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An Evaluation of the Long-Term Effectiveness of a Women's Leadership Development Program

Kirsten S. Ericksen
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**AN EVALUATION OF THE LONG-TERM
EFFECTIVENESS OF A WOMEN'S
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

by

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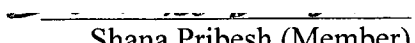
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ABSTRACT

AN EVALUATION OF THE LONG-TERM EFFECTIVENESS OF A WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Kirsten S. Ericksen
Old Dominion University, 2009
Chair: Dr. Jill Dustin

The purpose of this study was to investigate the Women's Institute for Leadership Development (W.I.L.D.) program to determine the immediate and long-term impact as defined by the alumni program participants from three cohorts (2008, 2005, 2003). A secondary focus of the career transition decision-making of recent W.I.L.D. participants was also investigated. Qualitative (individual interviews and W.I.L.D. inventory open-ended written responses) and quantitative [Career Transitions Inventory, (CTI), and the W.I.L.D. inventory] results were examined. Within group and between group differences were analyzed using a paired samples *t*-test, while a grounded theory approach indicated emerging themes for the immediate and long-term impact upon W.I.L.D. program participants. The W.I.L.D. program was found to have both an immediate and long-term impact for program participants. Systematic comparative analysis was used to develop the emerging themes related to leadership skills, leadership knowledge/information, and other beneficial components. Significant differences were found related to participants' perceived leadership skills. Implications based on the findings are discussed.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

College enrollment in the United States increased dramatically between 1955 and 2005. While the population of the country grew by 80%, college enrollment increased 559% (Marks, 2007). From 1995 to 2005, the percentage of female students enrolled in higher education increased by 27% (10 million) in the United States and by 31% (3.3 million) in the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) states (i.e., Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia) (Fact Book on Higher Education, Southern Regional Education Board, June 2007). During the same period (1995-2005) male student enrollment increased by 19% (7.44 million) for the U.S. and 20% (2.3 million) for the SREB states. The women's figures are higher than the total percent increase of 26% (5.6 million) in the United States. In Virginia, women's increase was 26.1%, while men's increase was 19.8%. One reason for the large number of individuals seeking higher education is the desire to enhance their career development.

The increase in women's representation in higher education enrollment has created some unique needs for this growing population. As more women enter higher education, there is a need to determine the means to support them during the decision-making process for their university major and career choices (Sagaria, 1988). University campuses now offer a variety of career resources such as career counseling, virtual career centers, advisors, career fairs, cyber coaches, seminars and workshops (both on campus and online), and leadership development programs. In anticipation of better preparing

students for careers and society, an increasing number of universities are incorporating leadership development for their students. These leadership programs may include: general student leadership development (Kiger, 2008), effective orientation advisors (Posner & Rosenberger, 1997), resident advisors (Posner & Brodsky, 1993), and/or female students (Jurgens & Dodd, 2003). Various programs have reported immediate short-term success for student leaders (Posner & Brodsky, 1993; Posner & Rosenberger, 1997). It would be beneficial to determine if there is a correlation between leadership programs for students and leadership skills application to post-graduation/later careers.

Cress, Astin, Zimmerman-Oster, and Burkhardt (2001) found that leadership has become a central, explicit function for many college campuses. Many colleges and universities incorporate leadership directives within the mission and goals for the campus. One such institution is a public co-educational university, located on the eastern coast. The mission of this university's Division of Student Affairs states in part, that it is desirable to provide a community that allows members to grow and succeed intellectually and personally within a global community. One of the ways this is accomplished is through the Women's Center, one of 13 offices within the Division of Student Affairs. The Women's Center has been serving the community since 1976 with programs ranging from monthly educational activities, a peer mentoring program, and a bi-annual women's leadership program to address the needs and challenges of female students. A total of 23,086 students (17,330 undergraduates, 5,756 graduates) are enrolled at the university ("Campus Facts", 2009). The university has over 200 student organizations and a commitment to student life.

The Women's Institute for Leadership Development program (W.I.L.D.) was created in 1996 to enhance the leadership skills for female students enrolled at the institution. The seven-module institute encourages leadership development throughout the sessions to promote empowerment of female students' self-growth, team building skills, women's leadership styles, diversity appreciation, conflict management skills, and career development.

The Women's Institute for Leadership Development (W.I.L.D.) program focus is portrayed in its descriptive written mission. The mission for the W.I.L.D. program is:

- To explore women's styles of leadership and to support and empower women students as they develop their leadership skills;
- To enhance leadership skills and intellectual development and to create an environment which values and nurtures women leaders;
- To create a network and a community among women leaders during and after the college experience; and
- To become an integral part of leadership development of women students at The Institute.

The Women's Institute for Leadership Development's (W.I.L.D.) overall goal is to develop the leadership skills of female students through empowerment. The specific program objectives are to:

- Define personal leadership style;
- Learn effective team-building techniques;
- Discover new ways to motivate group members;
- Learn conflict management strategies;

- Polish communication skills; and
- Learn how to develop contacts and create a network.

The W.I.L.D. program incorporates this mission and objectives throughout the seven modules offered each semester. A combination of theory and practice guide the development of the seven modules. The modules include the following:

- *Module 1- Welcome/Orientation-* the Call to Leadership: Individuals are oriented to the Women’s Center and Institute through lecture and interactive team-building activities.
- *Module 2- The Art of Team Building:* Experiential activities guide participants and provide an opportunity to demonstrate leadership skills.
- *Module 3- Women’s Leadership Styles:* Guided discussion and structured activities explore leadership styles and women’s special strengths, characteristics, and values.
- *Module 4- The Journey:* Managing diversity and moving beyond students’ leadership “comfort zone’ is the focus.
- *Module 5- Strategies for Effective Communication:* The effective communication skills focus on gender communication as well as assertiveness for women.
- *Module 6- Build Your Stairway to Success- Women’s Career Development:* Students obtain a variety of strategies including goal setting and career decision-making skills, best practices for getting a promotion, and how to establish and start an action plan.

- *Module 7- Reflection/Synthesis- Call to Leadership:* Through self-reflection students review what has personal meaning and value and what inspires or calls them to action. The significance of personal responsibility and ethics is also addressed.

The W.I.L.D. program has a written application process for interested female students. Both undergraduate and graduate students may apply to the W.I.L.D. program. Applicants provide demographic information, leadership experience, and a description of their reasons for wanting to participate in the institute. A total of 50 students are accepted to participate during the academic year, 25 students during the Fall and an additional 25 students during the Spring semester. Each student pays a \$35.00 fee to participate in the program and, at the culmination of the program, receives a certificate of completion.

An evaluation of the program (Jurgens and Dodd, 2003) found that “the W.I.L.D. program significantly increased participants’ leadership skills awareness” (p.199). As Dickerson and Taylor (2000) assert, a woman’s lack of confidence in leadership skills can lead to a negative influence for career opportunities. The W.I.L.D. program’s goal is to enhance the leadership skills of female students. However, limited summative data has been collected to determine the effectiveness of the W.I.L.D. program. Additional research is needed to better understand the long-term impact/effectiveness of the W.I.L.D. program. A more thorough examination would be valuable to explore specific aspects of leadership that were beneficial to the participants and its relationship to career transition decision-making.

Statement of the Problem

The W.I.L.D. program has been shown to be effective in developing leadership awareness for participants (Jurgens & Dodd, 2003). However, there is no evidence of long-term program effectiveness and/or specific career-related benefits. The W.I.L.D. assessment tool developed in-house has been in use since the inception of the program in 1996. Documented research to support the long-term effectiveness of the program could enhance the program's continuation. There are many programs that claim to enhance the psychological, emotional, or academic development of students, which can lead to leadership development. Where these claims are made it is necessary to evaluate and assess a program to ensure these statements are valid.

It would be valuable to determine whether the W.I.L.D. program offers any long-term benefits to the increasing population of women students and, more specifically, whether the program affects their career transition decision-making. Dickerson and Taylor (2000) assert there is a relationship between confidence in leadership skills and career opportunities; therefore close examination of the reported application of leadership skills will give insights into the long-term career development effectiveness of the W.I.L.D. program. This research explored the extent to which the W.I.L.D. program influenced a woman's career transition (as measured by the Career Transitions Inventory, Heppner, 1991), which has been shown to be a challenging process for women (Slaney & Dickson, 1985). It will test the premise that as leadership skills become more proficient, women become more confident in their ability to successfully transition to a new career and apply these aptitudes to future careers.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the extent that participation in the Women's Institute for Leadership Development (W.I.L.D.) program enhances women students' leadership skill development and ultimately their career transition decision-making. Specifically, the purpose was to evaluate 1) the long-term effect of the W.I.L.D. program as expressed by the W.I.L.D. program participant alumni interviews, and 2) the effect of the W.I.L.D. program on women's career transitions as measured by the Career Transitions Inventory (Heppner, 1991) for women. The independent variable was the Women's Institute for Leadership Development (W.I.L.D.) program. The dependent variables within the study included women's written reports/assessments for: Readiness, Confidence, Personal Control, Support, and Independence as reported on the Career Transitions Inventory, related to their career transition decision-making as well as the qualitative feedback during the individual interviews. The Career Transitions Inventory (CTI) and the W.I.L.D. inventory provided quantitative results of the levels of expressed influence/benefit. The alumni interviews informed the qualitative themes for the long-term impact of the W.I.L.D. program.

Research Foci

The literature speculates that leadership programs attempt to develop effective skills for inclusive, empowering, purposeful, ethical, and process-orientation for the purposes of positive change (Eich, 2008). Day (2001) found that developing skills of 360-degree feedback, effective coaching, job assignment, mentoring, networking, and action learning were beneficial for leadership growth. Additionally, the Women's Institute for Leadership Development (W.I.L.D.) program has been found to increase

leadership awareness in participants (Jurgens & Dodd, 2003). However, this research examined the long-term program effectiveness and/or specific career-related benefits related to the W.I.L.D. program. For the duration of the study, the following research foci will be examined:

1. The extent the Women's Institute for Leadership Development (W.I.L.D.) program serves as an integral part of leadership development for the participants as measured by:
 - What leadership development skills did participants in the W.I.L.D. program report they have developed?
 - What additional skills did participants in the W.I.L.D. program report as beneficial to their development?
 - What did participants report as lacking in the W.I.L.D. program?
2. The extent the effects of participation in W.I.L.D. extend beyond the completion of the program as measured by:
 - What leadership skills did participants in the W.I.L.D. program report they are using or have retained after one year?
 - What leadership skills did participants in the W.I.L.D. program report they are using or have retained after four years?
 - What leadership skills did participants in the W.I.L.D. program report they are using or have retained after six years?
3. The extent the career transition needs of females are being met through the W.I.L.D. program as measured by the Career Transitions Inventory:

- Did participants report a change in perceived support towards career transition?
- Did participants report a change in independence towards career transition?
- Did participants report a change in self confidence towards career transition?
- Did participants report a change in personal control towards career transition?
- Did participants report a change in readiness towards career transition?

Significance of the Study

Improving the quality and effectiveness of student leadership programs is the responsibility of higher education and vital to the effective education of future leaders (Eich, 2008; Marks, 2007). The knowledge, information and data gained from this research can assist administrators in the development of future leadership programming not only for women, but also for men. Furthermore, these results can help strengthen the W.I.L.D. program through informative feedback. In addition, this study can help shape future female leaders who will impact society in a variety of environments. The results also revealed the impact on the leadership component of career transitions decision-making.

Definition of Terms

In order to ensure accurate representation and assist with the mutual understanding of certain concepts, the terms below have been defined in relation to this particular study.

Leadership

Many different descriptions of leadership have been provided throughout the years and it is extremely difficult to develop one comprehensive definition. For the purposes of this study, the excerpt related to leadership shared with the Women's Institute for Leadership Development (W.I.L.D.) participants was used as the guiding reference. The context in which this leadership discussion occurred was one in which participants were invited to consider their personal leadership style. The following book excerpt shared elements of a leadership definition that encouraged females to develop their own leadership definition: "The new leader is someone who can assess a situation, bring people together, build consensus, and discover solutions, drawing on the talents of everyone involved. The new leader is a facilitator, a communicator, a team builder, who realizes that our greatest natural resources are our minds and hearts, together with those of the people around us" (Dreher, 1996). This encouraged individuals to determine and develop their own guiding leadership definition.

Career Transition

For the purposes of this study, career transition refers to the change from student status to career selection (regardless if one currently has a part-time job, a career or has never had a career). It also refers to the transition from one career to another (with the student transition as one stepping stone along the path to a new career) (Louis as cited in Sharf, 2002).

The Career Transitions Inventory (CTI)

This inventory provides an overall indication of the self-perception of internal psychological resources (Heppner, 1991) in five areas, which are defined for clarity and

relevance to this study. These terms are defined according to the Career Transitions Inventory (Heppner, 1991).

Readiness

A person's willingness to do the things needed to achieve her or his career goals.

Confidence

The belief in one's ability to successfully perform career-planning activities.

Personal Control

The extent to which a person feels she or he has power over her or his career planning process verses feeling that external forces determine the outcome of her or his career transition.

Support

How much backing a person feels she or he has from the significant people in her or his life as she or he contemplates a career transition.

Independence

The level a person views career choice as being an independent decision verses a choice made as a part of a relational context such as family, friends, partners, or 'significant others' that enter the career planning process.

Delimitations

I have a personal interest in this research topic since I am a woman who chose to return to higher education in order to pursue a different career path. As a female who has held leadership positions and is the mother of two daughters, I was very mindful of my own biases during the implementation and interpretation of the research. During the interviews I remained neutral and listened when individuals shared information that was

personally relative to my own experiences to eliminate any potential influences. To assist in the accurate representation of others' voices within the results, journal writing was used to reflect on my personal perspectives and influences.

