occurs when one group member modifies the motivation or competencies of others in the group. Leadership can be conceived as directing the attention of other members to goals and paths to achieve them. (Bass & Bass, 2008, p. 25)

The definitions of leadership are diverse, but leadership is generally defined in terms of traits, behaviors, practices, roles, and processes (Jordan, 2009). The trait approach focuses on the attributes of a leader such as personality, motives, and values (Bass & Bass, 2008; Yukl, 2010). These theories were prevalent until the 1940s. Following the framework of the trait approach, the behavioral theories examined the behaviors exhibited by the leader. Following the late 1960's and leading into the early 1980's, the study of leadership progressed to the contingency-situational approach which focused on the interactions between the traits of leaders and followers in various situations. Since 1980, the theory of transformational leadership has been the focus of the majority of the literature and it is described as being the most accurate framework for examining leadership (Antonakis, Cianciolo, & Sternberg, 2004; Bass & Bass, 2008).

Yukl (1994) defines transformational leadership as "The process of building commitment to the organization's objectives and empowering followers to accomplish

these objectives” (p.350). Additionally, Burns (1978) describes transformational leadership as “The development of a relationship of mutual needs, aspirations, and values in which the leader looks for potential motives in followers, seeks to satisfy higher needs and engages the full person of the follower” (p.4). Transformational leadership, as concluded by Snowden and Gorton (2002), consists of three elements: a) a shared decision-making approach; b) an emphasis on empowerment of the followers; and c) an understanding of change and how to encourage change in others (Snowden & Gorton, 2002).

Burns’ Transformational Leadership Model

Burns’ (1978) model of transformational leadership describes transformational leadership as a process in which the leader progresses from transactional to transformational behaviors. In his observation, transformational leadership was a more effective leadership model than transactional leadership. He describes the transformational leader as being able to motivate followers beyond the current conditions by connecting performance to the vision. Conversely, transactional leadership is characterized by an exchange between the leader and the follower in which the leader compels followers to act by providing them with economic, political, and/or psychological compensation (Burns, 1978). One major difference between transactional and transformational leadership is transactional leaders appeal to the self-interest of the follower whereas transformational leaders appeal to the follower’s desire for a higher purpose. Burns (1978) considered transactional and transformational leadership as opposites and conceptualized the process of transactional leadership “As leaders inducing followers to act for certain goals that represent the values and the motivations – the wants

and needs, the aspirations and expectations – of both leaders and followers” (p.4).

The term “transformational leadership” was first used by Downton (1973) in his book, *Rebel leadership: Commitment and charisma in a revolutionary process* and further developed by Burns. Burns (2003) first developed the concept of transforming leadership and described it as “A relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and may convert leaders into moral agents” (p. 14). Burns (2003) in his pursuit to answer the question, “What is transforming leadership?” examined the presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt. During his observation, Burns noted President Roosevelt’s resiliency to produce change as he contended with amending policy in the Supreme Court. Initially, Burns (2003) described the leadership style displayed by Roosevelt as “transactional” but later concluded that this was not an accurate assessment of the leadership dimensions of President Roosevelt and that his leadership style was better described as transformational.

Through further research, Burns (1978) concluded that transformational leadership was a “Process of engaging with others to create a connection that increases motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower” (p.20). Burns (1978) describes transformational leadership as a leader’s attentiveness to the needs and motives of followers and one’s willingness to help followers reach their fullest potential. In his book *Leadership*, Burns (1978) explains that intellectual leadership is a form of transformational leadership in which the role of the intellectual leader is filled with conflict and tension between the pure and applied. Burns (1978) selected political leaders to examine the concept of leadership since previous leaders were drawn into the political arena as a result of the conflict to resolve social issues. Conflict, as Burns (1978) states, is “The catalyst that converts these generalized needs into specific intellectual leadership”

(p. 142).

Burns (1978) notes that transforming leadership “Becomes moral in that it raises the level of human conduct and ethical aspiration of both [the] leader and [the] led, and thus it has a transforming effect on both” (p.20). Transforming leadership is both more complex and more potent than transactional leadership in that the leader “Recognizes and exploits an existing need or demand of a potential follower” (p.4). The conclusion of transforming leadership is the development of a relationship between the leader and follower in which followers are converted to leaders and leaders into moral agents (Burns, 1978). Transforming leaders are more than mere power holders; in addition, they are also capable of creating and developing new leaders (Burns, 1978). At the heart of transforming leadership is the leader’s ability to transform the values of others (Burns, 2003). In summary, Burns (2003) claims that the defining characteristics of a transformational leader are their ability to seize opportunities, overcome obstacles, and influence how people perceive, think, and act.

Bass’ Transformational Leadership Model

Burns (1978) conceptualized leadership as either transactional or transformational. Bass’ view on transactional and transformational leadership was different than that of Burns as he believed that a leader could exhibit both or neither transactional and transformational leadership behaviors in what he described as the full range of leadership model (Bass, 1999). Bass (1999) claims transformational leaders motivate followers to act in the best interest of the group, team, or organization rather than seeking one’s own personal interest. Building on the work of Burns, Bass concluded that transformational leaders “Expand a follower’s portfolio of needs; transform a follower’s self-interest; increase the confidence of followers; elevate follower

expectations; heighten the value of the leader's intended outcomes of the follower; encourage behavioral change and; motivate others to higher levels of personal achievement" (Bolden, Gosling, Marturano, & Dennison, 2003, p. 15). Bass and Riggio (2006) describe transformational leadership as an extension of transactional leadership.

The four elements of transformational leadership include: a) individualized consideration; b) intellectual stimulation; c) inspirational motivation; and, d) idealized influence (Bass, 1985a; Bass & Avolio, 1994). Individualized consideration is described as the degree to which a leader attends to the needs of the followers. The behaviors modeled by the leader include acting as a mentor or coach to the follower, showing empathy, keeping the channels of communication open, and placing challenges to be achieved by the followers (Bass, 1985a). Intellectual stimulation is when the leader challenges assumptions and is willing to take risks. Additionally, the leader seeks out opportunities in which to learn and better ways in which to perform tasks. Bass and Riggio (2006) assert, "Transformational leaders stimulate their followers' efforts to be innovative and creative by questioning assumptions, reframing problems, and approaching old situations in new ways" (p.7). Leaders do not criticize the mistakes of individuals, but rather followers are encouraged to try new methods and to share their ideas, even when these ideas differ from the leaders (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

The element of inspirational motivation is the degree to which the leader articulates a vision in a way that inspires and motivates followers. According to Bass and Riggio (2006), "Transformational leaders behave in ways that motivate and inspire those around them by providing meaning and challenge to their followers' work" (p.6). The combination of idealized influence and inspirational motivation form a single leadership factor of charismatic-inspirational leadership (Bass & Riggio, 2006). As a result of the

leader's ability to effectively communicate expectations to the followers, the followers are both encouraged and optimistic about the future and their abilities to be a part of the change process. Lastly, idealized influence is when the leader models ethical behavior and gains the respect and trust of the followers as a result of the leader's behavior (Bass, 1985a). Transformational leaders are admired, respected, and trusted by their followers, and as a result of the leader's relationship, they are allowed to serve as role models to the followers (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Through the research of Bass (1985a), the model of transformational leadership has been expanded and refined, and the majority of empirical research has been based on Bass' Transformational Leadership Theory model (Gardner, Lowe, Moss, Mahoney, & Cogliser, 2010).

Transformational leadership begins with the development of a vision. The vision must ignite excitement and enthusiasm in potential followers. Upon casting the vision, the transformational leader has to sell the vision by establishing trust and integrity, and in essence, he must sell himself alongside of the vision. While the leader may not always have a strategy to achieve the vision, the leader begins the process moving forward with the understanding that there may be failings and blind spots along the way. The final stage of transformational leadership consists of the leader remaining out front and visible among the followers. The leader must give balanced attention between the mental state of the followers in sustaining motivation and activities that create progress (Bass, 1958b).

Bass (1985a) suggests that a leader can display both transformational and transactional leadership practices. Bass (1985a) identified seven leadership factors of transactional and transformational leadership: charisma, inspirational, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, contingent reward, management-by-exception, and laissez-faire leadership. Research demonstrates that successful leaders engage in

transformational leadership behaviors more often than transactional behaviors (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & Van Engen, 2003). Bass (1985b) was able to extend the work of Burns by paying more attention to the needs of the followers instead of just the leader and also suggested that transformational leadership could be applied to outcomes that were not positive.

Bass (1985b) asserts that transformational leaders not only seek to transform the organization, but there is also an expectation on the behalf of the followers that they will be transformed to possibly be more like the transformational leader whom they are following. Transformational leaders focus on the big picture and, in cases when they do not have someone to focus on the details, they may have a tendency to fail. In recent years, there has been a shift in the study of leadership moving beyond task and relations-oriented leadership to transformational leadership behavior (Bass, Avolio, & Atwater, 1996).

Based on empirical research, it has been proven that there is little or no difference in leadership style between men and women (Bass, Avolio, & Atwater, 1996). Additional studies reveal that transformational leadership is positively correlated with measures of objective performance to include: financial performance, performance in military units, performance in research and development, and performance in educational institutions (Bass, Avolio, & Atwater, 1996). These findings are supported by the research results of Skipper and Bell (2006) in their study that analyzed the differences in leadership behaviors of project managers. The data indicated that there were no statistically significant differences in leadership behaviors based on age, gender, or amount of educational experience. However, managers who were identified as top performers demonstrated quantifiably better leadership behaviors than managers from the control

group.

Kouzes and Posner's Transformational Leadership Model

In their book, *The Leadership Challenge*, authors James Kouzes and Barry Posner (2007) asked followers the characteristics they look for in a leader. Based on over twenty years of research and seventy-five thousand participants, the following attributes are preferred in a leader: honest, forward-looking, competent, inspiring, intelligent, fair-minded, broad-minded, supportive, straightforward, dependable, cooperative, determined, imaginative, ambitious, courageous, caring, mature, loyal, self-controlled, and independent (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). In their discovery of the leadership style, which is transformational, there is a strong focus on the relationship between the leader and the followers.

Since 1983, Kouzes and Posner (2007) have conducted research on the personal-best leadership experiences of individuals in a variety of areas to include manufacturing, government, business, education, healthcare, community service, entertainment, profit, and nonprofit (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). From their analyses of thousands of personal-best experiences they have discovered that leaders who get extraordinary things done engage in the five practices of exemplary leadership: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). Kouzes and Posner (2007) define effective leadership as “A relationship between those who aspire to lead and those who chose to follow” (p. 22).

Based on their research, Kouzes and Posner (2007) claim that previous leadership theories are not an accurate model of observing and explaining leadership since these theories claim that leadership is reserved for a few charismatic men and women. Rather than basing leadership on traits or personality, Kouzes and Posner (2007) assert that

leadership is about behavior. They claim that “Leadership is an identifiable set of skills and abilities that are available to all of us” (p.23). Leadership is not just found at the top levels of society and organizations but is evident everywhere (Kouzes & Posner, 2007).

Leadership is a decision that begins with the individual (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). Bass and Riggio (2006) assert that “Transformational leadership can be taught and learned” (p.147). Developing the ability to lead is not about gathering and collecting a vast array of information or trying out the latest leadership technique. It is, however, about allowing what is already within the individual to manifest itself to the outside world (Kouzes & Posner, 2011). Through this process of self-reflection and examination, the person becomes aware of the need to lead (Kouzes & Posner, 2011).

Model the Way

Kouzes and Posner’s model of transformational leadership begins with the practice of Model the Way. Leaders who Model the Way are self-aware and are clear about their values (Wisner, 2011). Kouzes and Posner (2007) identify the second law of leadership which is clarified in the acronym DWYSYWD, or better stated, “Do what you say you will do” (p.41). Leaders are to be clear about their beliefs and put them into actions. Model the Way links directly to these two dimensions of people’s behavioral definition of credibility and includes the clarification of a set of values and being an example of those values to others (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). Genuine success does not come from proclaiming your values but from consistently putting them into action (Blanchard & O’Connor, 1977).