It was important to recognize the limitations in the sample utilized for this research. The participants for the W.I.L.D. program are a unique population since they have been selected and often displayed or possessed many personal leadership characteristics and/or expressed interest and motivation in obtaining leadership skills. In addition, the purposeful sample created a narrow scope of selected individuals to study the entire W.I.L.D. program. These factors were taken into consideration in the reporting of the results and limitations of the study.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

One common factor found in the mission statements of higher education institutions is the development of effective leaders to serve society (Eich, 2008; Cress, Astin, Zimmerman-Oster, & Burkhardt, 2001). While this has been an understood institutional value at many universities and colleges, recently this concept has appeared as a specific goal. A stated goal at the institution where this study takes place is to develop intellectual skills that allow graduates to “encompass the breadth of understanding needed for personal growth and achievement and for responsible citizenship” (“The Mission of the University,” 2002, p. 1001-2). Southern Illinois University at Carbondale includes a priority of “seeking to meet educational, vocational, social, and personal needs of its diverse population of students and helping them fully realize their potential is a central purpose of the university” (“Mission and Scope of Southern Illinois University Carbondale,” 2008, ¶ 3).

As more females enter higher education, the need to develop effective leadership programs for this population has been recognized. Various factors that can influence the development of an effective leadership program are discussed in this chapter. The literature relating to leadership covers a wide spectrum including: leadership styles (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001), peer leadership (Gnagey, 1979), women in leadership (Denmark, 1993), the impact of computer-based simulation training on leadership (DiGiovanni, 2003), wilderness experiences as contributors to leadership development (Blanchard, Strong, & Ford, 2007), and many more. For the purposes of this study the leadership literature concentrating on female students, programs, theory,

and style is the focus.

One important component of leadership growth is career development which encompasses a number of facets. Important considerations are the techniques that have been shown to be effective and the research literature, which both support a woman's entry into higher education and her career transition. An additional related facet that is beneficial to examine is the research on group interventions that have been found to be valuable for these women. A review of the research revealed issues related to women in higher education and effective research designs.

Review of Research Approaches and Designs

Mixed Methods Approaches

Mixed methods approaches (i.e., qualitative and quantitative research) were utilized in several of the empirical research studies (Berman, Gelsco, Greenfeig, & Hirsch, 1977; Heppner, Multon, & Johnston, 1994; Slaney, Stafford, & Russell, 1981). Berman et al. (1977) conducted experiments to test the validity and reliability of a transitions inventory with the intention of creating a tool to assist career counselors. The mixed methods research yielded more positive outcomes (Berman et al., 1977; Heppner, Multon, & Johnston, 1994) when compared to single research method approaches.

Many articles capture the benefits of successful qualitative interviews (Gilligan, Spencer, Weinberg, & Bertsch, 2003; Lichtman, 2006). Lichtman (2006) emphasizes the importance of communicating ideas effectively through the use of the voices of others and the richness and depth of the data. The *Listening Guide*, (Gilligan, Spencer, Weinberg, & Bertsch, 2003) offers suggestions for important listening techniques and appropriate analysis and interpretation of qualitative interview data. In particular,

attending to one's "own responses to the narrative" (Gilligan et al., 2003, p.257) and ensuring the speaker's voice be heard. It has been suggested that women are more comfortable than men engaging in building relationships and intimate interactions with others (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1997), therefore, story telling is an ideal format to present the qualitative data.

Much of the literature has utilized self-report techniques to gather feedback about the effectiveness of the treatment/program. Some of the common measures assessed during qualitative interviews included: satisfaction (Sterrett, 1999), vocational decision-making (Heppner, Multon, & Johnston, 1994), and support/connecting to others (McManus, Redford, & Hughes, 1997; Morgan & Hensley, 1998).

Efficacy is a common construct/variable that researchers have examined. Some constructs are more specific than others [i.e. self-efficacy (Dickerson & Taylor, 2000; Quimby & O'Brien, 2004; Sullivan & Mahalik, 2000) or program-efficacy (Berman et al., 1977)]. The assessments utilized to measure efficacy often included standardized tools or open-ended interview questions.

When conducting non-empirical studies, it is often difficult to control for the measured variables due to the numerous factors interfering within the environment (life-work roles balance, different home environments, etc.). It is important to acknowledge the possibility that social desirability could become a concern for those programs with student participants, when students receive academic credit for attending the session and as a result might feel an obligation to respond as the researcher wished/desired (Berman et al., 1977; Gnagey, 1979).

Russon and Reinelt (2004) suggest leadership is a process that develops over time therefore longitudinal evaluations were considered to provide an effective full impact perspective on leadership development programs (p.107). Russon and Reinelt (2004) found that interviews are effective means for gathering the rich data from program participants in place of surveys. In addition, these authors recommend the use of mixed methods to triangulate the results (Russon & Reinelt, 2004). The use of triangulation can support or compliment each method's strengths.

After an examination of the research literature, it is apparent that there are several strong themes present related to female leadership development in higher education. These themes include: educational theories, challenges in higher education, leadership theories, leadership styles, women's leadership, women's leadership challenges, women's leadership strengths, women's career development, career development resources, career development interventions, transitions, and groups.

Educational Theories

Several effective educational theories exist, which explore different aspects of learning and different populations (i.e., cultural components, gender issues, style, and age). Within the context of this paper the focus is guided by relevant educational theories that relate to females in higher education as learners. These theoretical perspectives may contribute to female students overall higher education experience and final career decisions.

Feminist/Women's Educational Theories

Since the 1970s a number of educational theories have explored preferred females learning. Educational theories that provide perspectives related to females can be

categorized as psychosocial theories, responsibility focus theories, or event theories.

These perspectives provide insights into the female students ideal educational environment and consequently their learning.

Psychosocial Theories

Most theories about women's learning have been approached from a psychological perspective (Hayes, 2001). Belenky et al., (1997) introduced the concept of "connected knowing" in reference to the manner in which women learn. In addition, they proposed "connected teaching" in order to support women's ways of learning. Belenky et al., (1997) argue that women learn best in an encouraging supportive environment presented in the format of "confirmation-evocation-more confirmation." This suggests a learner's need for comments such as "I like what you're saying, keep thinking, and adding more" instead of, "you need to add more here." Some instructional perspectives may unintentionally discourage participation from females if reassurance is not provided with guidance and encouragement.

Similarly, VanStone, Nelson, and Niemann, (1994) argue that the "academic success of single-mother college students is dependent upon the support of a wide variety of individuals and psychological belief factors" (p.572). In other words these females considered knowledge and skills as valuable however; they also evaluated their academic success together with consideration of their personal building relationships with others. Although they may perform well academically, females may report their campus experience as poor if they have not developed rich building relationships. Hayes (2001) cautions that an orientation to the "connected knowing" relationship not be interpreted solely as "women learn best in groups rather than alone" (p.37), but instead should be

taken into consideration during the instruction of females. Group work may be beneficial however there is more intermingling of building relationships and personal relevance associated with the idea of 'connected knowing'.

Responsibility

Similar to feminist perspectives, Freire (1970) presented the idea that education had a social responsibility linked to freedom and change; and that students and educators should engage in improving society. Striving for equality within higher education for females suggests one method to create awareness and improve society.

An interdisciplinary approach is represented within both the feminist and multicultural educational theories. Mulvihill (2000) declares a critical need to incorporate both feminist and multicultural education theories within higher education for the purpose of social justice. This supports Freires' (1970) idea of improving society. As Brown, Irby, Fisher, and Yang (2006) mention, it is important to keep the "particular and unique needs, values, and interests" (p.62) in mind as well as the characteristics of female higher education students while contemplating effective educational theories and providing appropriate educational strategies.

Event Focus

A portion of women in higher education are returning after an interruption in their academic endeavors. Ebaugh (1988) presents an interesting theoretical framework suggesting that adult females become students to deal with various life changes. Some of these life changes may be positive while others may be a challenge. Similarly, Ross (1988) alleges that 63 percent of adult women reported a life event which caused them to return to college. A financial status change was reported as the most frequent significant

event related to a decision to return to school while divorce and the exit of the youngest child from home were other events mentioned. In other words, it is suggested that adult women have a crisis or other life event which causes them to pursue higher education. Ross (1988) contends, the decision to return to school “seems to be influenced by a combination of internal and external forces and requires a theoretical explanation that takes into account the confluence of biological, social, cultural, and historical forces” (p.117). This suggests a need for a holistic approach to the adult female students’ successful experience.

Challenges Faced by Females in Higher Education

Much of the research cites important findings related to the need for “psychological” components (Belenky et al., 1997; Berman et. al., 1977) including self-care and self-awareness (McManus, Redford, & Hughes, 1997) and internal self (Breese & O’Toole, 1994). This suggests that it would be beneficial to consider both external environmental components and individual personal facets for the development of female leaders in higher education.

Structural Challenges

The challenges of a male-normed organizational structure in higher education persist today, despite the revelation of a need for women in leadership positions (Eddy & Cox, 2008). Gallos (1995) contends that this male-oriented educational structure in higher education, especially the classroom environment, contributes and influences women’s feelings of insecurity and doubt about their academic abilities. The higher education structure can suggest that females do not belong in positions of leadership. The higher education structure can impact women’s quality of instruction and college

experience which can translate to female students' careers and leadership potential. Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1997) allege that women entering college desire confirmation that they have the capacity to learn. Self-confidence in their intellectual ability is lacking.

Personal Challenges

Female students may need more personal support due to the male dominating higher education structure, poor self-esteem, challenges relating to selecting a career (especially if it is a non-traditional one) and/or expectations to meet the demands of many roles. Females could benefit from services such as, counseling, guidance, and support groups. As Belenky et al. (1997) emphasize, women want their voices to be heard. It may help for women to simply share their stories with other women to relieve their sense of stress. Cook (1993) has declared that the nurturing in women's lives may contribute and influence their career development.

It is important to examine an institution's educational philosophy. This philosophical perspective can guide the experience a female has within the higher education institution and impact her subsequent career transition as well as her leadership development. Higher education institutions need to recognize their influence on female students' development and respond appropriately with consideration for this population's unique needs and perspectives for leadership and career development.

Leadership Theories

The literature suggests that there are feminine and masculine differences in leadership roles (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001; Yoder, 2001), however, the various reasons for these differences is debated. Leaders often have different perceptions of their

dominant leadership skills than do the individuals whom they lead (Whitsett, 2007). Van Wagner (2008) has identified eight different types of leadership theories: “great man”, trait, contingency, situational, behavioral, participative, management and relationship theory. Each of these theories focuses on different central beliefs such as being born a leader or having the ability to learn leadership behaviors/qualities. Conger (1999) suggests dominant, effective leadership theories share many common features including “1) vision, 2) inspiration, 3) role modeling, 4) intellectual stimulation, 5) meaning-making, 6) appeals to higher-order needs, 7) empowerment, 8) setting of high expectations, and 9) fostering collective identity” (p. 154).

Trait Theory

Trait theory is professed to be one of the first documented leadership theories. The basis for this theory is the idea that people are born leaders and have innate characteristics/traits which propel them into the role of leadership (“Trait leadership theory”, 2009). Tead (1935) described certain characteristics (in support of trait theory) including energy, enthusiasm, sense of purpose, and direction, affection, and decisiveness as necessary qualities in leaders. People who are born with the right combination of traits, make good leaders. In other words, only certain people who are born with these specific characteristics can become leaders. Kirkpatrick and Locke (1991) further support the idea of a trait approach to leadership arguing that key leadership traits include: drive (this incorporates achievement, motivation, ambition, energy, tenacity, and initiative), leadership motivation (the desire to influence others), honesty, integrity, self-confidence (emotional stability), cognitive ability (formulate suitable strategies), and knowledge of the business.

Situational/Context/Environment

Some propose that the group or organizational environment (Rosener, 1990; Conger, 1999; Yoder, 2001) may influence effective types of leadership; in other words one type of leadership may be appropriate in one context while a different type of leadership may be more appropriate in a another setting. Social scientists initially suggested this type of leadership as an alternative to Trait theory (Stogdill, 1974). Similarly, Conger (1999) suggests that both charismatic and transformational leadership may be appropriate at different times for different reasons, depending on the context. Rosener (1990) found that nontraditional leadership styles were effective in various environments and the diversity of the leadership style was a strength to the organization. Furthurmore, Conger (1999) attests that there may be more than one context present, the first being an organization's culture and structure while the second context is the external environment beyond the organization.

Functional Theory

This type of leader views her or his role as doing whatever is necessary to meet the needs of the group (Hackman & Wageman, 2005). When group cohesiveness is achieved, the functional leader has accomplished her or his role. It is expected that the leader will maintain the structure and foster effective building relationships.

Behavioral Model

Conger and Kanungo (as cited in Conger, 1999) propose a stage model of leadership which moves the followers from one state to a future organizational state. This change is achieved through active involvement in three stages. Initially, the leader assesses the environment and develops strategic, idealized goals. Finally, these goals are

examined together with the followers, demonstrating achievement through risk taking and personal role modeling. Behaviorism contends that leaders can learn ideal qualities through observation and practice.

Conger (1999) asserts that a behavioral model incorporates a consideration of the environmental context. This environmental context exerts a strong influence on the leadership outcomes. Other theories take into account additional aspects/components of leadership development such as emotions, vision, and building relationships.

Relational Theory

Building relationships are viewed as crucial and valuable to the development and success by these leaders. Gilligan (1982) proposes that women effectively use building relationships to develop their leadership skills and interactions. Furthermore, the idea of self-in-relation (Gilligan, 1982) where leaders are aware of their own abilities and skills in relation to others is presented as a leadership skill. Pope, Reynolds, and Mueller (2004) assert awareness (self-understanding and understanding of others), skills (gaining trust and respect of others), and knowledge (obtaining information) are essential factors in the development of successful personal and professional building relationships. Similarly, Bennis (2000) asserts that leaders need to manage themselves in order to be successful. Bushe (2001) recognizes that growth and development flourish when the leadership envisions “organizations primarily as people and human building relationships with limitless capacity and potential to achieve whatever the human imagination can yearn for” (p. 159). It has been suggested that the prominence of these building relationships are taking on a feminine quality.