Based on their studies, Kouzes and Posner (2007) report that when people perceive their manager to have high credibility, they are more likely to be committed to the organization, possess a strong sense of team spirit, and share common values with the

organization. Conversely, when people perceive their managers to have low credibility, they are more likely to be extrinsically motivated by money, be productive only when they are being observed, and be critical of the organization. The leadership practice of Model the Way represents the character of the leader.

In a study designed to measure the development of Taiwanese college student's leadership behaviors and attitudes, data was collected from 1,235 college students who were randomly selected from 18 institutions across Taiwan using the LPI instrument. The results indicate that there were some differences between self-perceived leadership practices based on academic major, hours spent working, and leadership roles. Additionally, the findings indicate that there is a positive relationship between non-academic factors and student leadership development (Lin, 2003).

Young (2004) conducted a study focusing on potential educational leaders to test the psychometric properties of the LPI. The participants of the study consisted of graduate students enrolled in the Innovative Leadership Program at The University of Alabama. The overall Cronbach alpha coefficient of .91 indicated a strong reliability of the instrument. Model the Way was the most frequently engaged leadership practice. Also, the participants' average LPI scores were higher than the average scores from the normative database. These findings suggest that this sample of students possessed a higher propensity for leadership (Young, 2004).

Black (2010) conducted a study to determine the relationship between perceived learning practices of school administrators and employees' commitment in a large Michigan public school district. The study revealed that there was a significant relationship between the leadership practices of Model The Way and employee commitment using the Leadership Practice Inventory (LPI) developed by Kouzes and

Posner.

Inspire a Shared Vision

The leadership practice of Inspire a Shared Vision consists of the leader being forward-looking and inspiring (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). To Inspire a Shared Vision “Is to imagine future possibilities and to draw others to share ownership by creating in them a desire to make something happen, to change the way things are, to create something that no one has ever created before” (Kouzes & Posner, 2007, p.15). Leaders need to create a vision as this is an essential component of creating change and gaining support of followers as revealed in Hababakuk 2:2-3 (ESV) that states, “Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it...if it seems slow, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay”. This is when the creation of a vision enables leaders to use their influence to achieve the vision. To accomplish anything of significance is going to take more than the efforts of the leader. That is why having influence and using this acquired influence to create followers is so essential to leadership.

Leaders who demonstrate this practice have visions and dreams of what could be and go about creating this new future (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). Transformational leaders use powerful language such as slogans, acronyms, and symbols to build enthusiasm for the vision (Kirby, Paradise, & King, 1992). Yukl and Lepsinger (2006) describe the process of sharing vision as leaders “Painting a vivid, appealing picture of what your organization wants to accomplish or become, help to communicate the desired outcomes of a change initiative in a way that is understandable, meaningful, and inspiring” (p. 5). Kotter (2006) asserts that the essence of leadership is about creating significant change. Also, leadership involves going beyond disrupting the status quo to also helping people to develop a vision of a new future. Leaders must be able to motivate, inspire, help, and

empower people to make the vision become reality. Leaders create a vision, communicate the vision, and establish a plan to achieve the vision (Jones & Rudd, 2008). While leaders are passionate about their vision, they do not, however, impose their vision on others but rather compel others to join them in their efforts (Bennis & Thomas, 2002).

Yukl and Lepsinger (2006) note the vision may include numerous items “Such as strategic objectives, key values for the company, general approaches for attaining the vision, slogans and symbols, and a description of what the vision will mean to people when attained” (p. 5). Transformational leadership suggests that creating positive change is the work of leaders (Harrison, 2011). Additionally, one of the assumptions of transformational leadership is that the leader has the ability to change the beliefs, assumptions, and behaviors of followers by articulating the value of achieving a specific goal (Moynihan, Pandey, Wright, 2012). Grant (2012) states that transformational leadership consists of communicating a vision in a way as to inspire followers to make positive contributions in the lives of others.

Challenge the Process

The leadership practice of Challenge the Process is when the leader recognizes and supports new ideas from others so as to progress toward achievement of a goal or set of goals (Wisner, 2011). Kouzes and Posner (2007) describe the practice of Challenge the Process as the leader searching for opportunities, experimenting, and taking risks. Essentially, the leader is never content with the status quo and is willing to endure the process of trying, failing, and learning. This leadership practice involves the leader being in a constant state of growth and stretching, where the leader achieves goals that were originally beyond one’s belief of achieving (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). This is accomplished by building on small wins (Kouzes & Posner, 2007).

In a study on the leadership practices of educators in higher education, effective leaders challenged the status quo but were not reckless in achieving their change initiatives. Rather, these leaders carefully calculated their chances of success to ensure that success was a high probability (Kirby, Paradise, & King, 1992). Leadership is about creating positive change, not being satisfied with the status quo. Therefore, transformational leaders challenge the process and look for better ways to achieve the goals. Yukl and Lepsinger (2006) note, “Although most people would agree that change is essential if an organization is to adapt, grow, and remain competitive, change often produces anxiety and resistance” (p.5). Langbein (2010), who utilized the Kouzes and Posner Leadership Practice Inventory (SLPI), studied the leadership practices of students enrolled in an undergraduate management program. Based on the results of this study, graduating seniors reported higher scores in the leadership practices of Challenging the Process and Enabling Others to Act.

Enable Others to Act

Transformational leadership has proven to be effective for obtaining superior performance from followers while also inspiring a greater willingness by the subordinates to help leaders achieve goals (Chin, 2007). Enable Others to Act is when a leader acknowledges that leadership is a team effort (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). Transformational leaders are able create an environment in which others can do good work, take risks, and create positive change (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). It is meaningless to discuss leadership without believing that people can make a difference in the lives of others (Kouzes & Posner, 1993). Leaders must pay attention to the individual needs of their people as this makes them feel important and creates a desire to contribute to the success of the company (Caldwell, 2004). Additionally, Caldwell (2004) asserts that leaders are willing

to help followers and view this relationship as a partnership versus a boss and subordinate dynamic.

Effective leadership fosters change that is transformative and sustainable (Yi-ching & Lung-Chuan, 2011). In a study that focused on which leadership practices would have the greatest impact on improvements in Californian public schools, superintendents reported Enable Others to Act as the most frequent leadership practice (Sweeney, 2000). In another study using Kouzes and Posner's model of transformational leadership, Abu-Tineh, Khasawneh, and Al-Omari (2008) discovered that Enable Others to Act was the most frequently engaged leadership practice among principals in Jordanian schools. In the same study, there were no reported differences in leadership practices between male and female teachers (Abu-Tineh, Khasawneh et al., 2008). Additionally, a case study which observed the transformational leadership within a merging higher education institution revealed that leaders played a key role in sharing the vision, promoting teamwork, and enabling others to be involved in the change process (Chipunza & Gwarinda, 2010).

Encourage the Heart

Encourage the Heart is the practice where in which the leader cares for others and demonstrates one's care through his/her actions (Wisner, 2011). Bass and Avolio (1994) state that transformational leaders give individual consideration to followers by serving as a coach or mentor. Burns (1978) notes that transformational leaders strive to "Convert followers into leaders" and that both the leaders and the followers raise each other to higher levels of motivation. Yukl and Lepsinger (2006) explain that leaders are able to model this leadership practice by actively sharing ideas and new knowledge with followers. While research has demonstrated that a person cannot really motivate another

person, the leader can, however, create an environment in which motivation takes place (Caldwell, 2004). Based on thousands of cases, Kouzes and Posner (2003) state they have “Yet to encounter a single example of exemplary achievement that didn’t involve the active participation and support of many people”; leadership is not a solo act as it requires the participation of others (p.20).

Kouzes and Posner (2007) explain that leaders accept and act on the paradox of power which contradicts earlier theories of leadership: leaders who release their influence or give their power away to others are able to acquire more power and influence. The result is a synergy that is generated through the collaborative process where leaders are able to capitalize on the skillsets of others. Leadership is not a temporary phenomenon or concept that is here today and gone tomorrow; rather, it has been here since the beginning of civilization and will remain both today and forever (Kouzes & Posner, 2003).

Summary of Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership focuses on the relationship between the leader and the follower, and as a result of this relationship, the leader is able to transform the values of others (Burns, 1978, 2003). Due to their influence, transformational leaders can achieve their own personal goals at the expense of others; this was the case in political leaders such as Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin (Burns, 1978). Despite a transformational leader’s ability to achieve personal goals, Burns (1978) concludes that transformational leaders motivate followers to act in the best interest of the group, team, or organization rather than seeking one’s own personal interest. Additionally, Bass (1999) asserts transformational leaders motivate followers to higher levels of personal achievement while also transforming their self-interests.

The premise of leadership is creating positive change. Therefore, as Kouzes and

Posner (2007) describe, transformational leaders are not satisfied with the status quo and are consistently seeking change even after a goal has been achieved. Prior research has demonstrated that a person cannot really motivate someone else (Caldwell, 2004).

Despite this evidence, Caldwell (2004) notes that transformational leaders can create an environment in which motivation takes place (Caldwell, 2004).

Non-traditional Students in Higher Education

In higher education, non-traditional students are the fastest growing segment and are considered to be the most diverse (Wyatt, 2011). Due to their diversity, there is not a standard definition that is used to identify non-traditional students (Gilardi & Gugliemetti, 2011; Puser, et al., 2007). Most of the research identifies non-traditional students as having some or all of the following seven characteristics: a) delayed enrollment between high school and post-secondary institution; b) part-time enrollment; c) financially independent; d) full-time employment; e) have dependents other than spouse; f) single parent; and g) not having a high school diploma or equivalent (Kim, Sax, Lee, & Hagedorn, 2010). In some studies, non-traditional students have been defined by age and enrollment status. Other studies have defined a non-traditional student by the type of degree program in which the student was enrolled: traditional courses, which are 16-weeks, or accelerated, courses which can range in length from four to twelve weeks (Jonas, Weimer, & Herzer, 2001).

Non-traditional students are a diverse population and it is estimated that 30 percent of undergraduate students are working adults who are over the age of 24 years (Guidos & Dooris, 2007). In the past, non-traditional students typically pursued undergraduate degrees to increase their money-earning potential within their perspective career field but economic benefits are no longer the main driver. Now, due to the job

market in the United States, non-traditional students are seeking to remain employed. According to reports, in 2010 around 8 percent of those individuals who have earned a bachelor's degree were either unemployed or underemployed (Lumina Project, 2012).

Chao and Good (2004) claim that despite the growth of non-traditional students in higher education, these students have not garnered much attention in the academic community. Historically, non-traditional or adult student was not a term that was frequently heard of in higher education. There are approximately eight million students in the United States who are between the ages of 25 and 34 years old, and this number is expected to increase in the years to come (Schatzel, Callahan, Scott, & Davis, 2011). According to the United States Census Bureau (2010), more than 19% of residents between the ages 25 and 64 have earned a bachelor's degree. In 2010, 38.3 percent of the residents between age 25 and 64 had completed an associates or bachelor's degree (Lumina Project, 2012).

Less than a third of the adult population in the United States has a bachelor's degree, and it is estimated that 54 million working adults do not have a bachelor's degree (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009; Pusser et al., 2007). Additionally, almost 34 million adults in the United States have no college experience at all (Pusser, et al., 2007). Non-traditional students are seeking undergraduate degrees in an educational system that is designed primarily for traditional students (Pusser, et al., 2007). As a result, many non-traditional students do not have access to a wide variety of resources and must adapt to the system (Pusser, et al., 2007). Non-traditional students typically enroll in academic programs that are easily accessible, offer flexible course schedules, and are supportive of their commitments beyond the extent of the classroom (Genco, 2007).

Kuenzi (2005) reports that as a result of the Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965,

there have been significant changes in the demographics of students attending post-secondary institutions with the typical student being 25 years or older, female, and a minority (Kuenzi, 2005). Scott and Lewis (2011) state the following factors have contributed to the increase in the number of non-traditional students in higher education: a) a college degree is viewed as a means of advancing in their career; b) retirement packages provide time for leisure learning; and c) loss of job. Genco (2007) reports that non-traditional students pursue an academic program as a result of a life transition related to employment opportunities. It is reported that workers who have earned a bachelor's degree earn about \$20,000 more a year than workers with only a high school diploma (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009). In the United States, more than 1 in 4 adults, or about 27 percent of the population, have completed a bachelor's degree or higher (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009).

Today, "42 percent of Americans in the 25-34 age range hold a degree from a two- or four-year institution of higher education" (Kanter, 2011, p.8). Kanter (2011) states, "The biggest challenge for our schools and postsecondary institutions is to ensure that America's students receive a high-quality education that prepares them to succeed in and complete college" (p. 9). Since 1973, jobs requiring a college degree have increased from 28 percent to 59 percent (Kanter, 2011). Due to the changes in the global economy, up to 60 million Americans will lack the skills and training to be part of the knowledge economy (Kanter, 2011). As a result of the job market, people are looking for ways to remain marketable and competitive. To achieve these goals, these individuals are pursuing undergraduate degrees to not only advance within their perspective field but also to possibly change career fields and avoid being limited to a specific career path (Milheim, 2005).

Non-traditional students cite job advancement and the pursuit of general knowledge as the reasons to pursue a baccalaureate degree (Schatzel et al., 2011). Lane, Michelau, and Palmer (2012) explain that many non-traditional students are working full-time and have family obligations that may compete with their time to complete coursework while they are enrolled in their degree program. In some cases, non-traditional students may view obtaining a bachelor's degree as a financial investment (Chao & Good, 2004). While there is no consensus on how to define non-traditional students, it is reported that these students face challenges that are not commonly associated with traditional students as they pursue their academic degrees (Gilardi & Gugliemetti, 2011).

The distinguishing characteristic that differentiates the non-traditional student from the traditional student is that non-traditional students deal with the challenges of having multiple roles while they are pursuing their degree (Ross-Gordon, 2011). These roles may include: worker, parent, spouse, caregiver, partner, and community member (Ross-Gordon, 2011). These roles can be either assets or liabilities in enabling the student to achieve their educational goals. Non-traditional students, as a result of their diversity, have a wide range of aspirations and levels of preparations as they enroll in postsecondary degree programs (Pusser et al., 2007).

Due to the increasing number of non-traditional students pursuing undergraduate degrees during the 1970s, colleges and universities moved from simply offering courses to offering degree programs to this student population (Husson & Kennedy, 2003). To accommodate the needs of the non-traditional student population, many schools have developed courses and degree programs that can be completed in a shorter amount of time versus most traditional degree programs (Ross-Gordon, 2011). Up until the 1970s,

due to the format and delivery of classes, it took non-traditional students up to eight years to complete their bachelor's degree. Now, thanks to the development of accelerated or fast track classes, non-traditional students can finish their degree programs in the same amount of time as their traditional counterparts (Husson & Kennedy, 2003).

The research identifies barriers that non-traditional students have to overcome which vary from those of traditional students. These barriers include: work responsibilities, financial responsibility for others, working full time, enrolled part time, and academic deficiencies, (Hardin, 2008). A recent survey of adult students found that this demographic of students face four types of barriers which prevent them from being successful. These barriers are grouped in the following categories: institutional, situational, psychological, and educational (Hardin, 2008). To enable non-traditional students to continue with their educational pursuits, institutions of higher learning must implement prevention strategies which eliminate or reduce the barriers that adult learners face.

Donaldson and Townsend (2007) note that after a review of peer-reviewed articles published between 1990 and 2003, there were very few articles that focused on adult undergraduate students. Additionally, the majority of the research focused primarily on traditional-aged students (Donaldson & Townsend, 2007). Chao and Good (2004) note that non-traditional student college experience has not been sufficiently studied.

While the rate of non-traditional students enrolling in undergraduate degree programs continues to rise, the graduation rates of non-traditional students are lower than traditional students. One reason for the lower graduation rates of adult learners is that non-traditional students are not familiar with the services provided by the institution (Tones, Fraser, Elder, & White, 2009). Post-secondary institutions need to focus on

flexibility to meet the needs of non-traditional students rather than providing special treatment to these students in comparison to the traditional student population (Lane et al., 2012). Lane et al. (2012) note that some of the institutional barriers exist for non-traditional students because the majority of policies and practices are aimed for the traditional student population. Additionally, non-traditional students are more likely to separate from the institution as a result of performing poorly on developmental classes that focused on high stakes tests (Lane et al., 2012). This impacts the student's ability to earn a degree (Lane et al., 2012).

Spaid and Duff (2009) encourage colleges and universities to examine their current practices to find new and creative ways in which to better serve the non-traditional student population. Kim, Sax, Lee, and Hagedorn (2010) note that "Research on nontraditional students seeks to understand how institutions can better address the needs of this population, commonly viewed as a group that balances multiple responsibilities at school, work, and home" (p.404). There have been numerous documentations in academic studies that cite the lack of research in higher education on the non-traditional student population (Donaldson & Townsend, 2007). Hoyert and O'Dell (2009) studied goal orientation among traditional and non-traditional students. Reports from this study reflect that students who pursued learning goals performed better on tests after a failure as compared to students who pursued performance goals. Non-traditional students maintained higher grades than younger students.

Kasworm (2010) reveals that "Adult education researchers have also investigated the problematic relationship between the adult student and the university environment, noting lack of sufficient policies, procedures, and services to adequately support the success of adult graduates" (p. 144). Non-traditional students were concerned about being

accepted and valued by the academic community. Students report that they that never really feel accepted as part of the academic community due to their delay of enrollment in an undergraduate degree program and the lack of services and support provided by the institution. The expectations for college students are higher today than ever before; this is particularly the case for non-traditional students as they seek to develop the skills and abilities that will make them marketable in the workforce.

Plagemean and Sabina (2010) state “With the current emphasis placed on increasing the number of college educated adults, there is a need to better understand who these learners are, why they have come, and what can help them persist in graduation” (p.156). Research reveals that the first year of college is a critical time for non-traditional students, as this is the period that best predicts their ability to achieve academic success. Educators and administrators can help instill inspiration and motivation during this period through support services and programs (Kinkead, 2006). Non-traditional students are starting or returning to college for a variety of internal and external factors. In a recent study, “57% of respondent’s returned to school because of careers while 41% returned to fulfill personal goals and 2% returned to be an example to other family members” (Plagemean & Sabina, 2010, p. 163). Samuels, Beach, and Palmer (2012) report that non-traditional students were motivated to remain in college to serve as role models to their children.

Hillman (2008), using the LPI-Self to measure the self-perceived leadership practices of traditional and non-traditional graduate seminary students, discovered that there was no significant difference in the scores between these two groups. For this study, non-traditional students were defined as a student who was 30 years or older (Hillman, 2008). Kouzes and Posner (2007) state “Leadership knows no racial or religious bounds,

no ethnic or cultural borders” (p.14). Additionally, they describe leadership as a choice in which individuals seek to emulate effective leadership behaviors (Kouzes & Posner, 2007).

Academic Achievement

Academic achievement as measured by grade-point-average (GPA) is a tool that can be used to determine the success of students in attaining a degree. Stater (2009) reports that academic achievement consists of factors such as persistence, degree completion, critical thinking skills, and accumulation of knowledge, but the most simple and easiest way to measure is based on a student’s cumulative grade-point-average (GPA). Not only are students expected to perform well academically, students are also “Expected to demonstrate effective time management, show ability to set goals, build positive relationships, use effective conflict resolution skills, show an interest in helping others to build their leadership skills” and become involved in developing the community (Hillard, 2010, p. 93). Due to the current economic pressures and educational challenges, there is a call for evidence of student success both from the student and post-secondary institutions (College Board, 2011).

Many non-traditional students aspire to achieve a bachelor’s degree either to improve their economic position, change careers, or fulfill a life-long goal of doing so. A large percentage of non-traditional students have at one point in their educational journey taken classes or completed an associate’s degree at a community college and are looking to transfer these credits to a four-year school (Xueli, 2009). Academic performance is one of the strongest predictors of degree attainment and is generally represented by a student’s GPA. In a study conducted by Schofield and Dismore (2010), the findings suggest that there are two variables that impact student achievement. These variables are

age and academic entry level. Students who displayed more confidence in their academic ability, either due to prior life experiences or transferable skills, performed at a higher level versus students with less professional and educational experiences. Non-traditional students' 'real world' experiences in the workplace may be the contributing factor for higher GPAs compared to traditional students (Schofield & Dismore, 2010).

Based on previous studies, factors such as a student's locus of control, self-esteem, self-efficacy, stress levels, learning styles, and a student's ability to delay gratification have been correlated with academic performance (Mansfield, Pinto, Parente, & Wortman, 2009). The majority of studies that focus on academic achievement do so from the viewpoint of the teachers versus the perspective of the student. Additionally, the research also focuses on academic achievement in the public school sector as a result of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. Fayombo (2011) discovered that student-related variables contributed 46% of the variance in academic achievement with a student's interest in higher education as the best predictor of academic achievement. In another study to predict academic achievement among college students, Soares, Guisande, Almeida, and Paramo (2009) concluded that academic preparation was the strongest predictor of first-year academic achievement. Previous studies have indicated that non-traditional students with higher GPAs are more likely to remain enrolled in the degree program (Wlodkowski, 2003). Bliss, Webb, and St. Andre (2012) examined the impact of a two-semester-long learning community on the academic performance of first-year students at the University of Utah. The results of the Learning, Engagement, Achievement, and Progress (LEAP) program indicated that students who participated in the LEAP program showed improvements in their academic performance compared to students who did not participate in the program.

In a study to compare the effectiveness of high school GPA and ACT scores for predicting first-year GPA in post-secondary education, ACT score was more effective in predicting a student's success at all first-year GPA levels (Noble & Sawyer, 2004). Zeegers (2004) claims that a student's prior academic performance is the best predictor of GPA. Data retrieved from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) collected across seven years was used to predict cumulative GPA. For freshman, Level of Academic Challenge emerged as the best predictor of GPA. Conversely, Active and Collaborative Learning was the best predictor of academic achievement among seniors (Fuller, Wilson, & Tobin, 2011).

Jamelske (2009) conducted a study on the academic achievement of traditional students enrolled in at a Midwestern public university in the United States who were part of a first year experience (FYE) program. Based on the results of this study, students who were part of the FYE reported earning higher GPAs than non-FYE students (Jamelske, 2009). In previous studies, variables such as study time, study habits, academic orientation, and SAT scores were analyzed to determine if there was a positive correlation with students' GPA. The data revealed that there was a positive relationship between GPA and these variables but Patron and Lopez (2011) argue that this data may be skewed as a result of the collection methods associated with this study since it was a self-reported survey. In their study of 212 students enrolled in 11 microeconomics courses online, the authors report that GPA was related to student motivation and students who were consistent in the time they spend logged in earned higher GPAs versus students who were logged in longer (Patron & Lopez, 2011).

Working students are reported as having lower GPA scores than those who do not work (Horn & Maw, 1994). This contradicts the findings of Cheng and Alcantara (2007)

from the students of their study who claimed that working while in college enhanced their educational experience as it enabled them to gain real world experiences and insight into the job market. Sonnert and Fox (2012) claim that GPA is an indicator of performance and is often considered being the “bottom line” when it comes to learning objectives in undergraduate degree programs. GPA is often used as a predictor of persistence in obtaining a degree and to predict future performance (Sonnert & Fox, 2012). In some cases, grades can be viewed as labels rather than measures of academic achievement (McAllister, Xiaoyue, & Aghazadeh, 2008). Shulruf, Hattie, and Tumen (2008), when examining the impact of a student’s demographic orientation (age, gender, and ethnicity) compared to GPA scores, determined that there was no relationship between GPA and a student’s demographic orientation. These results differ from a recent cross-sectional study of undergraduate medical students that examined the relationship of demographic data, motivation, educational factors, and socio-cultural factors with academic achievement. The data from this study indicated that factors such as gender, marital status, and motivation were statistically significant with academic performance (Salem, Al-Mously, Nabil, Al-Zalabani, Al-Dhawi, & Al-Hamdan, 2013).