Feminine Theory

During the last decade there has been a movement to label a new theory of leadership “feminine leadership.” Research related to female superintendents, confirmed an “emerging model of feminine leadership: working from the center of a web-like organizational structure; employing a collegial, supportive, empowering style; establishing a district culture of increasing achievement for change; justifying tough personnel issues on the basis of “children-first”; developing supportive networks to address political and budgetary issues; and staying true to their core values of integrity and caring about people” (Washington, Miller, & Fiene, 2007, p.278). Washington, Miller, and Fiene (2007) speculate it is necessary to employ a feminine model of leadership in order to be successful within certain school systems, due to the district requirements, such as “value-added focus on increasing the level of student achievement over time” (p.278).

Billing and Alvesson (2002) caution that this leadership label can promote continued gender stereotypes and labor division. Women using a feminine leadership style lead through empowerment unlike traditional structural force (Washington, Miller & Fiene, 2007). Although feminine leadership refers to moving away from traditional styles of leadership, the name implies only women lead in this manner, neglecting the fact that men may also use a feminine theoretical approach.

Leadership Styles

Lewin, Lippit, and White (1939) examined three different leadership styles while a leader guided a group of school children during a craft project: authoritarian (autocratic), participative (democratic) and delegative (*laissez-faire*). Following the observation, they concluded that a participative (democratic) style in which followers

were invited to contribute while the leaders made the final decision was the most effective style of leadership. Several additional leadership styles have been identified since that time, however many of the same components resonate in existing types. Johnson Hummel (2008) proposes the ability to move between different styles depending on the topic or need is the most effective type of leadership. Similarly, Wallin and Crippen (2007) discuss the blending of leadership styles in reference to gendered leadership styles of men and women.

Authoritarian/ Transactional Leadership

The attributes often associated with this style include: “assertive, controlling and confident qualities such as aggression, ambition, dominance, force, independence, daring, and self-confidence” (deCasal & Mulligan, 2004). These leaders are often focused on the task rather than the goal. This traditional leadership style is structured with rank and power, void of any personal concerns. The focus is on the structural leadership to maintain order, direction and guidelines.

Charismatic Leadership

Shamir, House and Arthur (1993) assert that charismatic leadership alters the follower’s self-concept while achieving motivation through the development of a collective identity and creating a vision for the future. As Conger (1999) asserts “one of the important contributions of the theory [charismatic leadership] has been the attempt to explain in greater detail the role of a strong collective identity in the leadership process” (p.153).

Transformational Leadership

Various researchers have adopted different names for this similar concept. These are communal (DeCasal & Mulligan, 2004), democratic (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001), relationship theory (Van Wagner, 2008) and transformational (Conger, 1999) leadership. All refer to the same characteristics and leadership style. For the purpose of the present research it is understood that the use of the term transformational leadership is synonymous with “communal” and “democratic” leadership.

The transformational leader increases the follower’s knowledge about the importance of designated goals. Kouzes and Posner (2002) refer to this idea as inspiring a shared vision. Conger (1999) suggests that “at the heart of the model is the notion that transformational leaders motivate their followers to commit to and realize performance outcomes that exceed their expectations” (p. 148). A style that is transformational has been described as “minimizing hierarchy, being inclusive, working toward consensus, and creating unity”(Yoder, 2001, p.825).

Bass and Avolio (as cited in Conger,1999), “discovered that descriptions of the transformational leader are significantly closer to subordinates’ images of the ideal leader than transactional leadership” (p.148). This suggests that followers prefer a transformational leadership style. Perhaps followers would be more productive and loyal with a transformational leadership style.

Graham (1995) compared levels of moral development and leadership style and determined that transformational leaders encourage others to engage in high levels of moral reasoning (post-conventional; where creativity and independent principled beliefs are used). In addition, modeling and “constructive participation in organizational

governance” (Graham, 1995, p.51) were found to enhance leadership skills. Graham (1995) suggests that “selfishness and gullibility are both lessened when people are empowered to engage in high-level moral reasoning.

Servant Leadership

Greenleaf (1977) asserts that the servant leader’s motivation and natural feeling is to serve first and leading will follow. The servant leader “places the interest of followers before the self-interest of a leader, emphasizes personal development, and the empowerment of followers” (Smith, Montagno & Kuzmenko, 2004, p.80). According to Dittmar (2006) some individuals are more predisposed to being servant-leaders while others are able to learn to become a servant-leader. Zimmerli, Holzinger and Richter (2007) emphasize that the success of the servant leader is demonstrated by the growth of the followers, “do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?” (p.83). Being a good listener is one of the key characteristics of a servant-leader (Greenleaf, 1977). Based on the review of Greenleaf’s work, Spears (1995) developed 10 characteristics of servant leadership including: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community.

Additional Leadership Styles

It is not possible to examine all proposed styles of leadership however the dominate styles have been explored. Some additional styles found in the literature are discussed below. Whitsett’s (2007) studied the leadership styles of academic department chairs. Faculty perceptions of the department chair’s leadership style used most

frequently was selling (43.8% of faculty felt the chair was unable to take responsibility for a task but willing, and confident to match behaviors to needs of the group). Additional findings for academic department chair leadership style (Whitsett, 2007), in descending order of frequency, included: participating (31.3% felt the chair was able to take responsibility for a task but unwilling, and insecure to match behaviors to needs of group), delegating, (15.6% believed the chair was able to take responsibility for a task and willing, and confident to match behaviors to the needs of the group) and finally telling (9.4% felt chair was unable, unwilling and insecure to take responsibility for a task). In other words, the majority (43.8%) of faculty reported academic chairs as “selling” (willing and confident) however, unable to take responsibility for the task. Drucker (1954) insists that people, not events, are the important behaviors to consider for effective management. According to Drucker (1954) there is a need to balance a variety of needs and goals, instead of focusing on a single institutional value which he refers to as management by objectives. “The manager is the dynamic, life-giving element in every business” (Drucker, 1954, p.3).

Leadership style can emphasize one component (i.e. collaboration or structure) and it has been suggested that gender can impact a person’s leadership style (Wallin & Crippen, 2007). Wallin and Crippen (2007) found female superintendents used a “style of leadership that includes an emphasis on shared leadership, collaborative processes, and a focus on teaching and learning” (p.35).

Women's Leadership

Historical Perspective

Prior to 1980, the focus for leadership programs, development, and education was targeted toward the male population (Reay & Ball, 2000). In addition, early leadership theories lacked the inclusion/consideration of a vision or goal orientation (Burke & Cooper, 2006). There was a new emphasis on women and leadership in the 1980's and 1990's due to women's increased representation in leadership roles. During this time period much of the leadership literature examined the role of women (Billing & Alvesson, 2002; Carli & Eagly, 2001; Clark, Caffarella, & Ingram, 1999; Alimo-Metcalf, 1995; Denmark, 1993). As the involvement of women in leadership positions has increased, there has been a renewed interest in the impact this perspective brings to various environments.

Eagly and Johannesen-Schmidt (2001) investigated the differences between men and women as related to transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire styles of leadership. Women were found to significantly exceed men on three of the five transformational scales and one of the three transactional scales. The individualized consideration scale within transformational style leadership had the largest significant difference for women and had the most "communal content of the subscales" (p.791). The men's scores exceeded women's on laissez-faire leadership and the passive management-by-exception subscale within transactional style leadership was found to have the largest difference.

The leadership style often associated with women focuses on building relationships and connections in the workplace. Women have been found to encourage a

participatory, democratic leadership style. A survey sent to the International Women's Forum (IWF) found that "women are more likely than men to use transformational leadership — motivating others by transforming their self-interest into the goals of the organization" (Rosener, 1990, p.121). Others have found that "gender-stereotypic styles — women interpersonally oriented and men task-oriented" —was stronger in laboratory and assessment settings than in organizational settings (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001, p. 789). DeCasal and Mulligan (2004) studied female master's level graduate students to determine their perceptions of women and leadership. The qualities that these emerging women leaders reported as necessary overall were "determination, intelligence, fairness, and confidence" (deCasal & Mulligan, 2004, p. 30). Yoder (2001) suggests that transformational leadership is a "feminizing reaction to this masculinized model"(p.824) of hierarchical power and control. As Yoder (2001) advocates "transformational leadership establishes a congenial context for the expression of women's effective leadership" (p.824).

Eagly and Johannesen-Schmidt (2001) reported that women were more "interpersonally oriented" than men; however the genders did not differ in task-oriented leadership style (p.788).

Transformational leadership seems to fit well with Roseners' description of "ways women lead" (1990, p.119). Women may have a natural tendency, due to socialization, to utilize skills associated with transformational leadership including, the promotion of motivation and unity to obtain a goal.

Programs

Jurgens and Dodd (2003) found that “the W.I.L.D. program significantly increased participants’ leadership skills awareness” (p.199). Women’s participation in a leadership development program increased their skills and abilities to engage in leadership behaviors. Central Michigan University implements leadership development groups for women based on the idea that the group will complete a social change-action project during their participation.

Dickerson and Taylor (2000) propose that “participation in developmental leadership workshops” (p.203) and providing opportunities to observe effective leaders and discuss strategies can raise self-efficacy which contributes to their success. The literature supporting women’s effective leadership skills will likely lead to more representation in leadership positions (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001).

Women’s Leadership Challenges

Mentoring/Role Modeling

Miller and Krauss (2004) found that one explanation for the under-representation of women in student government (at Midwestern comprehensive universities) was due to the lack of female mentors to serve as “role models of leadership” to encourage mentees to participate (p.3). Similarly, Eckman (2004) found that women principals reported fewer same-gender mentor relationship opportunities. The disproportionate female representation in leadership roles sends the message of inequality to mentees and employees (Ly, 2008). New female school superintendents commented that there was no communication between them and the male superintendents which suggests a lack of mentorship and a feeling of isolation and insecurity (Wallin & Crippen, 2007).

Many have mentioned the benefits of mentoring for women in leadership positions (Dickerson & Taylor, 2000; Gibson, 2004; Portman & Garrett, 2005). Role modeling and mentoring has been mentioned as an effective method to propel females comfort and participation in leadership positions (Dickerson & Taylor, 2000). Support from mentors and role models appears to be a critical component to an effective leadership program. In fact, Gibson (2004) found that the women “perceived the experience of being mentored as having a profound effect in their ability to achieve success in academic institutions” (p.184). Searby and Tripses (2006) assert that “women have to become much more deliberate about teaching other women who aspire to leadership positions about ways to effectively engage in mentoring building relationships” (p.193). Effective, nurturing mentor building relationships between women require openness to the relationship, emotional availability, empathy, and collaboration (Portman & Garrett, 2005).

According to a poll conducted by careerwomen.com male and female mentors are both important and each offer distinct advantages to women (Donnelly, 2003). O’Neill and Blake-Beard (2002) argue that the male-female mentor relationship has many barriers due to social and psychological constraints, while many others support this mixed-gender mentoring relationship (Glaser, 2008; Sosik & Godshalk, 2000). Glaser (2008) suggests that male and female mentors offer different approaches, support, and skills, suggesting it ideal to have a mentor from each gender to obtain all the benefits. Glaser (2008) further explains that female mentors have been found to be better role models while male mentors may provide better guidance in obtaining promotions. A diverse mentoring relationship (both male and female) has demonstrated more benefits

than homogeneous mentoring building relationships (Sosik & Godshalk, 2000). Searby and Tripses (2006) found women participants acknowledged that mentoring takes many forms and comes from various sources.

Power

Carli and Eagly (2001) assert that gender impacts leadership and “women’s subordination remains apparent in their lack of access to positions of power” (p.634). They further discuss the influence of people who hold positions of power and the importance of having women in these leadership roles in order to change society and contribute to equality for women. Rosener (1990) contends that women ascribe their power to interpersonal skills and/or personal contacts unlike men who rely on organizational stature. This “male-normed organizational structure” has been found to maintain the gender differentiation in power for men and women (Eddy & Cox, 2008).

Some of the literature addresses these issues of unequal power between genders. Alimo-Metcalf (1995) cautions that empowerment needs to maintain the intended meaning of interdependence between individuals and not be transformed to mean possessing power. Clark, Caffarella, and Ingram (1999) revealed that although some women experienced gender discrimination in their careers, especially in relation to leadership, “most did not generalize beyond their personal experience to detect a systematic pattern of gender discrimination in the careers of women” (p.74) and instead “wrote off these experiences as something to be expected” (p. 74). Nussbaum (1997) argues that power causes people to separate themselves from others who are different (gender, race, ethnicity, etc) and this needs to be addressed to create cohesive equal, productive, environments.

Gender Bias

Much of the literature (Carli & Eagly, 2001; Tanner, 1990; Yoder, 2001) has revealed gender biases against women in leadership positions. It has been suggested that women receive negative reactions when they use an autocratic or directive leadership style (Carli, 2001; Eagly and Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001). Eagly and Johannesen-Schmidt (2001) consider social role theory of sex difference and similarities as principles that guide leadership and organizational roles. They assert that specific organizational roles are influenced by social identities and gender roles. Developing an awareness of these gender differences within contexts can be a primary strategy towards effective leadership for women (Yoder, 2001).