Many students begin their degree programs with the fear that they are not going to be able to cope with the challenges, particularly those who have been out of school for a number of years (Mercer, 2010). To enhance academic achievement of students, many post-secondary schools have developed First Year Introduction (FYI) programs for traditional students but these types of programs are not common-practice for non-traditional students (Montgomery, Jeffs, Schlegel, & Jones, 2009). Data reflects that students, traditional or non-traditional, who drop below a 2.0 GPA, find it difficult to improve their grades which results in students giving up and withdrawing from the

program (Montgomery, Jeffs, Schlegel, & Jones, 2009). Burks and Barret's (2009) study supports this observation as it found students who receive higher GPAs were more likely to remain in school for the second year. Hillman (2006) states, "At the heart of higher education is the idea of competence" (p. 142).

Choi (2010) examined an Executive Master of Business Administration program to determine if this education led to a transfer of leadership skills in the workplace. The results of the study showed that exemplary leadership scores were related to transfer of knowledge. Utilizing Kouzes and Posner's Student Leadership Practice Inventory (S-LPI) self-instrument, Grandzol, Perlis, and Draina (2010) examined the leadership development of team captains at six private institutions of higher learning and discovered that a student's participation in athletics did not impact his/her leadership development. Whereas serving as a captain on the team did enable students to foster their leadership skills. Hillard's (2010) research on leadership opportunities for students at colleges and universities revealed that there were very few leadership activities for students. Potential leadership activities for students included internships, group projects, and volunteer services. College and university leaders need to identify, promote, and develop programs to enhance the leadership skills of the student population.

Polat (2011), while studying the relationship between student's academic achievement and perceived organizational image, discovered a moderate positive relationship between a student's academic achievement and his/her perception of the image of the school which they were attending. Colleges and universities with positive images report positive outcomes in terms of the school's reputation, prestige, and attractiveness to the academic and public community. Additionally, positive organizational commitment impacts motivation and improves retention rates (Polat,

2011).

The model of transformational leadership is being used to develop the leadership skills of students in business schools (Bass & Riggio, 2006). In a study consisting of 437 participants employed by six United States banking organizations, transformational leadership was examined to determine its impact both directly and indirectly on supervisory-related performance. The results show that transformational leadership has a positive relationship with individual performance (Walumbwa, Avolio, and Zhu, 2008). In the college setting, studies have been conducted that examined the effects of transformational leadership from the perspective of the teacher rather than the student (Bolkan & Goodboy, 2009). These studies have researched the effect of transformational leadership on outcome variables such as a student's extra effort in the classroom, satisfaction with the teacher, and the student's perception of the effectiveness of the instructor (Bolkan & Goodboy, 2009). There have been no cited studies that have observed transformational leadership from the perspective of the student and what specific transformational leadership practices are related to academic performance.

Studies have concluded that students who believe they have a greater control over the outcome of their grades normally achieve higher grades in their coursework (Garger, Thomas, & Jacques, 2010). Garger, Thomas and Jacques (2010) conclude that academic achievement is based more upon confidence rather than ability. Rosch and Kusel (2010) note, "Without a concise definition of leadership to provide boundaries, it is unlikely that we, as educators, will be able to effectively instruct students how to best practice leadership" (p. 29).

Leadership Behaviors and Student Achievement

Previous research has indicated a relationship between leadership and student achievement (Frendendall, Robbins, & Moore, 2001; Ponder, 2008; Posner, 2009). A study conducted in Hong Kong examined the effects of instructors engaging in transformational leadership practices on undergraduate business students' classroom participation (Pounder, 2008). Classroom participation was measured in three areas: effectiveness, satisfaction, and extra effort. Instructors who engaged in transformational leadership behaviors had a greater impact in these areas. In another study which analyzed the indicators of leadership development among undergraduate military students, students with higher cumulative grade-point-averages scored higher on military measurements of leadership (Shepherd & Horner, 2010).

Koy, Steers, and Terborg (1995) tested transformational leadership theory to determine the influence of transformational leadership behaviors of school principals on organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behavior, and teacher satisfaction with the leader, and student academic performance. The results indicate that transformational leadership behaviors had an indirect effect on student achievement (Koy, Steers, Terborg, 1995). These findings are similar to Posner (2009) who reports that students who have a greater engagement in transformational leadership practices are also more actively engaged in various learning tactics such as feeling, thinking, assessing others and action.

Using a meta-analysis, Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2004) examined the effect of leadership on student achievement. After looking at more than 5,000 case studies that created a sample of 2,894 schools, 14,000 teachers and 1.1 million students, the data indicated a statistically significant positive relationship between student

achievement and effective school leadership (Water, Marzano, & McNulty, 2004). Gottlieb and Rogers (2002) studied the relationship between grade-point-average and leadership scores among 32 physical therapy assistant students. The results indicated a positive correlation between the students' GPA and their leadership scores (Gottlieb & Rogers, 2002). In a study that examined the leadership practices of school counselors, Mason and McMahon (2009) report that experience is a predictor of leadership practices.

Arendt (2004) conducted a study to examine the leadership practices of undergraduate hospitality management and dietetics students to determine if there were differences based on demographic characteristics. The results from this study indicate that students who have either taken leadership courses or held leadership positions scored higher in effective leadership behaviors. In an additional study that related effective leadership and student learning, Kavar (2012) concluded "That effective leadership plays a vital role in the teaching/learning process" (p.321). Mason and McMahon, (2009) claims that students who received formal leadership training report higher scores on leadership practices.

In a study conducted by Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2004) using a meta-analysis, the researchers examined the effect of school leadership on student achievement. In a sample consisting of 2,894 schools, 14,000 teachers and 1.1 million students, the results indicated that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between student academic achievement and school leadership. In another study, Shah, Rahman, and Ithnain (2011) compared the leadership practices of community college students related to academic performance, the results indicated that students who rated themselves higher on specific transformational leadership practices scored higher on their

GPA. The results support the findings of Louis, Dretzke, and Wahlstrom (2010) whose study revealed that leadership variables are positively related to student learning.

Gomez (2013) used a logistic regression analyses to test whether critical thinking, effective leadership behavior, Master's GPA, gender, application summary source, and psychological type were positively related with academic achievement as defined as degree completion and retention. The findings from this study suggest that the leadership behavior of Model the Way was a significant predictor of academic achievement among online doctoral leadership students. In another study, Rawls and Hammons (2012) examined the differences between traditional and accelerated degree students related to academic achievement where achievement was defined by the variables of critical thinking, oral and written communication, and cultural and global understanding. The data suggests that significant differences were reported in the leadership behaviors of students enrolled in the accelerated degree program.

In a study consisting of 147 undergraduate nursing students, researchers examined the differences in academic achievement between males and females. Demographic and academic data in addition to language acculturation and professional identity was collected from the participants. Based on the results of regression analyses, gender was the only significant predictor of academic performance ($\beta = -.44, p < 0.001$) (Wan Chik, Salamonson, Everett, Ramjan, Attwood, Weaver, & Davidson, 2012). In another study, the researchers investigated the relationship of demographic variables such as age, gender, and ethnicity with academic performance among community college students ($N = 320$). The data was analyzed using a linear hierarchal regression and the results indicated that age, gender, and ethnicity were not significant predictors of academic performance (Jost, Rude-Parkins, & Githens, 2012).

In a study using hierarchical multiple regression, the researchers investigated the relationship among leadership preparation practices, self-rated leader behavior, the school learning environment, and student achievement. When controlling for demographic variables, the variance was statistically significant between: preparation practices and leadership behaviors ($R_2 = 5\%$); preparation practices and student achievement ($R_2 = 5\%$); preparation practices and leaders instructional knowledge ($R_2 = 6\%$); and leader's instructional knowledge and instructional practices in schools ($R_2 = 5\%$). The findings suggest that students' achievement is impacted by leadership behaviors when controlling for demographic data (Braun, Gable, & Kite, 2011). Researchers conducted a study to determine the ability of student's preadmission academic variables to predict osteopathic medical school performance and the significance that gender, major, or undergraduate institution contribute to performance. The data was analyzed with Pearson product moment correlation coefficients and multivariate linear regression analyses; all preadmission academic variables were statistically significant predictors of performance. No statistically significant differences were found in school performance based on science and non-science academic major (Dixon, 2012).

In a study that used multiple regression analyses, the data indicated a strong relationship between high school grades, conscientiousness, verbal ability, and first and second year performance with overall academic achievement (de Koning, Loyens, Rikers, Smeets, & van der Molen, 2012). In another study consisting of 829 first-time students enrolled in a large higher education institution, the results concluded that learning efficacy, goal orientation, high school grades, and number of credits taken in the first academic school year, had a direct relationship with academic achievement (Lemmens, du Plessis, & Maree, 2011). Additionally, in another study conducted by

Raffo and Pender (2011), results demonstrated that students who minored in leadership scored higher on the leadership practices of Inspiring a Shared Vision and Enabling Others to Act.

In one study consisting of 71 seniors (18 men and 53 women) that examined the relationship among extracurricular involvement in psychology-related activities, satisfaction, and academic achievement in graduating psychology majors, involvement was related to satisfaction and GPA (Strapp & Farr, 2010). In a second study that examined the role of academic performance factors and personality with academic success and retention of undergraduate majors, the data revealed that ACT score and high school GPA were significantly related to second semester GPA for both male and female students (Haemmerlie & Montgomery, 2012). Huffman (2011) examined the student performance of students enrolled in an undergraduate real estate course and discovered that cumulative GPA and real estate major are associated with higher performance. In addition, class size, number of males in the course, and class level affected student performance.

Upon reviewing the literature, there have been limited studies that have examined the relationship between leadership and academic achievement among the non-traditional student population. Previous studies have demonstrated that leadership is related to performance and academic achievement, but few studies have examined the influence of the student's leadership behaviors on academic achievement (Bolkan & Goodboy, 2009; Choi, 2010; Walumbwa, Avolio, & Zhu, 2008). Some research has suggested that leadership has positive influences on students' academic achievements. While studies have indicated that leadership has both a direct and indirect impact on student achievement, there is little empirical data to identify which leadership practices are

associated with academic achievement (Mansfield, Pinto, Parente, & Wortman, 2009; Koh, Steers, Terborg, 1995).

Summary

In summary, the leadership practices of non-traditional students in higher education create both challenges and opportunities for educational leaders' postsecondary schools. A review of the literature has established a need for a better understanding of the leadership practices of non-traditional students enrolled in accelerated bachelor degree programs and how leadership impacts academic achievement. Higher education administrators have the opportunity of developing academic programs and services to address the leadership needs of the present time. This is not an exhaustive review of the literature as the concept of leadership continues to be developed and studied. Also, the description of non-traditional students continues to evolve as this segment of the student population becomes more and more diverse.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this correlation quantitative design using hierarchal multiple regression was to test the Transformational Leadership Theory of Kouzes and Posner (2007) that relates leadership practices with academic achievement, while controlling for demographic variables (i.e. gender, age, and ethnicity) and academic variables (i.e. enrollment status, academic major, and education level), for non-traditional students enrolled in an accelerated bachelor's degree program. Students from a private, four-year college were surveyed to measure the relationship their self-perceived leadership practices has on their academic achievement. A hierarchal multiple regression was utilized to show the relationship between the criterion variable and the predictor variables. In this chapter, the researcher will discuss the research design, the research question and hypotheses, the participants, and the settings. In addition, the researcher will identify and describe the instrumentation, procedures, and the data analyses for this study. Upon reviewing the literature examining the impact of leadership with academic achievement among non-traditional students, the researcher identified a research gap in the literature. This study seeks to fill this gap.