Female Leadership Strengths

Relationships/Communication

The literature suggests that the importance of personal interactions and building relationships has been a common characteristic for female leaders (deCasal & Mulligan, 2004; Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2004). The value females place on personal interactions/building relationships is apparent in their leadership communication styles. For example, Gilligan (1982) argues that women's development is related to their building relationships and increasing intimacy with others. The importance and influence of these relationships also encompasses females' leadership development and growth. Similarly, Tannen (1990) contends there is a gap between men and women's communication styles, "genderlect" (p.79), where women highly value discussion, building relationships, inclusion, and support from others, while men focus on levels of dominance and control. These different communication styles impact their leadership

styles in a different manner. Feminist theory promotes the idea of self-in-relation (Gilligan, 1982) which suggests the building relationships women form can provide a natural advantage in positions of leadership. Portman and Garrett (2005) discuss the benefits of relational-cultural theory in leadership to include the development and mentoring of professionals through a “collectivistic relationship that fosters interdependence among colleagues and group success as relational norms” (p. 9).

Powersharing

Interactive leadership is the term Rosener (1990) uses to describe the encouragement of individual self-worth, active participation in discussions, and sharing style (power and information) of many women leaders. Rosener (1990) suggests that “inclusion is at the core of interactive leadership” (p.120). Leaders who share power and information illustrate loyalty to employees by demonstrating “they are trusted and their ideas are respected” (Rosener, 1990, p.123). Much of the literature confirms the benefits of collaborative, interdependent leadership (Alimo-Metcalf, 1995; Nussbaum, 1997; Rosener, 1990).

Styles

Eagly and Johannesen-Schmidt (2001) hypothesize “that democratic and participative styles may be especially effective for female leaders, because of the ambivalence that many people have about ceding power to women” (p.790). Rosener (1990) indicates that women’s leadership style incorporates factors unique to their socialization and these feminine characteristics are the reason women are succeeding as leaders. Women scored significantly higher than men on perceived effectiveness of leadership skills (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001). Similarly, Yoder (2001) contends

that women may adapt their leadership style according to the reinforcement they receive when utilizing more interpersonal and inspirational style of leadership. Belenky et al., (1997) maintain that females naturally engage in personal interactions therefore, certain leadership styles (interactive, transformational) may also naturally flourish.

Women's Career Development

Until recently career development theory and research has focused on men. Some current theories have offered explanations for women's career development including the impact of career decision-making and career indecision. These areas are explored below with the consideration of higher education as one path to a career.

Theories/Frameworks

Patterns

Age-related lifecycles have been criticized since they often do not take into account the career patterns of women and minorities. Leach and Chakiris (as cited in Kerka, 1991) present three types of career patterns including linear (traditional pattern of education-work-retirement), free-form (paid or unpaid work, part-time jobs, consulting), and mixed form (transitions between linear and free-form patterns).

Identity Development

Jones (1997) proposes that college women have multiple facets to their identity development (she proposes 10) including career decisions and future planning as two of these influential aspects/facets. A similar concept expressed by Breese and O'Toole (1995) in their description of role exit theory, explains a portion of the transition process. In this theory, one must lose one's identity in order to take on a new one. These women determined education would lead to a different role (Breese & O'Toole, 1995), perhaps

one with more leadership responsibility. Adult students often arrive at a higher education institution with a clear idea of their career aspirations while traditional students are often still developing their career path.

Ecological Perspective

Cook, Heppner, and O'Brien (2005) stress that the interactions of females with the environment (at different systemic levels) influence their career development. It is the interactions between these various systems (i.e., culture, society etc.) that ultimately determine a woman's career decisions.

Contextual Perspective

Loveland, Buboltz, Schwartz, and Gibson (2006) propose that a "content change signifies a focus on the importance of contextual issues affecting career development rather than a previous focus on career development interventions" (p. 263). In other words it is important to consider all aspects (culture, environment, gender, timeframe, etc.) influencing the individual and determine the most appropriate specific actions for this particular individual at this point in time instead of imposing one general predetermined intervention. This would be particularly effective with females in higher education due to the intimidating, masculine environment and the many factors influencing female's career development (Eddy & Cox, 2008).

Career Decision-Making

Influential Factors

As Dickerson and Taylor (2000) assert, women's lack of confidence in their leadership skills can lead to a negative influence on career opportunities. Specifically, self-efficacy (Quimby & O'Brien, 2004) was related to women's selection of task choice

and preference (in their careers). Female students would be able to eliminate their sense of isolation by acquiring the knowledge that other women experience similar feelings and challenges.

Support

Berman et al. (1977) reported positive effects on women's vocational decision-making after involvement in a supportive learning environment. Gilligan (1982) asserts that decision-making for women is more contextual and based on building relationships; this supports the assertion that women benefit from interactive decision-making. In addition, it affirms that females may naturally prefer and use certain leadership styles (transformational, interactive, democratic).

Career Indecision

Indecision about career path (Berman et al., 1977), and the transition period for career decision-making (Sterrett, 1999) can contribute to the feelings of stress expressed by females in higher education. It is not surprising that the life transition of graduating from higher education is significant and may begin with the contemplation of a career change (from student to professional). Implementation of a leadership development program for female students can enhance their self-concept and career development and provide the necessary skills to feel more prepared to make this transition.

Higher Education as a Path to a Career

Some have suggested that some women view higher education as an opportunity to obtain additional training to seek a new profession/career or new role (Ericksen, Jurgens, Garrett & Swedburg, 2008; Ross, 1988). It is apparent that a women's career development may be influenced by several factors which should be taken into

consideration for this population. Given this information, it is important to explore the literature related to career development resources in order to better comprehend the numerous available resources.

Career Development Resources

Creating a community of support (in the classroom or on the campus) is an important factor expressed by various females in different higher education programs of study (Cook, 1998). All students can benefit from career exploration assistance. Specific consideration is given to the leadership component of career development for females in higher education.

Programs

A number of universities offer services and resources to females in higher education. At a minimum most higher education institutions offer services from a career development center and/or a women's center. In addition, some higher education institutions have websites dedicated to female students (i.e., University of Delaware, "Women's Leadership Development Program," and the University of Western Australia, and/or offer ongoing events to females such as weekly information sessions on a variety of themes (The University of Colorado at Boulder). Activities posted on the websites of these institutions range from general women's leadership support to specific programs. The Women's Institute for Leadership Development (W.I.L.D.) program offered to female students includes seven modules that explore the following areas: leadership styles, communication skills, career development, diversity, personal reflections/growth, team building, and team work (2008).

Although many higher education institutions offer specific programs geared toward leadership and career development for women, there are still many institutions that do not have specific services listed on their websites. As noted from various websites, it is apparent that there are a range of programs and services that are offered through different higher education institutions and that the commitment level to females in higher education is varied. Research is needed to identify and share exemplary leadership programs so that female students may benefit no matter which institution they attend.

Exploratory Tools

There are various tools that can help to initiate discussions about careers and the transition process. These tools include the application of Holland's Card Sort (Takai & Holland, 1979), (explores available opportunities using the Holland Code, six expressed areas of interest), a Vocational Card Sort (Williams, 1978), (determines initial interests and occupational knowledge), the Missouri Occupational Card Sort (Hansen & Johnston, 1989), (related to the Holland code personality types and interests), and/or the Campbell Interest and Skill Survey (Campbell, 1995), (measures self-reported vocational skills and interests incorporating confidence in abilities to perform occupational requirements). These inventories may help individuals, who are planning to return to the workforce after several years and want to narrow their path of career consideration. The use of these types of tools can stimulate discussion about the number of opportunities available by incorporating the experience and educational level of the individual members. Both career and leadership development benefit from an awareness obtained about one's personality and preferences which promotes an ability to better understand and work with

others. The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator is a user-friendly personality exploration tool that measures how people perceive the world and make decisions thereby encouraging personal understanding. Various online resources such as DISCOVER (2009) and the Occupational Outlook Handbook (2009) provide a wealth of information about numerous career paths, expected growth of occupations, as well as position descriptions. One institution, Old Dominion University, offers Focus, Career and Planning Education Solutions (2009) as an interactive online career assessment tool. This tool provides concrete information about personal development needs and personality in relation to interests and values.

Transition Assessment Tools

Many standardized measures have been created to examine various aspects of decision-making including Vocational Decision-Making Checklist (Blustein, 1989), Vocational Decision Making Difficulty Scale (Walsh & Osipow, 1988), Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy Scale (Taylor & Betz, 1983), Career Barriers Inventory (Swanson, Daniels & Tokar, 1996), Career Decision Scale (Taylor, 1979), and the Career Transitions Inventory (CTI) (Heppner, 1991). The majority of the research studies in the area of career transition have utilized at least one standardized assessment inventory. Further examination of two specific standardized tools related to career transition and indecision are described below.

Career Decision Scale

The Career Decision Scale (CDS) is an assessment tool that provides an estimate of career indecision. The tool's primary target populations are high school students and

college freshmen. Osipow, Carney, Winer, Yanico, and Koschier (1980) reported 2-week test-retest reliabilities of .90 and .82 while 6-week test-retest reliability .70 was reported.

Taylor (as cited in Harmon, 2004) tested the original CDS with high school and college students. The assessment tool incorporates a total of 19 self-rating items on a 4-point scale, with statements pertaining to the degree to which the description relates to the individual. Sixteen of the items measure the indecision construct (i.e., possible barriers) while two of the items reflect the individual's career certainty such as choosing a career path and/or an academic major. The final open-ended question offers the individual an opportunity to provide a self-description (i.e., personal characteristics). The CDS assessment tool seems most appropriate to initiate discussions about college for those traditional students contemplating the pursuit of higher education.

Career Transitions Inventory

The Career Transitions Inventory (CTI) provides a way of assessing an individual's psychological resources and perceived deficits when making a career transition (Heppner, Multon, & Johnston, 1994, p. 71). Heppner, Multon, and Johnston (1994) tested the original 72-item scale with three different samples. Following "varimax rotations between three and eight factors the five-factor solution was the most interpretable" (p.61). Constructs were revised until inter-rater reliability reached 100%; the five-factor scale was created and accounted for 44.5% of the variance. The final assessment tool incorporates 40 Likert-type items on a 6-point scale, ranging from 1-strongly agree to 6-strongly disagree.

The full-scale scores from the Career Transitions Inventory (CTI) provide an overall indication of the self-perception of psychological resources (Heppner, 1991). An

additional strength of the CTI is the ability to complete an analysis on each individual item for the five subscales (Heppner, Multon, & Johnston, 1994). The CTI provides insights into the following five relevant areas: Readiness (to do the things required to achieve the career goal), Confidence (belief in one's ability to successfully perform career planning activities), Personal Control (extent to which a person feels he/she has control over the career planning process verses external forces), Support (how much support a person feels he/she has from the people in her/his life as he/she contemplates a career change), and Independence (level a person views career choice as being an independent decision verses part of a relational context such as family, friends and/or partners). The Career Transitions Inventory is a valid and reliable tool to measure the relative effectiveness in preparation individuals considering career transition.

Additional Resources

Activities

Some specific activities, for discussion and exploration that focus on personal strengths and contributions would assist in reinforcing women's self-concept, self-esteem, and self-determination (Belenky et al., 1997; Chae, 2002,). Self-exploration activities that encourage reflection and explore the individual's values and experiences would be beneficial. Some examples of these include journal writing, meditation, and discussion forums.

When assisting females with their career development, it is essential to explore the numerous components influencing their decisions and experiences. The literature provides an overview for specific intervention considerations. Some of these interventions are explored below.

Career Development Interventions

Career Counselors' Challenges

Cook, Heppner, and O'Brien (2005) declare that the challenge for career counselors is to work within a woman's systemic influences (i.e., multiple roles and responsibilities) to assist in making the environment more helpful and supportive of her endeavors. This suggests consideration of each individual's circumstances and making adaptations accordingly (traditional versus non-traditional students). Career counseling is often available to traditional students through a career management center, however, too often the scheduled times for career counselors can limit the availability to adult women with additional commitments (i.e., work, family, community).

Career Counselors' Considerations

There is no typical prototype for the female entering higher education. Invariably life changes require a great deal of contemplation and the experience is unique for each individual (Breese & O'Toole, 1994; Bauer & Mott, 1990). However, the support from family and friends, or lack thereof, to enroll in higher education will strongly influence a female's success. It is necessary to have some support to be able to make this life transition (Ericksen, Jurgens, Garrett, & Swedburg, 2008). Seeking support from others is a natural occurrence for women (Gilligan, 1982); therefore, a strong level of support is necessary for successful transition.

Mentoring

In celebration of feminism, co-mentoring (a mutually beneficial relationship) offers cooperative learning and shared experiences for growth (McGuire & Reger, 2003). Bauer and Mott (1990) propose the most important higher education professional

strategy, to promote career exploration and development of intrinsic interests, is guidance and encouragement from a significant individual (i.e., teacher, counselor or mentor).

These facets also compliment the natural tendency for females to value building relationships. It has been suggested that mixed-gender building relationships are beneficial (Sosik & Godshalk, 2000). Glaser (2008) explains that male mentors offer better guidance for promotions while female mentors are better role models.

Cognitive Developmental Approaches

The cognitive developmental framework for career counseling is meant to meet the needs of women at their present level of cognitive functioning and assist in the formation of new career choices as well as increasing the exploration of the individual woman's identity development. With appropriate "levels of challenge, reflections, and support provided" throughout the counseling sessions the client will achieve higher levels of cognitive complexity combined with effective coping skills which will lead to an adequate identity development and career (Morgan & Foster, 1999, p.134).

Holistic approaches. As Brown and Crace (1996) argue, a holistic approach is essential when working with individuals in order to gain the total perspective of their life. To provide an optimum experience for females in higher education it is essential to examine and incorporate the various elements of females' lives. The holistic approach takes all facets of the woman's life into account to gain the ideal final decision/approach.

Transitions

Within the transition literature some articles refer to the value of recognizing the various types of transition experiences for different groups of people (Heppner, Multon, & Johnston, 1994). It is valuable to develop an awareness of different transitions for

female students in relation to higher education and the potential impact of higher education on their career development decisions. These factors can be taken into consideration when working with this population.

Transition Categories

Louis (as cited in Scharf, 2002) created five categories for normative transitions. These potential work place transitions that individuals experience include: 1) entering or reentering the labor pool, 2) taking a different role within the same organization, 3) taking a position with a different organization 4) changing professions, and 5) leaving the labor pool. As one of these designations, entering/reentering the labor pool (the classic example of school-to-work transition) is viewed/treated as a normal component to career development. The idea that this transition is a normal occurrence should be comforting to women and it would be beneficial to make female students aware of the frequency of this entering/reentering transition.

According to Schlossberg (as cited in Scharf, 2002) people face normative (voluntary and anticipated), non-normative (involuntary and unanticipated), and sometimes persistent occupational (career challenges that persist for a long time) transitions. Depending on the type of transition, women may experience positive or negative reactions.

Potential Transition Motivations

Some literature notes the importance of a combination of factors to assist women in dealing with stress including support groups, assertiveness training, and learning how to say no (Rayburn, 1986). According to Beeber (1999), women's transitions can result in deep internal changes including a decrease in self-esteem and/or depression.

Women's career development is influenced by a number of factors including psychosocial, family demands, self-concept, environment, support, etc. In order to facilitate ideal career growth, higher education institutions need to give consideration to the impact these various components have on females' career transitions and career development.

An additional relevant area to include while examining the leadership and career development of females is the topic of groups including types, characteristics, and activities. It is valuable to explore the literature related to groups and females in higher education since this is a pertinent topic for this population. It is beneficial to gain insights into particular group components that benefit the career development transition for females in higher education especially as they relate to leadership development.

Groups

There is a great deal of literature to support the idea of women's voice and "meaning making" which encourages the idea of making information relevant for this population. A group atmosphere is the forum that women naturally seek. Building relationships can provide growth and change for women in a group context (McManus, Redford, & Hughes, 1997). The creation of a group to provide a supportive environment and to develop leadership skills for females in higher education helps establish a sense of unity (Corey & Corey, 2005). McManus, Redford, and Hughes (1997) found that female participants in structured groups reported "that they became more aware of their strengths and learned the importance of self-care in their lives" (p.29). Duggan and Jurgens (2005) assert that group members who "complete assessments can share the results with one

another, gathering support, and sharing ideas” (p.18), which is not feasible in an individual setting.

Group Types

A number of authors discuss the benefits of various types of women’s groups. Most of the research supports the idea of incorporating several different aspects of group types to make them effective for women (Hodge & Casken, 1999; Morgan & Hensley, 1998). Horne (1999) discusses the evolution of women’s groups and the success of combining aspects of consciousness-raising, support, and social action. While the literature does not clearly present a definitive best type of group for women, one aspect that has been found to be beneficial and appears to exist in all women’s groups from focus groups to therapy groups is the support component (Kees & Leech, 2004). Sullivan and Mahalik (2000) emphasize the importance of active support from group members. Therefore, support is one of the defining characteristics of a successful women’s’ group.

According to Hodge and Casken (1999), the benefit of understanding a population and identifying its needs can be developed through the implementation of focus groups. They initially facilitated a focus group to better understand the needs of American Indian women for breast cancer awareness in order to develop appropriate psychoeducational group workshops.

Group Characteristics

It is suggested that a feminist approach is one of the unique characteristics that defines women’s groups (Horne, 1999). Facilitating women’s groups through the use of feminist principles seems like an obvious match. An all-women exclusive group with recognition of the feminist perspective provides the needed support and makes it more

comfortable for women to speak out and connect with other women. “Feminist group work equally values multiple ways of being and knowing and provides members with the understanding and means necessary to make as many conscious choices in one’s life as possible” (Kees & Leech, 2004, p. 447). Facilitators need to have awareness about gender issues and their impact upon the lives of female students. The gender issues of power, equity, and discrimination should be taken into consideration when working with female groups (Stevens-Smith, 1995). The importance of an awareness of the layers of female socioidentities (i.e., gender, race, and ethnicity) has been presented as fundamental for effective individual work within the group setting (Ancis & Sanchez-Hucles, 2000).

Several studies discuss the need to address self-care issues in a woman’s group (Forester-Miller, 1999; McManus, Redford, & Hughes, 1997; Sullivan & Mahalik, 2000). The success noted with a structured women’s group stresses “a positive wellness orientation that emphasizes problems as opportunities” (McManus, Redford, & Hughes, 1997, p.29). Restating the problem helps women develop new goals. Furthermore, much of the literature focuses on alleviating the inner turmoil that women experience (Sullivan & Mahalik, 2000).

Group Activities

Different group activities allow for reflecting on thoughts, feelings, and insights. In order to increase the development of knowledge, understanding, and connections, a number of techniques can enhance the experience. It is important to process activities in order to translate them into interpersonal and intrapersonal learning for each group member (DeLucia-Waack, 1997, p. 82). Group members need to be able to incorporate the discoveries from the group into their lives outside the group.

It is apparent that adult females in higher education can benefit immensely from group counseling and group interactions as this environment provides the support that women naturally seek. As the number of females entering higher education continues to increase, so will the need for a supportive group environment.

Implications/ Conclusion

Higher education institutions should anticipate a continued increase in the number of females seeking higher education and the leadership and career development needs of these students (Marks, 2007). The effectiveness of campus services that support female leadership development and career transition in higher education is crucial, especially as this population continues to grow. This chapter provided an overview of the existing literature relating to the experience of females in higher education and the best campus resources to support these individuals during their leadership development and career transition. It is essential to identify the best campus resources to support females in higher education to assist them with leadership development and their readiness and preparedness for a successful career transition.

In reviewing the related literature it became evident that the categories related to leadership development for females in higher education contemplating career transition include: educational theories, leadership, challenges, transitions, career development, career development resources, career development interventions, and career/leadership development groups.

Individuals learn best when there is active involvement and the content of the material is relevant. The literature suggests female adults should be actively involved in

the creation of “connected teaching” to engage them in successful learning (Belenky et al., 1997). Interactions with female students should explore these components.

According to the literature, females are more likely to use leadership theories and styles that encourage participation and building relationships between the various members (i.e., transactional, interactive, and democratic) (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001; Rosener, 1990). Interestingly, these types of leadership theories and styles have been found to be among the most effective. As mentioned previously, a number of higher education institutions provide leadership development programs to female students in various formats (on-campus, on-line, self-directed) [i.e., Southern Illinois University at Carbondale (2008), University of Delaware, (n.d.), the University of Western Australia (2008), and Old Dominion University (2008)]. The Women’s Institute of Leadership Development (W.I.L.D.) has been offered to its female students since 1996.

Career transitions research provides an important body of knowledge for the foundation of this study. Several articles examine the importance of career transition and the implications for an individual (Beeber, 1999; Rayburn, 1986; Scharf, 2002). Various models offer perspectives about the types of career transitions (voluntary, planned) while Schlossberg (as cited in Scharf, 2002) offers a guiding framework for this study. To better understand the context important to a particular individual, it is important to determine whether the individual is involved in a normative (voluntary), non-normative (involuntary, parental pressure, divorce) or persistent occupational (long-term career challenges) transition. Armed with the knowledge of the type of transition, the ideal resources for each individual can be determined (Scharf, 2002).

Some career development resources are available in the form of on-campus programs, including sororities, women's centers and websites (Walker-Johnson, 2009). Career counselors have several resources available (i.e., Holland's Card Sort, Vocational Card Sort, Campbell Interest and Skill Survey, Occupational Outlook Handbook) to help with the exploration of a female's career development. These assessments can help to determine areas where these individuals will be the most satisfied with their career decisions. General informative workshops and activities promoting the interests and needs of females in higher education, especially as it relates to their leadership development and career transition, indicates relevance and importance for this population and needs to be encouraged.

The incorporation of assessment tools, informal mentors, and building relationships can help females feel supported and can lead to enhanced decision-making skills and ultimately facilitate career transition. Coupled with the construct and success of supportive learning environments tested by Berman et al., (1977) and the group format of support described by Kees and Leech (2004) females can develop more confidence in their career transition decision-making.

Many of the career development activities and tools would be most effective when utilized in conjunction with each other (Enns, 1992; Rayburn, 1986). For example, if after completing the CTI a low confidence score is obtained, a career counselor can help the individual identify and generate ideas and provide support to increase her belief in her ability to complete career-planning activities. Furthermore, this exchange may be best if shared and discussed in a group format where participants share their insights and receive feedback (Duggan & Jurgens, 2005).

Career counselors can use different approaches to benefit females' transition and career development related to leadership, the most inclusive seems to be a holistic approach which provides a multi-faceted perspective, incorporating many items of concern to females in higher education (i.e., assessing interests, receiving necessary counseling, learning about leadership training related to career development, and considering barriers such as stereotypes, power and building relationships) (Brown & Crace, 1996).

A supportive atmosphere seems to be one of the most effective characteristics in a group for women (Kees & Leech, 2004). Some other considerations include an all-women exclusive group, including the leader, and promoting self-care issues (Forester-Miller, 1999; McManus, Redford, & Hughes, 1997; Sullivan & Mahalik, 2000). One main function of a group is to develop interpersonal and intrapersonal learning incorporated both in the group setting and through incorporating this information in other settings (DeLucia-Waack, 1997).

The literature provides insights to the factors influencing female students in higher education and their leadership development which can ultimately impact their career transitions (Dickerson & Taylor, 2000). There are many valuable components to contemplate these various literature findings in the creation and evaluation of leadership development programs for female students in higher education institutions. Research (both experimental and non-experimental) about various campus services to determine the long-term effectiveness of such services on female leadership development and career transition decision-making is necessary to accurately meet the needs of this population.

Chapter III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology used to evaluate the long-term program effectiveness of the Women's Institute for Leadership Development (W.I.L.D.) as well as specific career-related benefits is discussed in this chapter. The purpose of this study was to explore the impact of the W.I.L.D. program on the participants through an evaluation of the program. Specifically, the immediate influence and long-term impact as reported by the participants was examined. As mentioned previously, the following research foci were examined:

1. The extent the Women's Institute for Leadership Development (W.I.L.D.) program serves as an integral part of leadership development for the participants as measured by:
 - What leadership development skills did participants in the W.I.L.D. program report they have developed?
 - What additional skills did participants in the W.I.L.D. program report as beneficial to their development?
 - What did participants report as lacking in the W.I.L.D. program?
2. The extent the effects of participation in W.I.L.D. extend beyond the completion of the program as measured by:
 - What leadership skills did participants in the W.I.L.D. program report they are using or have retained after one year?
 - What leadership skills did participants in the W.I.L.D. program report they are using or have retained after four years?

- What leadership skills did participants in the W.I.L.D. program report they are using or have retained after six years?

3. The extent the career transition needs of females are being met through the W.I.L.D. program as measured by the Career Transitions Inventory:

- Did participants report a change in perceived support towards career transition?
- Did participants report a change in independence towards career transition?
- Did participants report a change in self confidence towards career transition?
- Did participants report a change in personal control towards career transition?
- Did participants report a change in readiness towards career transition?

Human Participants Review Process

The inclusion of human participants within this research proposal required appropriate review and consideration. In order to insure adequate protection of the participants in the research, an Application for Exempt Research form was submitted to the appropriate college Human Participants Review Committee at the university where the research was being conducted. The college committee reviewed and approved the proposal based on the benefits to participants, level of risk, potential regulatory exemption, and assurance that appropriate notifications were available to the human participants (informed consent, detailed research description, and appropriate securing of data). No revisions were needed to satisfy the Human Participants Review Committee

proposal requirements. Upon the approval of the application, the researcher commenced data collection.

Design

The researcher conducted an evaluation of the effectiveness of the Women's Institute for Leadership Development (W.I.L.D.) through a mixed methods approach, examining both qualitative and quantitative data. Quantitative data was gathered through the administration of two instruments, the Career Transitions Inventory (Heppner, 1991), and the W.I.L.D. in-house inventory. The qualitative data was obtained through rich in-depth interviews of W.I.L.D. alumni as well as through an analysis of the qualitative portion of the W.I.L.D. in-house inventory. Specific attention was given to the impact of the W.I.L.D. program on the leadership component of career transitions decision-making. Using the Career Transitions Inventory, this decision-making was evaluated to assess the influence on recent student participants.

The mixed methods incorporated a dual approach (qualitative and quantitative data) to obtain a range of data that was used to evaluate 1) the long-term effectiveness and impact of the W.I.L.D. program on participants and 2) the career transitions decision-making for recent program participants. Individual interviews and secondary data, including the Career Transitions Inventory and W.I.L.D. in-house inventory, were analyzed. The Career Transitions Inventory (standardized instrument) and W.I.L.D. inventory (developed by W.I.L.D.) provided secondary data from recent W.I.L.D. participants' (Fall 2008) for statistical analysis. Purposeful sampling was used to invite selected W.I.L.D. past participant cohorts [1 year (graduated in Fall 2008), 4 years

(graduated in Fall 2005) and 6 years ago (graduated in Fall 2003)] of the W.I.L.D. alumni program, to volunteer for individual interviews.

Naturalistic inquiry guided the design of the research, during the gathering of qualitative data. Four months were necessary to complete the individual interviews and review the secondary data (i.e., review the findings for the Career Transitions Inventory and W.I.L.D. inventory). Applied Research was used to analyze the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and the scores for the inventories. These multiple sources of information and resources provided comprehensive perspectives and helped to ensure the results were consistent and reliable.

Theory triangulation ensured a balanced perspective. Grounded theory/methodology served as the primary focus for this research. Fieldwork was completed and data observed using systematic comparative analysis. It was important to incorporate “feminist inquiry/principles” in this research since there is an obvious match with this research’s focus on women. Patton (2002) asserts “A feminist perspective presumes the importance of gender in human building relationships and societal processes and *orients* the study in that direction” (p. 129). A feminist perspective challenges the inequities for different people and this study hopes to provide results to further examine, improve, and support the continuation of the on-campus services for female students. As a female researcher, I attempted to intertwine a feminist perspective without presenting a political agenda. Storytelling is a natural format for women, therefore, narrative analysis was included in order to incorporate this pertinent theoretical perspective. In particular, narrative analysis was used while reviewing the data collected from the W.I.L.D. individual interviews.