Research Design

A non-experimental quantitative research design was chosen to examine the relationship between the self-perceived leadership practices on non-traditional students with academic achievement, while controlling for demographic and academic variables. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship among these variables;

therefore, this research design was appropriate (Field, 2009). Hierarchical multiple regression is used to explore the relationship between one continuous criterion variable and a number of predictor variables (Pallant, 2010). This research design is ideal for investigating complex research questions (Pallant, 2010). Exploratory research was needed for this topic since few studies have focused on the variables in this study and even fewer studies that focused specifically on the non-traditional student population (Field, 2009). This design was also appropriate as previous studies have used this type of design to determine the relationship between leadership and academic achievement with other variables of interest and reported successful results (Frendendall, Robbins, & Moore, 2001; Ponder, 2008; Posner, 2009). By using a regression design for this study, future research can use the results to examine a possible causal relationship between the variables of interest, leadership and academic achievement, and also be able to develop additional predictive models (Field, 2009).

Questions and Hypotheses

This section will use the same question and hypotheses as found in chapter one. The following is the research question and hypotheses that directed this correlational study which examined the relationship of self-perceived leadership practices and academic achievement of non-traditional students pursuing a bachelor's degree.

The research question for this study was:

RQ1: Will there be a statistically significant relationship between the leadership practices of non-traditional student enrolled in an accelerated bachelor's degree program and grade-point-average (GPA) while controlling for demographic variables (i.e. gender,

age, and ethnicity) and academic variables (i.e. enrollment status, academic major, and education level)?

The following are the research hypothesis:

H₁: There will be a statistically significant relationship between the leadership practices of non-traditional student enrolled in an accelerated bachelor's degree program and grade-point-average (GPA) while controlling for demographic variables (i.e. gender, age, and ethnicity) and academic variables (i.e. enrollment status, academic major, and education level).

H_{1a}: Demographic variables (i.e. gender, age, and ethnicity) will statistically contribute to the predictive model for GPA.

H_{1b}: Academic variables (i.e. enrollment status, academic major, and education level) will statistically contribute to the predictive model for GPA.

H_{1c}: Leadership variables (i.e. Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart) will statistically contribute to the predictive model for GPA.

Alternatively, the following are the null hypothesis:

H₀₁: There will be no statistically significant relationship between the leadership practices of non-traditional students enrolled in an accelerated bachelor's degree program and grade-point-average (GPA) while controlling for demographic variables (i.e. gender, age, and ethnicity) and academic variables (i.e. enrollment status, academic major, and education level).

H_{01a}: Demographic variables (i.e. gender, age, and ethnicity) will not statistically contribute to the predictive model for GPA.

H_{01b}: Demographic variables (i.e. gender, age, and ethnicity) will not statistically contribute to the predictive model for GPA.

H_{01c}: Leadership variables (i.e. Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart) will not statistically contribute to the predictive model for GPA.

Participants

For the purpose of this study, a convenience sample of 146 non-traditional undergraduate students enrolled in an accelerated bachelor's degree program at a small, private, liberal arts college in Eastern North Carolina was utilized. This specific sample population was selected due to the convenience and accessibility (Fields, 2009; Gall et al., 2007). There are currently over 3,500 students who are classified as non-traditional students enrolled at the research location in the following accelerated degree programs: business (business management, human resource management, health care management, management of information systems, and accounting) and non-business (early childhood education, criminal justice and criminology, psychology, history, religion, and general studies) (Mount Olive College, 2012). To determine the number of participants needed for this study, Farmer and Rojeswski (2001) recommend multiplying the number of variables by fifteen to obtain the minimum sample size. Based on this method, the researcher concluded that the minimum sample size needed for this study is 90 participants ($N \times 15$). The maximum number of participants needed for this study is 1,000 (Farmer & Rojeswski, 2001).

Setting

The setting is a private liberal arts college located in eastern North Carolina that has a total enrollment of approximately 4,200 students (700 traditional, 3,500 non-traditional). The college provides traditional undergraduate degree programs and accelerated undergraduate degree programs for non-traditional students. These courses are offered in an accelerated format in which students attend a seated course one night per week for five weeks. Some of the lower-level general education and business core classes are delivered in both modalities: online and seated. The criminal justice and criminology major courses are available both online and seated for non-traditional students. The research institution is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges Schools Commission on Higher Education and approved by the North Carolina Department of Education. The business school is accredited with the Accreditation Council for Business School Programs (ACBSP) and the business programs are also recognized by the Society for Human Resource Managers (SHRM) (Mount Olive College, 2012).

The survey the participants took consisted of the Leadership Practice Inventory-Self (LPI) developed by Kouzes and Posner (1998) and a demographic questionnaire developed by the researcher. The survey was taken in an educational classroom without any pressure from outside factors. The survey included instructions on how to answer the questions and return the packet back to the researcher. Once the data was collected, the responses were entered to Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) Version 20 software for analysis.

Instrumentation

The study utilized the Leadership Practice Inventory - Self (LPI) created by Kouzes and Posner and a demographic survey developed by the researcher to capture the demographic information of the non-traditional students. The LPI instrument was selected due to its reliability and validity (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). Also, the LPI has proven to be effective in capturing the leadership practices of a broad range of participants (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). This instrument consistently has an internal coefficient of reliability of .80 or greater (Posner, 2010). Based on previous studies using this instrument, the Cronbach alpha coefficient for each of the five scales for internal consistency were as follows: Model the Way = .69, Inspire a Shared Vision = .87, Challenge the Process = .83, Enable Others to Act = .82, and Encourage the Heart = .84 (Mullins & Weeks, 2006).

In this study, the predictor variables and criterion variables are not manipulated. The predictor variables are the five transformational leadership practices as developed by Kouzes and Posner. The criterion variable is the students' academic achievement as measured by GPA. This study examined the relationships between non-traditional students' self-perceived leadership practices and academic achievement. This design was chosen due to the limited research between self-perceived leadership practices of non-traditional students and academic achievement. Previous studies have used correlational research to examine the relationship between academic achievement and other predictor variables (Acee, Cho, Kim, & Weinstein, 2012; de Koning, Loyens, et al., 2012; Fernandez, Salamonson, Griffiths, 2012). The researcher sought to determine if a statistically significant relationship exists between the predictor variables and the criterion variable.

The LPI measures five exemplary leadership practices including: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. The LPI requires that participants complete a 30-question survey that measures each of the five practices of exemplary leadership using a 10-point Likert scale: (1= almost never do what is described in the statement, 2 = rarely, 3 = seldom, 4 = once in a while, 5 = occasionally, 6 = sometimes, 7 = fairly often, 8 = usually, 9 = very frequently, and 10 = almost always). Respondents are asked to use the Likert scale to indicate how often they engage in the action described by the question. The overall range of scores is from 30 to 300. Scores can range from 6 to 30 for the five subscales of leadership practices (Kouzes & Posner, 1998). The survey takes between 15 - 20 minutes to complete.

In addition, the participants will be asked to complete a demographic questionnaire that includes questions about ethnicity, age, marital status, academic major, grade-point-average (GPA), and years of leadership experience or training, employment status, education level, and enrollment status. Age will be categorized in the following groups: 21 – 24, 25 – 30, 31 – 35, 36 – 40, 41 – 50, 51 – 64, 65 and above. Gender will be either male or female. Ethnicity will be categorized as: White or Caucasian, Black or African American, Alaskan Native, American Indian, Asian, Hispanic or Latino, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, Multi-racial, and Other. Employment status: full-time (40 hours or more a week), part-time (less than 40 hours a week), or unemployed. Educational level will be categorized as follows: freshman (1 – 26 credit hours completed), sophomore (27 – 59 credits completed), junior (60 – 91 credits completed), and senior (92 – 126 credits completed) (Mount Olive College, 2012). When gathering

demographic information, there are two things to consider. First, is placement and presentation of the questions on the survey and the second, the wording of the questions and the response options (Farmer & Rojeswski, 2001). The survey was administered in an educational classroom at the research institution.

Procedures

After receiving approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Liberty University and Mount Olive College, the researcher began the research study. The researcher prepared survey packets to be given to the participants. The packet consisted of the consent form, the LPI instrument, and demographic questionnaire. The researcher made arrangements with the professors on the times and dates to visit to classrooms. Once arrangements were secured, the researcher gave a short presentation explaining the purpose and the scope of the research. Packets were dispersed to the students with instructions on how to return the survey to the researcher. The survey took between 15 – 20 minutes to complete. Data collection took place over a two-week period during the 2013 summer semester.

The researcher took precautions to protect participation identity by not linking survey information to participant identity. The researcher used data coding to keep the anonymity of the participants. Data coding was used to analyze the data. Data coding involves the use of numbers to identify students and results. The records of this study will be kept private and the research records will be stored securely and only the researcher will have access to the records. Signed consent forms were kept in a locked filing cabinet separate from the data collected from the survey. Electronic data will be stored in a password-protected computer for a period of seven years. All physical documents are

stored in a locked filing cabinet for a period of seven years. When analyzing the data, the participants were not be identified by name. The researcher used a code book to prevent the breach of confidentiality. The code book will be stored in a separate locked file cabinet which will only be accessible to the researcher.

Data Analysis

This study utilized a hierarchal multiple regression analysis to examine the strength and relationship between the predictor variables and the criterion variable (Field, 2009; Gall et al., 2007). Prior to analyzing the data, assumptions of hierarchal regression analyses were examined. These assumptions included tests of normality, homoscedasticity, linearity, and extreme outliers (Field, 2009; Gall et al., 2007). When collecting measures on two variables to determine the relationship between these variables, one of the most useful techniques for examining these relationships is a scatter plot (Howell, 2011). A scatterplot checked for homoscedasticity and linearity of the data to determine if there was a linear relationship between the criterion and predictor variables (Fields, 2009; Gall et al., 2007). Field (2009) notes that “The residuals at each level of the predictors(s) should have the same variance” (p.220). In addition, a probability-probability (p-p plot) was conducted to ensure normal distribution of the residuals. Also, Cook’s distance was utilized to identify any multivariate outliers that could impact the overall results. A Cook’s distance of greater than 1 may be a cause for concern as an influential outlier, therefore, all scores greater than 1 were removed prior to analysis (Field, 2009). A variance-inflation factor (VIF) “Indicates whether a predictor has a strong linear relationship with the other predictor(s)” (Field, 2009, p. 224). Field (2009) recommends that a value of 10 be set as a threshold and 10 was the number used

for this study. A higher VIF score would suggest there was high multicollinearity present in the data whereas a low score would suggest low multicollinearity. A collinearity diagnostic table in SPSS assessed if there was too much multicollinearity in the data (Field, 2009; Gall et al., 2007). A correlation matrix was also used to determine the relationship between the variables to test the assumption of multicollinearity and singularity. The r value showed the strength of the relationship between the variables through the use of the correlation coefficient scale of 1.0 to -1.0. Negative correlations are closer to -1.0 while positive correlations are closer to 1.0; no correlation between the variables would report a coefficient of zero (Field, 2009; Gall et al., 2007).

Data was collected and recorded in SPSS program Version 20 for each of the following: gender, age, ethnicity, marital status, academic major, GPA, leadership experience, employment, education level, enrollment status, and the five leadership practices: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. Hierarchical multiple regression analyses design was chosen to provide information regarding the direction, strength and relationship between leadership practices and academic achievement. This design was selected as because previous studies have used a multiple regression, and the results from these studies have demonstrated that academic achievement is related the variables of interest observed in this study (de Koning, Loyens, et al., 2012). Each predictor variable (Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart) was analyzed to determine its predictive power for the criterion variable (academic achievement) while controlling for demographic and academic data.

An alpha level of .05 was used for all statistical tests ($p < .05$) in this study. The guidelines for the effect size are as follows: .1 = small effect, .3 = medium effect, .5 =

large effect (Field, 2007; Gall et al., 2007). These levels were implemented to avoid a Type I error, which is the rejection of the null hypothesis when it is actually true (Gall et al., 2007). Conversely, a Type II error is the acceptance of the null hypothesis when it is actually false; this is identified as beta (Gall et al., 2007; Howell, 2011).