In order to gain a broad perspective and to determine possible repetition/themes, breadth was sought through an analysis of the standardized inventories distributed to the recent W.I.L.D. participants. A thorough examination of this population was desirable therefore depth was sought within the research by incorporating rich interviews from three separate groups of participants (women who completed the program one, four, and six years ago). One researcher conducted all the individual interviews. This ensured a consistent presentation of the questions, understanding of relevant concepts, and the maintenance of accurate coding for emerging themes.

Sample and Population

The selection of participants was conducted using a convenience sample from a large, southeastern, public, urban university. Due to the focus of this study the sample was necessarily a group of female students in higher education who were past participants in the women's leadership program (W.I.L.D.). Although 25 female students were invited to participate in W.I.L.D. during each of the fall semesters, not all of the females attended or completed the program. Therefore, the study participants were selected from a possible total population of 54 (12 participants in 2008; 22 participants in 2005 and 20 participants in 2003). Unique data were obtained from each of the three cohort groups for the study. When the three cohorts were combined the number of participants was 54. The following descriptive statistics are a representation of the point in time when the individuals participated in W.I.L.D. The age range was 18 to 51 years ($R=33$) with a mean age of 26.06 years. There were 3 freshmen (5.5%); 9 sophomores (16.7%); 15 juniors (27.8%), 16 seniors (29.6%) and 10 graduate students (18.5%) in this combined cohort, with 1 individual not reporting her year in school. The racial makeup

(as defined by the US Census Bureau), of this combined cohort was: African American (n=17, 31.5%); Asian (n=5, 9.3%); White (n=30, 55.6%) and Other (n=2, 3.7%). The colleges that the participants were enrolled in included: the Colleges of Sciences (n=19, 35.2%); Business and Public Administration (n=10, 18.5%) Education (n=8, 14.8%); Engineering and Technology (n=6, 11.1%); Arts and Letters (n=6, 11.1%); and Health Sciences (n=3, 5.6%). The GPA range for all cohort participants was from 2.02 to 4.0 (R=1.98) with a mean GPA of 3.20.

A total of 11 women (4 individuals from the 2008 cohort, 4 individuals from the 2005 cohort, and 3 individuals from the 2003 cohort) participated in individual interviews. Maximum variation sampling is ideal with this small sample size and therefore was used when selecting the sample for each cohort. The variation criteria included age, race, ethnicity, major, and class (freshmen, sophomore, graduate, etc.). For a detailed description for each W.I.L.D. interview subject, please see Appendix A. There were 11 individuals who agreed to be interviewed for this study. Four women were from each of the Cohorts 1 (2008) and 2 (2005) while three women were from Cohort 3 (2003). The age range of the interview participants was from 18 to 46 years (R=38) and the mean age was 27.27 years. Two African Americans (27.3%); one Asian (9.1%); six Whites (54.5%); and one Other (9.1%) responded to the invitation to be interviewed. The study group did not include any freshmen. It consisted of three sophomores (27.35); five juniors (45.5%); two seniors (18.2%); and one graduate student (9.1%). Table 1 provides the detailed information for the W.I.L.D. interview subjects.

Table 1

W.I.L.D. Interview Subjects' Demographic Information						
Cohort	Subject***	Age	Year	Race*	College**	GPA
2003	Jillian	20	Junior	WH	AL	2.9
2003	Maria	22	Senior	WH	BPA	-
2003	Mona	33	Junior	WH	BPA	3.75
2005	Heidi	19	Sophomore	WH	SC	3.8
2005	Janet	25	Sophomore	WH	BPA	4
2005	Yolanda	46	Junior	AA	AL	2.75
2005	Keisha	18	Sophomore	AA	SC	-
2008	Amani	36	Graduate	OT	HS	3.91
2008	Mya	25	Junior	AA	ET	4
2008	Jessica	23	Junior	WH	SC	3.2
2008	Kira	33	Senior	AS	BPA	2.73
MEAN		27.27				3.45

Notes: *Classification of Race: US Census Bureau

<http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/race/racefactcb.html>

The minimum categories for race: American Indian or Alaska Native (AIN); Asian (AS); Black or African American (AA); Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (NHPI); White (WH); and Other (OT).

**College: ET= Engineering and Technology AL= Arts and Letters

BPA= Business and Public Administration HS= Health Sciences

SC= Sciences E= College of Education

***Pseudonyms have been given to protect the identity of the Subjects

The interviews were arranged to accommodate individual schedules (i.e., morning, afternoon or evening, week day or weekend). The majority of the interviews were conducted during a face-to-face meeting however, interviews using a telephone (both land line and cellular phone) and Skype were also utilized due to challenging geographic situations (different cities and/or states). Each participant was interviewed in a confidential environment. The target was to interview equal numbers of females from each of the cohorts (2008, 2005, 2003). There was an attempt to obtain the desired total of 12 individual interviews (4 interviews from each of the 3 cohorts). Volunteer

participants were recruited/solicited from the W.I.L.D. program's database of former participants. After repeated attempts to contact individuals (during a period of 12 weeks) using electronic mail, regular post mail, a social network site (Facebook), and telephone calls the researcher concluded that it was not possible to obtain the desired number of respondents (12). The response rate for the 2008 and 2005 cohort, was 100%. For the 2003 cohort, there were three respondents, resulting in a 75% response rate. Individuals had the opportunity to withdraw their participation in the research at any point in the process.

The secondary data consisted of qualitative and quantitative data gathered from the W.I.L.D. alumni participant cohorts (1, 4, and 6 years ago). The results of the inventories from the population of 54 females (12 participants in 2008; 22 participants in 2005 and 20 participants in 2003, respectively) were analyzed.

Instrumentation

Triangulated data increased the validity of the gathered information for this project. The standardized Career Transitions Inventory (CTI) (Heppner, 1991) and W.I.L.D. inventory produced broad quantitative results while the written responses from the open-ended questionnaire portion of the W.I.L.D. inventory and the semi-structured individual interviews provided in-depth qualitative results.

Demographic information was collected via the W.I.L.D. application form (see Appendix B), to identify participants' age, race, class, education level, and major in school. This information was used to determine the representation and diversity of the sample. These factors have been taken into consideration during the reporting of the results.

The W.I.L.D. assessment was developed in-house by experts in the counseling and leadership field. The W.I.L.D. inventory consists of 11 Likert-type questions and two open-ended questions. The two open-ended questions revealed additional insights about the individual's experience in the program. The initial open-ended question remains the same for the pre- and post-assessment, "What is your definition of leadership?". The second question changes slightly from "Briefly describe your three most important leadership experiences and/or positions" during the pre-assessment to "Briefly describe the three most important leadership goals and/or future leadership positions you envision for yourself as a result of W.I.L.D.". Careful examination of these data for emerging themes helped determine the impact/influence of the W.I.L.D. program in terms of leadership growth and career transition decision-making (see Appendix C and Appendix D). These themes were compared with the individual interview results.

The Career Transitions Inventory (CTI) (Heppner, 1991) is a standardized instrument, which provides a way of assessing the psychological resources and deficits adults perceive when making a career transition (Heppner, Multon & Johnston, 1994). The instrument is grounded in Schlossberg's theory (as cited in Scharf, 2002) and has undergone various reliability and validity tests. The completion rate for the CTI is enhanced due to the relatively short nature of the assessment tool, including only 40 Likert-scale items (see Appendix E). Another benefit in the administration of this instrument is its minimal cost since it can be scored manually.

The results obtained through the administration of the CTI (Heppner, 1991) to female students in the W.I.L.D. program provided insights into five relevant career transition areas. These included: Readiness (to do the things required to achieve their

career goals); Confidence, (individuals' beliefs in their ability to successfully perform career planning activities); Personal Control (extent to which people feel they have control over the career planning process verses the extent to which people feel controlled by external forces); Support (how much backing people feel they have from the people in their lives as they contemplate a career change); and Independence (the level that people view career choice as an independent decision verses part of a relational context such as family, friends, partner).

Heppner, Multon, and Johnston (1994) tested the original 72-item scale with three different samples. Following "varimax rotations between three and eight factors the five-factor solution was the most interpretable" (p.61). Constructs were revised until inter-rater reliability reached 100%; a five-factor scale was created and accounted for 44.5% of the variance. The final assessment tool incorporates 40 Likert-type items on a 6-point scale, ranging from 1-strongly agree to 6-strongly disagree.

Cronbach's coefficient alpha was reported as .90 for the total CTI assessment, supporting internal reliability for the instrument. Further reliability was obtained during a test-retest study over a three-week period, which yielded a coefficient of .84. Construct validity was demonstrated using a sample to respond to the CTI, The Hope Scale (Snyder, 1995), and My Vocational Situation (MVS) (Holland, Daiger & Power, 1980) and agreement was found in the expected directions.

Individual interviews were a natural fit with the preferences women appear to have for narrative, descriptive interactions, and the assumption that women value building relationships (Gilligan, 1982). The length of the interview was determined, in part, by the participants' willingness to go into detail when providing information. The

qualitative semi-structured interview format consisted of nine (9) open-ended questions which were formulated with consideration of both the Career Transitions Inventory and the W.I.L.D. inventory (see Appendix F). The inclusion of the qualitative individual interviews added depth to the research data. The semi-structured interviews also allowed for flexibility and further exploration of emerging themes that arose during the interview process. The interview protocol utilized a semi-structured format to encourage participants to share their unique experiences and expound upon them. It also permitted the interviewer to ask follow-up questions as needed. A pilot test with the interview protocol was conducted with three female students (age Range= 23-58 years, Race= White) to ensure the interview questions were clear and comprehensive. The information obtained from the pilot test was incorporated into the interview protocol. Several of the questions were changed to reflect an open-ended structure (to replace or modify close-ended questions). One question was eliminated and one additional question was added. Prompts were also added to maintain consistency for the interviewer and permit true expression for the participants. All questions were reviewed by experts in the field to ensure accurate, effective representation and data collection. Emerging themes helped to shape and refine the open-ended interview questions. An open-ended format was selected to allow for the unique voices of the participants to come through. The researcher intentionally reviewed the narrative analysis through systematic comparison. In order to enhance the data verification process, interview participants were invited and encouraged to review the verbatim transcript for accuracy, and share any additional post-interview clarifications and/or thoughts. These elements helped to eliminate interviewer bias.

Data Collection and Procedures

Semi-structured personal interview, the standardized formal inventory (Career Transition Inventory) and the W.I.L.D. inventory each contributed unique data to this research and provided collaborative data for additional insights. This variety assisted with determining the impact that the W.I.L.D. program had on participants over time and on career transitions for recent participants. The researcher's personal experience influenced the interest in this topic and should be apparent through the engagement in the research. Please see Appendix G for visual representation of the data collection timeline.

Initially, the pilot test for the interview questions was conducted and necessary adjustments were made to improve the quality and efficiency of the protocol. Eleven individual interviews were facilitated in a 12-week time frame, in order to accommodate the schedules of the volunteer participants. Conducting semi-structured individual interviews helped create a casual environment where individuals were comfortable during their participation. Each one-time interview was conducted at the convenience of the W.I.L.D. participant, including the time, location, and method. Seven of the interviews were conducted face-to-face in convenient community settings such as the community library, and on-campus meeting rooms. Due to geographical location two interviews were conducted via cellular phones, one interview conducted via Skype and the remaining interview began with Skype but had to be finished on the telephone due to technical difficulties. Initially, each woman was invited to participate, in the individual interview to provide specific details pertaining to her W.I.L.D. experience, via a letter emailed to the last known address. If the W.I.L.D. past participant was unreachable within 1 week a letter was sent via postal mail (see Appendix H for a sample of the letter). The interview

invitation provided potential participants a complete description of the interview protocol. A second personalized email was sent three weeks following the initial request. The social network, Facebook was used to post a request to the 'W.I.L.D. group' Facebook members as well as locate potential participants. Through Facebook, four individuals verified their identification and two agreed to participate. As compensation for the participants' time, a \$15.00 gift card was offered to each individual at the conclusion of the interview. One participant declined the gift card but participated in the interview.

All individuals who volunteered to participate were assured confidentiality. Each face-to-face interview participant provided consent (see Appendix I), through her signature, while Skype and telephone interviewees provided audio agreement. Recent W.I.L.D. participants (Fall 2008) were given a *Participation Notification Document* (see Appendix J) with details pertaining to the inclusion of their results (including the Career Transitions Inventory) in the research. In addition, detailed university resource contact information was shared if they had any concerns or questions (see Appendix K). All individuals gave permission to audiotape the interviews. To ensure accuracy each interview was transcribed.

Individual interviews were conducted with 11 female W.I.L.D. alumni through purposeful sampling of past participants of the W.I.L.D. program. In order to obtain a balanced perspective in determining the long-term impact of W.I.L.D. the interviews were conducted with program alumni from each year (four participants in 2008; four participants in 2005 and three participants in 2003, respectively). All individuals gave permission to audiotape the interviews which were transcribed to ensure accuracy.

During the opening script (see Appendix L) for the interviews, participants were given a research description for their records (see Appendix M). This description provided detailed information relating to their involvement in the study.

The interviewer used the qualitative semi-structured format (i.e., nine standard open-ended questions) throughout each interview which lasted an average of 20 minutes (Range = 8 to 35 minutes). The questions elicited detailed information about effective components of the W.I.L.D. program and career transitions preparedness, as well as suggestions for alterations to the current format of the W.I.L.D. program. The interviewer attempted to create a comfortable, safe atmosphere to encourage discussion. Initially, an explanation of the research was provided to the participants and permission to audiotape the interview was obtained with the signed consent form or audio agreement (telephone and/or Skype interviews) as necessary. As the interviewer facilitated the interview, clarification, expansion and re-focusing was provided as needed. Additionally, the interviewer used attentive listening skills to reassure the participants. At the conclusion of the interview, participants were given an opportunity to contribute/express any additional thoughts beyond their previous responses, thanked for their contributions, and offered the \$15.00 gift card. Following the transcription of the interview, participants were given an opportunity to review the document (transcript) to verify accurate representation and provide any clarification. Participants were given two weeks to respond. One of the participants responded via email that the interview transcript “looked good”. No additional suggestions or clarifications were offered from any of the participants. The same individual/researcher facilitated the individual interviews to ensure consistency and validity.

Secondary data were obtained from the Women's Center at the institution. The secondary data included the results of pre- and post-tests for both the Career Transitions Inventory and the W.I.L.D. inventory for recent participants (Fall 2008). During the initial W.I.L.D. module, for the Fall 2008 participants, both the W.I.L.D. inventory and the Career Transitions Inventory (Heppner, 1991) was administered to obtain pre-test scores, while the post-test was administered during the final module, at the end of the program. At the end of the Fall 2008 semester, each participant's individual Career Transitions Inventory scores were shared confidentially and detailed university contact information was provided just incase participants had any concerns and/or questions. None of the participants expressed any concerns. This same cohort (Fall 2008) completed the CTI assessment one year later (Fall 2009) to determine any long-term effects. In addition, the W.I.L.D. inventory results from previous participants (alumni from 1 year ago, 4 years ago, and 6 years ago) was incorporated to obtain a broad perspective.

The researcher safeguarded sensitive information and maintained confidentiality. Data has been stored securely in computer files on a secure server space and/or in a locked file cabinet, in a locked office). The data have been coded appropriately to conceal the identity of the individual participants through the use of code numbers and/or pseudonyms. Access to the data has been limited to the researcher, professional faculty as requested, and the transcriber. Any identifying data will be destroyed after completion of the research.

Available resources were minimal therefore costs (i.e., participant invitations, supplies, gift cards, digital recorder, and discs) were covered by the researcher. The researcher and volunteers have provided the bulk of the labor including conducting the

individual interviews and analyzing the data. Assistance was obtained in the transcription of the interviews and a gift card was offered as compensation for the transcription. Training was provided to the transcriber to ensure professional and confidential security of the interview data. The interview locations (i.e., libraries, telephones) were publicly accessible and free. The Career Transition Inventory with a value of \$100.00 was donated by Dr. Heppner in exchange for the results of the study (see Appendix N). The Women's Center assisted with the gathering of data by donating letterhead, envelopes, stamps, and staff, and with the entry of database information and printing reports for the secondary data.

Data Analyses

The data were analyzed to compare the qualitative (interviews) with the quantitative data (inventories) and determine any differences 1) within the recent participant group's CTI scores for the pre, post, and one year follow-up administration, as well as 2) between the former alumni groups (alumni from 1, 4 and 6 years ago) for the duration of the study. The participants' responses during the individual interviews were compared with the W.I.L.D. written responses to determine any differences/similarities. The individual interviews were audiotaped and transcribed. After data process verification (i.e., interviewer reviewed the verbatim transcript for accuracy), the interview transcripts were reviewed to obtain a sense of the common, related items. Each emerging theme was recorded on a separate sheet, where similar components were grouped to create themes with categories. The data results were assessed to include any consistencies (i.e., themes) and differences in responses and experiences. The results were used to determine which components of the W.I.L.D. program the participants reported as most

effective short and long-term, as well as the extent to which participants reported any benefit to their career transition decision-making. The data also revealed any statistical differences in the CTI scores (within the fall 2008 W.I.L.D. over time). In addition, various statistical analyses were used to compare different test scores throughout the study. Descriptive statistics, including paired sample *t-tests* for the W.I.L.D. inventory, and CTI were compared to examine any changes after participation in the W.I.L.D. program for all study participants.

The study in part used participants' language to evaluate the perceived strengths of the program relative to leadership development and career transition decision-making/preparation. Narrative analyses of the individual interview data provided valuable results to examine the participants' own voices and personal experiences with the W.I.L.D. program. Inductive analyses were the most effective method to discover the themes and categories within the data. As the data was analyzed various patterns began to emerge.

Chapter IV

RESULTS

This study sought to determine how the Women's Institute for Leadership Development (W.I.L.D.) program impacts participants' leadership development. The research also looked at how the program relates to the individuals' personal leadership growth and development as well as their career transition. The program evaluation was based on the findings from individual interviews and an analysis of the responses to two separate inventories, the Career Transitions Inventory (Heppner, 1991) and W.I.L.D. inventory. These data were examined and analyzed to determine the impact, if any, of the W.I.L.D. program which is offered through the Women's Center at a public university.

Findings

The evidence from the emerging themes suggests the current objectives of the Women's Institute for Leadership Development (W.I.L.D.) are being met. As discussed in Chapter One, the specific program objectives are to: define personal leadership style, learn effective team-building techniques, discover new ways to motivate group members, learn conflict management strategies, polish communication skills, and learn how to develop contacts and create networks. These same program objectives have been in place since the inception of W.I.L.D. in 1996. This study found emerging themes from the individual interviews that demonstrated the impact and supported the existing W.I.L.D. program objectives. The objectives paired with the prominent emerging themes included: objective- define personal leadership style (emerging theme 2.11 leadership styles, reported by 3 interviewed individuals), learn effective team-building techniques (1.2 group facilitation, reported by 5 interviewed individuals), discover new ways to motivate

group members (1.1 evaluation/feedback, reported by 3 interviewed individuals), learn conflict management strategies (1.62 conflict resolution, reported by 1 interviewed individual; 1.61 managing people reported by 2 interviewed individuals) polish communication skills (1.8.1 listening, reported by 3 interviewed individuals and 1.8.2 conversation, reported by 3 individuals); and learn how to develop contacts and create a network (1.6.5 networking- reported by two individuals) 3.16 career defining- reported by one individuals; 3.21 support from other participants, reported by four interviewed individuals). Table 2 lists the W.I.L.D. objectives paired with the prominent emerging themes. See Appendix O for a complete listing of the emerging themes and categories.

Table 2

W.I.L.D. Objectives Paired with the Prominent Emerging Themes

W.I.L.D. Objectives	Emerging Themes	Number of Participants
Define personal leadership style	Leadership styles	3
Learn effective team-building techniques	Group facilitation	5
Discover new ways to motivate group members	Evaluation/Feedback	3
Learn conflict management strategies	Conflict resolution	1
Polish communication skills	Listening	3
	Conversation	3
Learn how to develop contacts and create a network	Network	2
	Career defining	2
	Support from other participants	4

Research Question 1: Extent Women's Institute for Leadership Development Serves as
Integral part of Leadership Development for Participants

This question was examined using both the qualitative and quantitative data results. The individual interviews of the program participants and W.I.L.D. inventory results from both quantitative responses to the 11 Likert-type items and qualitative data from the open-ended questions informed the results. The first research question examined the impact of the W.I.L.D. program on the participants' leadership development, related general development and additional program areas that could be beneficial or improved in the area of leadership development.

Leadership Skill Development Reported by Participants

For the first part of the question, the individual interviews and W.I.L.D. inventory qualitative responses from each of the cohorts (2003, 2005, 2008) were individually examined for emerging themes which were developed into themes with categories. Additionally, the W.I.L.D. inventory results were analyzed using a paired samples *t*-test for similarities and differences to incorporate an overall view of the W.I.L.D. program impact on participant leadership skills.

When asked to reflect about their experience in the W.I.L.D. program and its impact, many participants responded immediately with statements such as "I remember it was pretty powerful for me" (Jillian*¹, cohort 2003, personal interview, September 21, 2009), "It was a really good program, it really was!" (Mya, cohort 2008, personal interview, July 15, 2009), "...it was a very good program and a good course" (Amani, cohort 2008, personal interview, September 1, 2009), "...it just, I guess it had a powerful impact on me" (Jessica, cohort 2008, personal interview, July 21, 2009), and "I really

¹ Names changed to protect confidentiality, pseudonyms are used.

enjoyed myself” (Keisha, cohort 2005, personal interview, July 22, 2009). After further examination and analysis of the research data, several concrete results were obtained to support these anecdotal statements. An in-depth review of the interview transcripts led to emergent themes which have been developed into Themes with Categories. Through the systematic comparison of the results the emerging themes became apparent. The individual interview responses were divided into three broad themes including 1. leadership skills, 2. knowledge/information and, 3. additional beneficial areas. Each of these themes will be discussed in more depth throughout the results section. The Leadership Skills specifically apply to research question one (RQ1).

Leadership Skills

Within the theme of Leadership Skills, eight (8) categories were developed to reflect the participants responses: 1.1 evaluation/feedback, 1.2 group facilitation, 1.3 reinforcement, 1.4 assertiveness, 1.5 motivating, 1.6 general leadership ability, 1.7 no skills, 1.8 communication skills. Additionally, general leadership ability and communication skills warranted the creation of subcategories. General leadership ability included 1.61 managing people, 1.62 conflict resolution, 1.63 organization management, 1.64 time management, and 1.65 networking. The communication skills included the subcategories of 1.81 listening and 1.82 conversation. Table 3 shares the emerging theme of leadership skills according to each cohort’s responses.

Table 3

Emerging Leadership Skills for Participants Reported by Each Cohort				
	Cohort 2008 N= 4	Cohort 2005 N= 4	Cohort 2003 N= 3	Total All Cohorts N=11
1 Leadership Skills				
1.1 Evaluation/Feedback	3		1	4
1.2 Group Facilitation		3	2	5
1.3 Skill Reinforcement	1	1	1	3
1.4 Assertiveness		1	1	2
1.5 Motivating			1	1
1.6 General Leadership Ability		2	2	4
1.61 Managing People				
1.62 Conflict Resolution			1	1
1.63 Organization Management		1	1	2
1.64 Time Management		1		1
1.8 Communication Skills				
1.81 Listening	1	2		3
1.82 Conversation		2	1	3
1.65 Networking		1	1	2
1.7 No Skills		1	1	2

Maria highlighted various themes when she described the leadership skills she obtained from the W.I.L.D. program “It promoted leadership. They promoted people taking control of the group.....Or even standing back and listening to the person effectively watching how people handle ah project management, and group management. It pointed out things to you and it also promoted that leader in you” (cohort 2003, personal interview, September 24, 2009). Table 4 shares the exemplar quotes associated with the emerging theme of leadership skills.

Table 4

Exemplar Quotes for Emerging Leadership Skills

Theme	Participants (N)	Quotes
1.1 Evaluation/Feedback	4	“positive feedback....I’m better at giving people the positive approach to things” (Jessica, cohort 2008, personal interview p.3)
1.2 Group Facilitation	5	“I really think W.I.L.D. prepared me for team leadership” (Keisha, cohort 2005, personal interview p.6)
1.3 Reinforcement	3	“I’m building on something that I had from before” (Heidi, cohort 2005, personal interview p.4)
1.4 Assertiveness	2	“I’ve learned to be assertive and have my opinion taken seriously” (Keisha, cohort 2005, personal interview p.3)
1.5 Motivating	1	“the W.I.L.D. program is learning how to engage people and kind of selling it” (Mona, cohort 2003, personal interview p.4)
1.6 General Leadership Ability	4	“...how to go about assuming that role I feel like I got some kind of the background information so I could figure out how to become a better leader (Keisha, cohort 2005, personal interview p.6)
1.61 Managing People	2	“I would say managing other employees” (Maria, cohort 2003, personal interview p.3)
1.62 Conflict Resolution	2	“...you’re a team and you have to still push through to reach the objective whether you want to do it or not” (Mona, cohort 2003, personal interview p.4)
1.63 Organization Management	2	“It promoted leadership....how people handle project management, and group management” (Maria, cohort 2003, personal interview p.3)
1.7 No Skills	1	”I don’t know that I got some leadership skills” (Janet, cohort 2005, personal interview p.4)
1.8 Communication Skills		“...not just delegating but being able to listen to others ideas” (Yolanda, cohort 2005, personal interview p.5)
1.81 Listening	3	
1.82 Conversation	3	“...I think most importantly was the communication aspect of it. How to talk to people” (Maria, cohort 2003, personal interview p.3)

Notes: Total N=11

General leadership ability. Two of 11 statements for the W.I.L.D. inventory related to the general leadership ability of program participants. These are “how would you rate yourself as a leader?” and “how do you think others rate you as a leader?” All participants (n=54) completed the likert rating scale questions (1=very low, 5=very high). A paired-samples *t*-test was conducted to compare pre-self leader rating and post-self leader rating after attending the W.I.L.D. institute for each of the cohorts, all three cohorts were found to have significance. The cohort 2008 results indicate there was a statistically significant difference in the scores for pre-self leader rating ($M=3.17$, $SD=.577$) and post-self leader rating ($M=3.75$, $SD=.754$) following participation in the W.I.L.D. program $t(11)= 3.924$, $p= 0.002$. The cohort 2005 results indicate there was a statistically significant difference in the scores for pre-self leader rating ($M=3.50$, $SD=.512$) and post-self leader rating ($M=4.09$, $SD=.526$) following participation in the W.I.L.D. program $t(21)= 4.161$, $p= 0.000$. The cohort 2003 results indicate there was a statistically significant difference in the scores for pre-self leader rating ($M=3.60$, $SD=.681$) and post-self leader rating ($M=4.05$, $SD=.605$) following participation in the W.I.L.D. program $t(19)= 2.932$, $p= 0.009$. The total combined cohort results indicate there was a statistically significant difference in the scores for pre-self leader rating ($M=3.46$, $SD=.605$) and post-self leader rating ($M=3.96$, $SD=.726$) following participation in the W.I.L.D. program $t(53)= 6.207$, $p= 0.000$. The results from the W.I.L.D. inventory indicated there is significance in the pre-and post-self-leader rating scores for the leader rating an individual gives themselves for all combined cohorts. Table 5 represents the mean difference for self-rating of general leadership ability.