Table 1

Variables and Measurement Methods

Theoretical Framework & Research	Variable	Data Source Measurement	Unit of Analysis
Transformational Leadership Theory (Kouzes & Posner, 2007)	GPA	Self-Reported from Student; #6; “Current Grade Point Average (GPA)”	4.0 GPA Scale
			4.00 – 3.76 3.75 – 3.51 3.50 – 3.26 3.25 – 3.01 3.00 – 2.76 2.75 – 2.51 2.50 – 2.26 2.25 – 2.01 2.00 – 1.76 1.75 – 1.51 Below 1.50
Transformational Leadership Theory (Kouzes & Posner, 2007)	Leadership Practices	Self-Reported from Student; #1; “I set a personal example of what I expect from others”	10 point Likert-type scale
			1 – 10 1 = Almost Never 2= Rarely 3= Seldom 4= Once in a while 5= Occasionally 6= Sometimes 7= Fairly Often 8= Usually 9= Very frequently 10= Almost always

Table 1

Variables and Measurement Methods (continued)

Theoretical Framework & Research	Variable	Data Source Measurement	Unit of Analysis
Transformational Leadership Theory (Kouzes & Posner, 2007)	Demographic Data	Self-Reported from Student;	Gender
	• Gender	#1; Gender	Male
	• Age	#2; Age	Female
	• Ethnicity	#3; Ethnicity	Age
	• Marital Status	#4; Marital Status	21 – 24
	• Leadership Experience	#7; Years of Leadership Experience/Training	25 – 30
	• Employment Status	#8; Employment Status	31 – 35
			36 – 40
			41 – 45
			46 – 50
			51 – 55
			56 – 60
			61 – 65
			65+
			Ethnicity
		White/Caucasian	
		Black/African American	
		Alaskan Native, American Indian	
		Asian	
		Hispanic or Latino	
		Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	
		Multi-racial	
		Other	
		Marital Status	
		Single, Never Married	
		Married	
		Separated	
		Divorced	
		Widowed	
		Other	
		Leadership Experience	
		0 – 2	
		3 – 5	
		6 – 10	
		10+	
		Employment Status	
		Full-Time	
		Part-Time	
		Unemployed	

Table 1

Variables and Measurement Methods (continued)

Theoretical Framework & Research	Variable	Data Source Measurement	Unit of Analysis
Transformational Leadership Theory (Kouzes & Posner, 2007)	Academic Data <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Major • Education Level • Enrollment Status 	Self-Reported from Student; #5; Academic Major #9; Education Level #10; Enrollment Status	Academic Major Business Management Human Resource Management Health Care Management Management of Information Systems Accounting Early Childhood Education Criminal Justice and Criminology Psychology History Religion General Studies Other Education Level Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior Enrollment Status Full Time ¾ Time Part-Time

Table 2

Explanation of Data Analysis Tests

Data Analysis Test	Purpose
Hierarchical Multiple Regression	A method of multiple regression used to examine the strength of the relationship between the variables (Field, 2009).
Scatterplot	A graph that checked for homoscedasticity and linearity of the data (Field, 2009).
Histograms	A frequency distribution that measured data to check for normality (Field, 2009).
Probability-Probability Plot (p-p plot)	Checked to ensure normal distribution of the residuals (Field, 2009).
Cooks Distance	Identified multivariate outliers by measuring the overall influence of a case on model (Field, 2009).
Correlation Matrix	Assessed the relationship among variables to the assumption of multicollinearity and singularity.
Variance-Inflation Factor (VIF)	Measured multicollinearity.
Collinearity Diagnostic Table (SPSS)	Assessed if there was too much multicollinearity in the data.

The predictor variables were placed into “blocks” to determine the significance level of the relationship that each had with the criterion variables could be evaluated.

Block 1 included demographic data: (gender, age, ethnicity, marital status, employment, and leadership experience). Block 2 consisted of academic data: (academic major,

educational level, and enrollment stats). Block 3 included leadership practices: (Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart). Each of the variables in these blocks showed the contribution that was made on GPA. These blocks are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3

Data Source Blocks

Data Source Blocks	Variables
Block 1	Demographic Data Gender Age Ethnicity Marital Status Employment Leadership Experience
Block 2	Academic Data Academic Major Education Level Enrollment Status
Block 3	Leadership Practices Model the Way Inspire a Shared Vision Challenge the Process Enable Others to Act Encourage the Heart

To analyze the data, dummy coding was used to categorize the predictor and control variables in this study in which the dummy code of 1 being classified as the selected answer and a 0 being classified as the other answers that was not selected.

Dummy coding allowed for predictor variables to be used as nominal data for analysis. The control variables that were assigned dummy coding included gender and academic major. For example, if a participant selected a business major, it was assigned a 1 and all of the other options were assigned a 0.

Table 4

Example of Dummy Coding

Business Major	Non-Business Major
1	0
0	1

Summary

This non-experimental, regression study examined the relationship between the leadership practices (Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart) and academic achievement (GPA) for non-traditional students enrolled in an accelerated bachelor's degree program, while controlling for demographic and academic variables. Previous research studies have been conducted on this topic that have used similar analysis approaches but these studies examined different predictor, control, and criterion variables (Frendendall, Robbins, & Moore, 2001; Ponder, 2008; Posner, 2009). A hierarchal regression was selected for this study since the researcher sought to examine the strength of the relationship between the criterion variable and the predictor variables.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

This chapter outlines the statistical procedures and findings from this study. The purpose of this study was to determine if there is a relationship between leadership practices and academic achievement of non-traditional students enrolled in a bachelor's degree program while controlling for demographic and academic variables. The chapter begins with a report of the demographics and descriptive statistics. Then, the results of the analysis for the following hypotheses is presented:

H₁: There will be a statistically significant relationship between the leadership practices of non-traditional student enrolled in an accelerated bachelor's degree program and grade-point-average (GPA) while controlling for demographic variables (i.e. gender, age, and ethnicity) and academic variables (i.e. enrollment status, academic major, and education level).

H_{1a}: Demographic variables (i.e. gender, age, and ethnicity) will statistically contribute to the predictive model for GPA.

H_{1b}: Academic variables (i.e. enrollment status, academic major, and education level) will statistically contribute to the predictive model for GPA.

H_{1c}: Leadership variables (i.e. Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart) will statistically contribute to the predictive model for GPA.

Demographics

The study consisted of 146 non-traditional students enrolled in an accelerated bachelor's degree program. Seventy-three (50.0%) of the participants were male, and 73 (50.0%) were female. Participants age ranged from 21 to over 65; 36 (24.7%) were age 21 -24; 36 (24.7%) were age 25 – 30; 19 (13%) were age 31 – 35; 23 (15.8%) were age 36 – 40; 11 (7.5%) were age 41 – 45; 11 (7.5%) were age 46 – 50; 5 (3.4%) were age 51 – 55; 3 (2.1%) were age 56 – 60; 1 (.7%) were age 61 – 65, and 1 (.7%) was age 65 and over. The reported ethnicities of the participants are as follows: 92 (63%) were White/Caucasian; 35 (24%) were Black or African American; 5 (3.4%) were Alaskan Native or American Indian; 1 (.7%) were Asian; 9 (6.2%) was Hispanic or Latino; 3 (2.1%) were Multi-Racial, and 1 (.7%) was other.

The educational level of the participants included 73 freshmen and sophomores, and 73 junior and senior students. Marital status was as follows: 40 (27%) were Single or Never Married; 86 (58.9%) were Married; 2 (1.4%) were Separated; 16 (11%) were Divorced; and 2 (1.4%) were Widowed. There were 77 (52.7%) business majors and 69 (47.3%) non-business majors. The reported leadership experience was as follows: 52 (35.6%) with 0 – 2 years; 31 (21.2%) with 3 – 5 years; 26 (17.8%) with 6 – 10 years, and 37 (25.3%) with 10 or more. Employment status was as follows: 117 (80.1%) were full-time; 12 (8.2%) were part-time, and 17 (11.6%) were unemployed. Enrollment status was as follows: full-time; 41 (28.1%), 3/4-time; 31 (21.2%), and part-time; 74 (50.7%).

Descriptive Statistics

The mean and standard deviation for the five leadership practices are as follows: Model the Way ($M = 48.70$, $SD = 5.83$), Inspire a Shared Vision ($M = 45.86$, $SD = 7.58$), Challenge the Process ($M = 46.05$, $SD = 7.10$), Enable Others to Act ($M = 51.06$, $SD =$

5.33), and Encourage the Heart ($M = 49.32, SD = 7.24$). The results indicate that Enable Others to Act was the highest reported leadership practice followed by Encourage the Heart. The mean and standard deviation for GPA is ($M = 8.79, SD = 2.06$); gender ($M = 1.50, SD = .50$); age ($M = 3.12, SD = 2.00$); ethnicity ($M = 1.75, SD = 1.40$); marital status ($M = 2.00, SD = .92$); leadership experience ($M = 2.33, SD = 1.20$); employment status ($M = 1.32, SD = .67$); academic major ($M = 1.47, SD = .50$); education level ($M = 1.50, SD = .50$); and enrollment status ($M = 2.23, SD = .86$).

Correlation of Predictor Variables and Academic Achievement

Results of the correlation analyses are presented in Table 5. The analyses suggested negative relationships between leadership practices and academic achievement (GPA). Participants who reported higher scores in the leadership practice Enable Others to Act were shown to have lower GPA's ($r = -.21, p < .05$). The leadership practices of Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, and Encourage the Heart, were not shown to be significantly correlated to the participants GPA's. The predictor variables in this study will be the five practices of transformational leadership. Transformational leadership is defined as how often an individual engages in the five leadership practices: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). The Leadership Practice Inventory – Self (LPI) will be used to measure the five practices of transformational leadership. In addition to these variables, demographic and academic data were identified as the moderating or control variables. The demographic variables included age, gender, ethnicity, marital status, work status, and leadership experience. Academic variables included major, education level, and enrollment status.

Table 5
Correlation Matrix

Variable	Model The Way	Inspire a Shared Vision	Challenge The Process	Enable Others To Act	Encourage the Heart	GPA
Model The way	-					
Inspire a Shared Vision	.71**	-				
Challenge the Process	.70**	.79**	-			
Enable Others to Act	.60**	.55**	.58**	-		
Encourage the Heart	.67**	.64**	.63**	.64**	-	
GPA	-.16	-.14	-.10	-.21*	-.11	-

Note. *p < .05, ** p < .01

Assumption testing

All data was screened for accuracy, missing data, and outliers prior to statistical analysis. Additionally, an analysis was conducted to test the assumptions of normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and extreme outliers for the data set. A scatterplot checked for the assumptions of homoscedasticity and linearity and a visual inspection revealed no extreme outliers. Therefore, the assumption of homoscedasticity and linearity was found tenable. Multicollinearity did not appear problematic; variance inflation was less than 2.0. Therefore, the assumption of multicollinearity was found tenable. A histogram, as shown in Figure 1, checked for normal distribution. A probability-probability (p-p plot), presented in Figure 2, demonstrated a normal distribution of the residuals. This suggests no significant deviations from normality. Also, the Cook's distance of .13 suggested no significant problems with multivariate outliers. A maximum Mahalanobis distance of 30.48 did not exceed the critical chi-square value. This report suggests that there were no significant outliers. The variance inflation factor (VIF) for all the variables were below the threshold number of 10 and the tolerance values were above .10. This suggests

collinearity among the variables.

Figure 1

Histogram

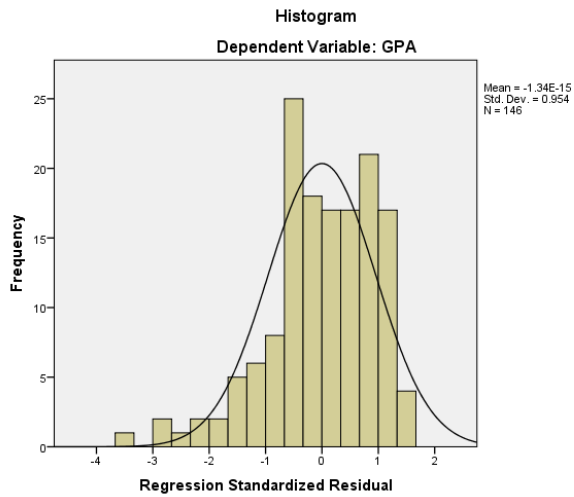
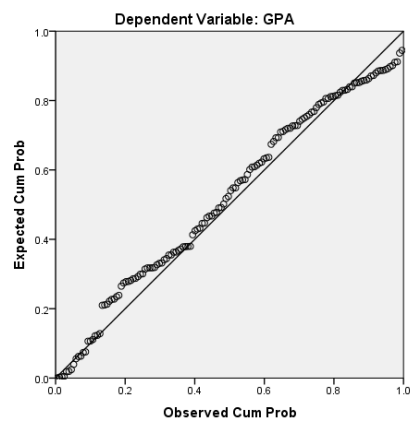


Figure 2

Normal P-Plot



Results of Hierarchical Regression Model

The primary research question sought to examine if there is a statistically significant relationship between the leadership practices of non-traditional student enrolled in an accelerated bachelor's degree program and grade-point-average (GPA) while controlling for demographic variables (i.e. gender, age, and ethnicity) and academic variables (i.e. enrollment status, academic major, and education level). The variables were grouped into three blocks so that their significance on the overall model could be understood. The results of the hierarchical regression used to identify the significance of the relationship between the variables of interest, (leadership practices and GPA), are presented in Table 6. The control variables of demographic data was entered into Block 1 of the regression explained 21% of the variance in GPA, the model was not significant, with $F(6,139) = 1.02$, $R^2 = .04$, $p > .05$. In Block 2, the control variables of academic data (enrollment status, academic major, education level) were entered and accounted for an additional variance of 2% to the model after controlling for the Block 1 variables, see Table 6. The Block 2 model was found not to be statistically significant, $F(3,136) = .49$, $R^2 = .05$, and R^2 change .01. In Block 3 of the model, the predictor variables of leadership practices (Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, Encourage the Heart) accounted for 10% variance. Block 3 was found to not have a statistically significant contribution to the overall model, $F(5,131) = 1.65$, $R^2 = .11$, and R^2 change .06. The leadership practice variable Enable Others to Act was found to be a statistically significant variable within this block (beta = $-.10$, $p = .04$).

Table 6

Model Summary

Model	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> ²	Adjusted <i>R</i> ²	Standard Error of Estimate	<i>R</i> ² Change	<i>F</i> Change	Sig. <i>F</i> Change
1	.205	.042	.001	2.06	.042	1.02	.42
2	.228	.052	-.011	2.08	.010	.49	.69
3	.329	.108	.013	2.05	.056	1.64	.15

Table 7 shows the bivariate, partial, beta correlations of the predictor variables with GPA.

Table 7

Zero Order Correlation Matrix (N = 146)

Variable	Zero- Order r	Partial r	β	SE B	B	t	<i>p</i>
Model The way	-.16	-.08	-.05	.05	-.13	-.90	.37
Inspire a Shared Vision	-.14	-.05	-.03	.04	-.09	-.62	.53
Challenge the Process	-.10	.10	.05	.04	.16	1.09	.28
Enable Others to Act	-.21	-.18	-.10	.05	-.25	-2.09	.04*
Encourage the Heart	-.11	.06	.02	.04	.08	.63	.53

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Each predictor variable, (Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart) was examined to determine how much it contributed to the prediction of the criterion variable. According to the results shown in Table 6, the leadership practice of Enable Others To Act had a statistically significant negative relationship with GPA. The regression coefficients of the leadership

practices Model the Way ($p = .37$), Inspire a Shared Vision ($p = .53$), Challenge the Process ($p = .28$), and Encourage the Heart ($p = .53$), were not significant. This suggests that there was not a statistically significant relationship between these predictor variables and GPA. Based on the results, null hypothesis one is rejected. The predictive model failed to reach significance.

Summary

This study examined the relationship between leadership practices and academic achievement of non-traditional students enrolled in a bachelor's degree program while controlling for demographic and academic variables. A quantitative, non-experimental hierarchical multiple regression analysis was used to identify the significance of relationship between the predictor variables of leadership practices (i.e. Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, and Encourage the Heart) and academic achievement (GPA) while controlling for demographic data (i.e. age, gender, and ethnicity) and academic data (i.e. major, educational level, and enrollment status). The variables were grouped into three blocks so that their significance on the overall model could be understood. Block 1 consisted of the control variables of demographic data (age, gender, ethnicity, marital status, work status, and leadership experience). In Block 2, the control variables of academic data (major, education level, and enrollment status) were entered. The final block consisted of the predictor variables of leadership practices (Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart). The results indicated that the variables entered in each block were not significant in the model for predicting GPA. Therefore, the null hypothesis was failed to be rejected. The Assumption tests were conducted and results were found tenable.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

As noted in previous chapters, the purpose of this non-experimental hierarchical multiple regression study was to examine the relationship between leadership practices and academic achievement of non-traditional students enrolled in a bachelor's degree program while controlling for demographic and academic variables. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss implications of the survey findings on the research questions and hypothesis. The following section consists of a summary of results, limitations, practical implications, significance of the findings, recommendations for future research, and a conclusion.

The study examined the relationship between the five transformational leadership practices as identified by Kouzes and Posner's Transformational Leadership Theory and academic achievement of non-traditional students enrolled in an accelerated bachelor's degree program. This was done to gain a better understanding of the extent to which non-traditional students identify themselves in engaging in specific leadership behaviors and how these behaviors are related to academic achievement. This study was conducted in a small liberal arts college in Eastern North Carolina.

The students were asked to complete a survey packet consisting of the Leadership Practice Inventory (LPI) assessment and a demographic questionnaire. The results of this study suggest that certain leadership practices may contribute to predicting academic achievement among non-traditional students. These findings help to solve the research problem presented in previous chapters and have helped to gain a better understanding of the leadership behaviors of non-traditional students and how these behaviors are related to academic achievement.

This study was initiated because of the limited research conducted on the relationship between leadership practices and academic achievement among non-traditional students. None of the previous studies examined the relationship between the students' leadership behaviors and academic achievement (Giles, 2012; Lemmens, du Plessis, & Maree, 2011; Sparkman, 2012; Fernandez, Salamonson, & Griffiths, 2012). The theoretical framework that was used in this study helped to fill in the research gap. The results of this study were obtained using a quantitative methodology with a correlational approach. The data was analyzed using a hierarchal multiple regression.

Summary of Results

This study examined the data through a hierarchal regression analysis in which the variables were entered in 3 blocks so a better understanding of the variables contributions to the participants GPA could be understood. Block 1 of the regression examined the relationship of the control variables demographic data (i.e. gender, age, ethnicity) with GPA. This block demonstrated that there was not a statistically significant contribution toward the model. Block 2 of the regression examined the relationship of the control variables demographic data and academic data (i.e. enrollment status, academic major, education level) with GPA. This block suggested that there was not a statistically significant contribution toward the overall model. Block 3 of the regression examined the relationship of the control variables, demographic and academic data, and predictor variables leadership practices (Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart) with the criterion variable GPA. This block suggests that there was not a statistically significant contribution toward the overall model. The contributions of the predictor variables in blocks 1 -3 was not significant, therefore, the null hypothesis was failed to be rejected: There will be no

statistically significant relationship between the leadership practices of non-traditional student enrolled in an accelerated bachelor's degree program and grade-point-average (GPA) while controlling for demographic variables (i.e. gender, age, and ethnicity) and academic variables (i.e. enrollment status, academic major, and education level).

Research Question 1

The research question was as follows: Will there be a statistically significant relationship between the leadership practices of non-traditional student enrolled in an accelerated bachelor's degree program and grade-point-average (GPA) while controlling for demographic variables (i.e. gender, age, and ethnicity) and academic variables (i.e. enrollment status, academic major, and education level)? A hierarchal regression analyses were performed using the five leadership practices as the predictor variables and academic achievement as the criterion variable.

After grouping the variables into 3 blocks, the leadership practice of Enable Others to Act was found to be a statistically significant variable within Block 3 (beta = -.10, $p = .04$). The negative correlation is in contrast to Kouzes and Posner's transformational leadership theory, which asserts that the five leadership practices of Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart are positively related to achievement.

The results suggested negative relationships between leadership practices and academic achievement (GPA). Participants who reported higher scores in the leadership practice Enable Others to Act were shown to have lower GPA's ($r = -.21, p < .05$). The leadership practices of Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, and Encourage the Heart, were not shown to be significantly correlated to the participants GPAs. It is interesting to discover that the leadership practices of Model the Way, Inspire

a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, and Encourage the heart were all negatively correlated with GPA but above the significance level of .05 ($p > .05$).

Limitations

This study provided useful findings and theoretical and practical implications; however, limitations do exist. This study used a correlational research design, which is beneficial in examining the relationship between variables and determining the predictability of these variables (Field, 2009). The relationship between leadership practices and academic achievement among non-traditional students pursuing a bachelor's degree is statistically significant when controlling for demographic and academic variables. However, it cannot be determined from this study if leadership practices cause academic achievement. Correlational studies do not explain the cause of the relationship just the degree of relationship. This is because the predictor variable is not manipulated, as it would be in an experimental study. This study did not focus on all of the levels of leadership or leader characteristics. Leadership style, personality, motivation, and academic competencies and other factors were not measured.

Another limitation of this study is the use of a self-report assessment to measure the leadership practices of non-traditional students and is limited to the five transformational leadership practices of: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart as captured by the Leadership Practice Inventory (LPI). The values measured in this self-report may not reflect the student's actual behavior. A self-report survey reduces the time and cost associated with the data collection process and also increases the number of participants (Creswell, 2002). Self-report relies on the accuracy of the participants. The leadership practice inventory (LPI) has been used extensively in research. The survey asked

participants to determine how often they engaged in the leadership behavior.

One final limitation of this study is that the generalizability of the results is limited to non-traditional students. More specific, the results apply to non-traditional students who are enrolled in an accelerated bachelor's degree program at a private, liberal arts institution. The current study was focused on academic achievement in relation to leadership practices of non-traditional students. Students completed the Leadership Practice Inventory (Kouzes & Posner, 1998). The research survey results were collected from one higher learning institution, which limits the generalizability of the study findings. Future researchers should widen the scope of the study, examining the correlation between leadership practices and academic achievement.

Practical Implications

The results of this study are consistent with the theoretical framework discussed in Chapter 2. Some of the transformational leadership practices identified by Kouzes and Posner showed a small negative relationship with academic achievement when controlling for demographic and academic variables. The findings of this study confirmed the hypotheses that there is a relationship between leadership practices and academic achievement when controlling for demographic and academic data. An analysis of the data indicated that there is a small negative correlation between the leadership practice of Enable Others To Act and academic achievement. This study provides continued support that more research needs to be dedicated to the non-traditional student population as to better understand their leadership behaviors and how these behaviors impact academic performance. Specifically, this study reveals that the lack of leadership experience and training could negatively impact student performance.

Significance of the Findings

The significance of the study has added to the construct of transformational leadership and the general interest on the topic of academic achievement. Additionally, the results have helped to fill the gap of research concerning which leadership practices are related to academic performance. This study has also added to the theoretical perspective of Kouzes and Posner's (2007) theory of transformational leadership by confirming that leadership practices are related to performance. Kouzes and Posner (2007) describe the leadership practice of Enable Others to Act as a leadership practice in which the leader fosters collaboration in achieving positive change. The results from this study indicated that there is a small negative correlation between this leadership practice and academic achievement. This leads to the question: Do students who engage in the leadership practice of Enable Others to Act distract the student from focusing on their own academic work? Not only are these results beneficial to non-traditional students but they will also be helpful in other student populations that have an interest in how transformational leadership impacts academic performance.

Recommendations for Future Research

According to the findings of this research, the leadership practices of non-traditional students were statistically significant in relation to academic achievement when controlling for demographic and academic variables. The data from this study indicated that there is a small negative relationship between specific leadership practices and academic achievement. These results differ from previous studies that have demonstrated a positive correlation between transformational leadership behaviors and

academic performance (Mansfield, Pinto, Parente, & Wortman, 2009; Walumbwa, Avolio, & Zhu, 2008; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2004).

This study provided information from non-traditional students regarding their self-perceived leadership practices and how these practices are related to academic achievement. The following recommendations were derived from the limitations of the study and the expansion of research in transformational leadership and its impact on student achievement. Recommendations for further study are as follows:

1. The limitations of the correlational research design can be negated with an experimental research design. Further research studies to include qualitative and quantitative research designs on transformational leadership and academic achievement among non-traditional students would be beneficial in broadening the research and gaining a better understanding of this phenomenon among this demographic of the student population in higher education.
2. A specific recommendation would be to implement an experimental research design in which the control group would be used to determine the impact of leadership training among non-traditional students. One group would receive transformational leadership training and the other group would receive no formal training.
3. Future research could also examine the impact of personality, life experiences, and other cognitive variables to determine how they affect leadership behaviors and academic achievement.
4. This study could be replicated with different sample populations at other schools that offer degree programs for non-traditional students. Research has indicated

that leadership variables such as emotional intelligence influenced academic achievement.

5. Additionally, prior studies have also demonstrated a relationship between leadership training and leadership behaviors. It would be beneficial to investigate other factors that may influence leadership behaviors such as personality, life experiences, and mentoring.
6. The LPI scales used in this study may have limited applicability to the population. It is recommended that the study be repeated with a larger group or a more diverse group to strengthen the findings and possibly bring other items to significance with a larger sample or more diverse sample.

The findings from this study provide support for further research into the relationship of transformational leadership and academic achievement among non-traditional students. The purpose of this study was to begin the inquiry into the relationship of Kouzes and Posner's (2007) model of Transformational Leadership Theory and academic achievement. The statistically significant results from this study of non-traditional students provide a basis for continued study of this student population.

Conclusion

This study examined the relationship between leadership practices and academic achievement among non-traditional students who were enrolled in an accelerated undergraduate degree program. Prior research has demonstrated that there is a relationship between transformational leadership behaviors and academic performance (Mansfield et al., 2009; Walumbwa, Avolio, & Zhu, 2008; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2004).

Findings from this study suggest that there may be a significant relationship between leadership practices and academic achievement among non-traditional students. Specifically, the results indicated that there were differences in leadership practices and academic achievement when controlling for demographic and academic variables. The results of this study help to provide additional evidence to support Kouzes and Posner's Transformational Leadership Theory and to give a better understanding of the leadership behaviors of the non-traditional student population. Many researchers have contributed transformational leadership with positive outcomes such as higher performance in business, team productivity, higher levels of motivation, emotional intelligence, and self-concept; however, the results of this study indicate that certain types of leadership behaviors may be negatively correlated with academic achievement.

The focus of this study was to contribute to the scientific knowledge that may be used by educators and administrators in higher education to help improve students' academic achievement while also enabling students to have a better understanding of their own leadership behaviors. Not all of the five practices of transformational leadership predicted academic achievement of non-traditional students when controlling for demographic and academic variables. The leadership practice of Enable Others To Act showed a small negative correlation with academic achievement when controlling for demographic and academic variables.

Research results that do not show high statistical significance do not imply failed research, but instead these results offer an opportunity to elaborate on the limitations of the research and make recommendations for future research in the field. A possible significance of the research information is sharing the experience of the participants' leadership behaviors. The premise of the research was that transformational leadership

practices of students could be related to higher levels of academic achievement. A broader significance of the research and implications for future research could include learning about possible leadership behaviors that may help improve academic performance.

The findings contributed to the body of knowledge regarding the leadership behaviors in undergraduate non-traditional students. The results of this study are expected to contribute to transformational leadership by assisting colleges and universities in better understanding the correlation of leadership behaviors and academic performance. The study findings contributed to transformational leadership and how leadership behaviors are interrelated with academic performance. The results validate the importance of the concept of transformational leadership and the need for further research. The current findings about the leadership practices examined might not be conclusive. Helping non-traditional students learn more about their leadership behaviors and how to develop their leadership potential might be a lifelong process.

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APPENDIX A: CONSENT FORM

The Leadership Practices of Non-Traditional Students Pursuing a Bachelor's Degree: A Correlational Study

Michael Ammons
Liberty University
Department of Graduate Education

You are invited to be in a research study that is examining the relationship between leadership practices and academic achievement among non-traditional students. You were selected as a possible participant because you may fit the criteria for this study (i.e., non-traditional student enrolled in a bachelor's degree program). I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by Michael Ammons, Department of Graduate Education.

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between leadership practices and academic achievement among non-traditional students enrolled in an accelerated bachelor's degree program. The focus of this study is to determine which leadership practices best predicts academic achievement of business and non-business majors while also looking at the relationship between leadership practices and educational level.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things: You are being asked to complete a survey instrument consisting of less than 50 questions regarding your leadership practices and questions about your demographics. The length of time to complete the survey is estimated at 15 – 20 minutes. Participation is voluntary. The researcher will take precautions to protect participant identity by not using the names of participants in his results or writing. The researcher will use the assessment results for publications and presentations purposes.

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study:

There are no foreseeable risks for completing this survey more so than what you would encounter on a daily basis. It might be possible, as a result of participating in this survey, that you would have more of an awareness of unpleasant thoughts associated with academic achievement and/or leadership behaviors. To minimize these risks, the researcher will provide counselor referral information at the request of the participants. The study may involve additional risks to the participant, which are currently unforeseeable.

The benefits to participation are they may benefit from an increased awareness of their leadership behaviors. Participants may gain further understanding and practical information that may be applicable to future comparable experiences. The potential publication of this study may prove beneficial for the development of academic programs and services for the non-traditional student population.

Compensation:

Participants will not receive any financial compensation for participation in this study.

Confidentiality:

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report I might publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only the researcher will have access to the records. Signed consent forms will be kept in a locked file cabinet separate from the data collected from the survey.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University or Mount Olive College. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions:

The researcher conducting this study is Michael Ammons. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact them at meammons@liberty.edu 910.379.4805 or Dissertation Committee Chair, Dr. Anita Fauber afauber@liberty.edu 540.448.2901. You may contact the Mount Olive College IRB Chair, Roselie McDevitt, Sc.D. at rmcdevitt@moc.edu 919.658.7791.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd, Suite 1837, Lynchburg, VA 24502 or email at irb@liberty.edu.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

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

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Investigator: _____ Date: _____

IRB Code Numbers: Liberty University 1516.042313
Mount Olive College 0213-1

IRB Expiration Date: Liberty University 4/22/14
Mount Olive College 4/2/14

APPENDIX B: DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY

Answers to the following demographic questions are necessary to allow the researcher to determine if the results of this study are related to leadership practices or other variables such as age, gender, major, etc.

1. Gender
 - Male
 - Female

2. Age
 - 21 – 24
 - 25 – 30
 - 31 – 35
 - 36 – 40
 - 41 – 45
 - 46 – 50
 - 51 – 55
 - 56 – 60
 - 61 – 65
 - 65+

3. Ethnicity
 - White/Caucasian
 - Black/African American
 - Alaskan Native, American Indian
 - Asian
 - Hispanic or Latino
 - Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
 - Multi-racial
 - Other

4. Marital Status
 - Single, Never Married
 - Married
 - Separated
 - Divorced
 - Widowed
 - Other

5. Academic Major
 - Business Management
 - Human Resource Management
 - Health Care Management
 - Management of Information Systems

- Accounting
- Early Childhood Education
- Criminal Justice and Criminology
- Psychology
- History
- Religion
- General Studies
- Other

6. Current Grade-Point Average (GPA)

- 4.00 – 3.76
- 3.75 – 3.51
- 3.50 – 3.26
- 3.25 – 3.01
- 3.00 – 2.76
- 2.75 – 2.51
- 2.50 – 2.26
- 2.25 – 2.01
- 2.00 – 1.76
- 1.75 – 1.51
- Below 1.50

7. Years of Leadership Experience/Training

- 0 – 2
- 3 – 5
- 6 – 10
- 10+

8. Employment Status

- Full-Time
- Part-Time
- Unemployed

9. Education Level

- Freshman (1 – 26 credit hours completed)
- Sophomore (27 – 59 credit hours completed)
- Junior (60 – 91 credit hours completed)
- Senior (92 – 126 credit hours completed)

10. Enrollment Status

- Full-Time (12 or more credit hours)
- 3/4 Time (9 credit hours)
- Part-Time (6 or less credit hours)

APPENDIX C: LIBERTY UNIVERSITY IRB APPROVAL LETTER



The Graduate School at Liberty University

April 23, 2013

Michael Ammons

IRB Exemption 1516.042313: The Leadership Practices of Non-Traditional Students Pursuing a Bachelor's Degree: A Correlational Study

Dear Michael,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and that no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under exemption category 46.101 (b)(2), which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:

- (2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless:
 - (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and
 - (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and that any changes to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by submitting a change in protocol form or a new application to the IRB and referencing the above IRB Exemption number.

If you have any questions about this exemption, or need assistance in determining whether possible changes to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,

Fernando Garzon, Psy.D.
Professor, IRB Chair
Counseling

(434) 592-4054



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APPENDIX D: MOUNT OLIVE COLLEGE IRB APPROVAL LETTER



**MOUNT OLIVE
COLLEGE**
AT NEW BERN

Mount Olive College

04/03/2013

Memorandum

TO: Michael Ammons

FROM: Rosalie McDevitt Sc.D., Chairperson
Human Subjects Review Committee

RE: FINAL approval of your research proposal 0213-1
*Leadership Practices of Non-Traditional Students
Pursuing a Bachelor's Degree: A Correlational Study*

Mount Olive College's Human Subjects Review Committee has granted final approval to your project. The committee finds that the proposed research, *Leadership Practices of Non-Traditional Students Pursuing a Bachelor's Degree: A Correlational Study*

This approval is valid for one year from this date 04/03/2013. If the project is still active, you must seek approval for renewal by this date 4/02/2014.

If there are any revisions to the project – additional testing and/or interviewing – please contact this office for reconsideration.

Please feel free to contact with me questions or concerns.

Rosalie McDevitt Sc.D.,
Mount Olive College IRB Chairperson
634 Henderson Street
Mount Olive, NC 28365
(919) 658-7877
rmcdevitt@moc.edu


*Mount Olive College
at New Bern*
2912 Trent Road
New Bern, NC 28562
(252) 633-4464
FAX (252) 633-6365

Copy: Institutional Officer
IRB Members

www.moc.edu

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APPENDIX E: PERMISSION TO USE LPI INSTRUMENT

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News

May 25, 2012

Michael Ammons
201 Colonial Drive
Clinton NC 28328

Dear Mr. Ammons:

Thank you for your request to use the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) in your dissertation. We are willing to allow you to **reproduce** the instrument in written form, as outlined in your request, at no charge. If you prefer to use our electronic distribution of the LPI (vs. making copies of the print materials) you will need to separately contact Lisa Shannon (lshannon@wiley.com) directly for instructions and payment. Permission to use either the written or electronic versions requires the following agreement:

- (1) That the LPI is used only for research purposes and is not sold or used in conjunction with any compensated management development activities;
- (2) That copyright of the LPI, or any derivation of the instrument, is retained by Kouzes Posner International, and that the following copyright statement is included on all copies of the instrument; "Copyright © 2003 James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner. All rights reserved. Used with permission",
- (3) That one (1) **electronic** copy of your dissertation and one (1) copy of all papers, reports, articles, and the like which make use of the LPI data be sent **promptly** to our attention; and,
- (4) That you agree to allow us to include an abstract of your study and any other published papers utilizing the LPI on our various websites.

If the terms outlined above are acceptable, would you indicate so by signing one (1) copy of this letter and returning it to me either via email or by post to; 1548 Camino Monde San Jose, CA 95125. Best wishes for every success with your research project.

Cordially,

Ellen Peterson
Permissions Editor
Epeterston4@gmail.com

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