Table 5

Mean Difference for Self-rating of General Leadership Ability
as reported by The W.I.L.D. Inventory

Subjects	Pre-test mean	Post test mean	Mean Difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Cohort 2008	3.17	3.75	.58	3.924	11	.002
Cohort 2005	3.50	4.09	.59	4.161	21	.000
Cohort 2003	3.60	4.05	.45	2.932	19	.015
All Cohorts	3.46	4.00	.54	6.207	53	.000

Note: $p < 0.05$

In addition, a paired-samples *t*-test was conducted to compare pre-other leader rating and post-other leader rating after attending the W.I.L.D. program. All participants ($n=54$) completed the likert rating scale question (1=very low, 5=very high). For the cohort 2008 results no significant difference was found in the scores for pre-other leader rating ($M=3.33$, $SD=.651$) and post-other leader rating ($M=3.58$, $SD=.669$) following participation in the W.I.L.D. program $t(11)= 1.393$, $p= .191$. For the cohort 2005 results there was a significant difference in the scores for pre-other leader rating ($M=3.50$, $SD=.598$) and post-other leader rating ($M=3.91$, $SD=.294$) following participation in the W.I.L.D. program $t(21)= 3.250$, $p= .004$. For the cohort 2003 results there was a significant difference in the scores for pre-other leader rating ($M=3.65$, $SD=.489$) and post-other leader rating ($M=4.00$, $SD=.562$) following participation in the W.I.L.D. program $t(19)= 2.666$, $p= .015$. The total cohort combined results indicated there was a significant difference in the scores for pre-other leader rating ($M=3.52$, $SD=.574$) and post-other leader rating ($M=3.87$, $SD=.516$) following participation in the W.I.L.D.

program $t(53) = 4.026, p = .000$. The results from the W.I.L.D. inventory indicated there is significance in the pre-and post-other-leader rating scores for the ratings participants felt others would give them as a leader. Table 6 represents the cohort mean difference for self-rating of perceived others rating of general leadership ability.

Table 6

Mean Difference for Self-rating of Perceived Others Rating of General Leadership Ability as reported by The W.I.L.D. Inventory						
Subjects	Pre-test mean	Post-test mean	Mean Difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	P
Cohort 2008	3.33	3.58	.25	1.393	11	.191
Cohort 2005	3.50	3.91	.41	3.250	21	.004
Cohort 2003	3.65	4.00	.35	2.666	19	.015
All Cohorts	3.52	3.87	.35	4.398	53	.000

Note: $p < 0.05$

The impact upon general leadership ability (1.6) as a result of participation in the W.I.L.D. program was expressed by Yolanda, a graduate student in the communications field, when reflecting on her previous work experience “I guess W.I.L.D. did benefit me more than I knew because they (other colleagues) were afraid to go forward with that information and they were like ‘Well, you are going to teach the class already?’ and I was like ‘Well yeah somebody’s got to teach them.’ So they’re sending their students from their facility over to my hospital for me to teach them and I am like ‘Why aren’t you teaching them? You know this stuff’. They were like ‘I don’t know what you’re doing’ and so they were sitting in on my classes to see what I was teaching and how I was teaching so... ‘I guess I was getting more from it than I thought I was.’” (cohort 2005,

personal interview, August 12, 2009). A total of 4 (36%) participants out of the 11 interviews identified general leadership ability as a skill obtained during participation in the W.I.L.D. program.

Assertiveness. As one of the categories within the leadership skills theme, assertiveness (1.4) was an important skill expressed by two (18%) of the interview participants. Some examples include: “I’ve learned to be assertive and have my opinion taken seriously” (Keisha, cohort 2005, personal interview, July 22, 2009), “It (W.I.L.D. program) has already helped. This last week I submitted a suggestion for employee motivation at work.” (Janet, cohort 2005, W.I.L.D. inventory response). “I learned how to react and how to say things that, and act upon them and not cause a problem” (Jillian, cohort 2003, personal interview, September 21, 2009). These examples demonstrate the wide range of assertive leadership skills that female participants reported from verbally expressing opinions to the assertion of suggestions for change in the workplace.

Listening. Listening was a prominent leadership skill within the communication category mentioned by 3 (27%) of the 11 individuals interviewed. When discussing her improvement in group leadership ability, which she credits to the W.I.L.D. program, Yolanda offered a connection with the listening leadership skill. She asserted that her group facilitation and in turn her listening skills were impacted “...in the sense of not just delegating but being able to listen to others’ ideas” (cohort 2005, personal interview, August 12, 2009).

Group Facilitation. Group facilitation was a leadership skill category mentioned by 5 (46%) of the 11 individuals interviewed. Yolanda expressed “I’m probably more comfortable after W.I.L.D. with group leadership” (cohort 2005, personal interview,

August 12, 2009). Keisha shared that she had never previously liked team/group projects until her exposure to W.I.L.D. and she reported “But I really think W.I.L.D. prepared me for team leadership” (cohort 2005, personal interview, July 22, 2009). These statements suggest an improvement in group leadership skills after completion of the W.I.L.D. program. Another supportive comment “I liked the group setting because you were part of a team” (Keisha, cohort 2005, personal interview, July 22, 2009) suggests the environment was also conducive to promoting and demonstrating skills in speaking to groups.

The W.I.L.D. inventory statement that related to the group facilitation theme was “How good are you at talking to groups and communicating?” A paired-samples *t*-test was conducted to compare any change (difference) in pre-talking to groups and post-talking to groups following participation in the W.I.L.D. program. There was a statistically significant difference in the total scores for the pre-talking to groups ($M=3.44$, $SD=.984$) and post-talking to groups ($M=3.96$, $SD=.726$) after completion of the W.I.L.D. program; $t(53)=4.026$, $p=.000$. These results suggest that participants report an increase in their ability to talk to groups and communicate immediately following their participation in the W.I.L.D. program. There are differences in the cohort results. In cohort 2008 there was no significant difference for the pre-talking group ($M=3.50$, $SD=1.087$) and post-talking group ($M=4.08$, $SD=.669$), $t(11)=1.541$, $p=.152$. With cohort 2005 there was a significant difference for the pre-talking group ($M=3.45$, $SD=1.057$) and post-talking group ($M=3.95$, $SD=.785$), $t(21)=2.569$, $p=.018$) and for cohort 2003 there was also a significant difference for the pre-talking groups ($M=3.40$, $SD=.883$) and post-talking groups ($M=3.90$, $SD=.718$), $t(19)=-2.939$, $p=.008$). When all

three cohorts were combined there was a statistically significant difference as indicated above. Table 7 represents the mean difference for self-rating of ability to talk to groups, group facilitation.

Table 7

Mean Difference for Self-rating of Talking to Groups/Group Facilitation as reported by The W.I.L.D. Inventory						
Subjects	Pre-test mean	Post-test mean	Mean Difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	P
Cohort 2008	3.50	4.08	.58	1.541	11	.152
Cohort 2005	3.45	3.95	.50	2.569	21	.018
Cohort 2003	3.40	3.90	.50	2.939	19	.000
All Cohorts	3.44	3.96	.52	4.026	53	.000

Note: $p < 0.05$

Communication. Three of the 11 interviewed individuals discussed the value of the subcategory conversation within the communication aspect of the W.I.L.D. program suggesting an impact in these skills following participation in the program. Maria shared she liked "...the communication aspect" in reference to a program activity and she learned "...how to handle and speak to other employees" (cohort 2003, personal interview, September 24, 2009). Two specific questions from the Likert-type scale on the W.I.L.D. inventory are relevant to communication. The question "how good are you at talking to groups and communicating?" is similarly related to group facilitation and is discussed at length above. Another W.I.L.D. inventory question related to communication skills was "how would you rate your written communication skills?" A paired-samples *t*-test was conducted to compare all groups pre-written communication

rating and post-written communication rating after attending the W.I.L.D. institute. There was a statistically significant difference in the total combined cohort scores for pre-written communication rating ($M= 3.66, SD=.984$) and post-written communication rating ($M=3.96, SD= .726$) following participation in the W.I.L.D. program $t(53)= 4.026, p= .000$. The results from the W.I.L.D. inventory indicated there is a statistical significance in the pre-and post-written communication rating scores for the ratings individuals gave themselves. In addition, a paired-samples t -test was conducted to compare each of the cohorts separately for pre-written communication rating and post-written communication rating after attending the W.I.L.D. institute. There was not a significant difference in the 2008 and 2003 cohorts' scores however, there was a significant difference in the 2005 cohort scores for pre-written communication rating ($M= 3.36, SD=.848$) and post-written communication rating ($M=4.09, SD= .811$) following participation in the W.I.L.D. program $t(21)= 3.648, p= .002$. The total combined cohort results from the W.I.L.D. inventory indicated there is significance in the pre-and post-written communication rating scores for the ratings individuals gave themselves. Table 8 represents the mean difference for self-rating of written communication ability.

Table 8

Mean Difference for Self-rating of Written Communication as reported by
The W.I.L.D. Inventory

Subjects	Pre-test mean	Post-test mean	Mean Difference	t	df	P
Cohort 2008	3.67	4.00	.33	1.773	11	.104
Cohort 2005	3.36	4.09	.73	3.648	21	.002
Cohort 2003	4.00	4.26	.26	1.424	18	.172
All Cohorts	3.66	4.13	.47	4.060	52	.000

Note: $p < 0.05$

Reinforcement. While some individuals mentioned "...it's not something I learned in the W.I.L.D. program I think it got reinforced or refreshed (reinforcement category) from the W.I.L.D. program" (Mona, 2003 cohort, personal interview, September 17, 2009). Other interviewed participants commented "Well, to be honest I didn't get the skills but, ahhh, the most impressive thing I learned is how to rate others regardless of their backgrounds or gender" (Amani, 2008 Cohort, personal interview, September 1, 2009). In other words, although these individuals did not obtain a new skill, the knowledge acquired and reinforced was valuable.

One comment made during Keisha's interview, in which she shared many ways her participation in the W.I.L.D. program impacted her leadership development, summarized one of the reasons she attributes for such a large impact "especially first year of college freshman, kinda caught me early" (cohort 2005, personal interview, July 22, 2009). She further clarified to explain her early involvement in the W.I.L.D. program helped propel her academic career and involvement in leadership positions on campus and in the community since she was involved with the program early in her academic career.

When asked what leadership skills they got from W.I.L.D., one individual responded "I don't know that I got some leadership skills" (Janet, cohort 2005, personal interview, July 21, 2009). It is worth noting that this is the same individual when discussing one of the interactive exercises shared "...we were, like, so tight together on our blanket. I remember that just being like one of the best experiences. Just, like, bonding with other women" (Janet, cohort 2005, personal interview, July 21, 2009).

Although she did not report any leadership skills she expressed another theme defined beneficial area, support.

Additional Beneficial Skills

What additional skills did participants in the W.I.L.D. program report as beneficial to their development? This was the second part of research question 1. After a review of the qualitative data many of the emerging themes related to additional skills reported as beneficial to leadership development. The following emerging themes defined the prominent additional beneficial areas for leadership development; program components (3.42 exercises/activities), 3.2 support (3.21 other participants, and 3.24 camaraderie), personal growth (3.11 leadership confidence) and 2.12 altered leadership definition.

Exercises/activities. Sixty-four percent (7 out of 11) of the subjects indicated the exercise/activities were beneficial to their development. This theme spanned all the cohorts and was mentioned by more than one person within each cohort, indicating a frequent presence over time. Mya shared that she “really enjoyed when we did one day, when we did like, they set up like little games” (cohort 2008, personal interview, July 15, 2009) and went on to explain that during these activities she learned about the important leader role of providing positive feedback. Keisha referenced the “various games” that were played and her comfort level with making mistakes in this environment (cohort 2005, personal interview, July 22, 2009). This indicates the program components, and in particular the exercise/activities were beneficial to the W.I.L.D. program participants.

Support. Support especially from the other participants, was reported by several (4 of the 11 participants) individuals as having an influence on their development in the

W.I.L.D. program. Mona's comment "...it was a very powerful group of women, you know....they were very dynamic people" (cohort 2003, personal interview, September 17, 2009). An exemplary quote from Jillian "I was able to see people, especially strong women who were able to navigate themselves, you know, through their life whether they were a professional or more creative" (cohort 2003, personal interview, September 21, 2009) demonstrated the impact of the other participants and presenters. Another highly represented subcategory was camaraderie (6 of 11 participants reported this theme), still within the category of support. As shared, "...it really gave me, I think a sense of community" (Mona, cohort 2003, personal interview, September 17, 2009) and demonstrates the camaraderie experienced as a participant in the program. "I even met my roommate in the W.I.L.D. program. We decided to be roommates after that particular experience and we stayed roommates all through college" is indicative of a strong camaraderie impact (Keisha, cohort 2005, personal interview, July 22, 2009).

Leadership confidence. "It made me a lot more confident about my abilities to lead" (Yolanda, cohort 2005, personal interview, August 12, 2009). This statement supports the leadership confidence theme. Similarly, when asked about the W.I.L.D. program's impact Keisha responded in part "...it made me more confident in my skills in leadership" (cohort 2005, personal interview, July 22, 2009). Additionally, Keisha reported an increase from "high" to "very high" in her response to the question "how much do you know about leadership skills?" Mya expressed her growth in her leadership confidence in this manner "...so, I realized that it's okay, you know, it's okay no matter what you do, you'll always be...I'm not going to say the B word" and she goes on to further explain that "...it's okay to come straight forward" (cohort 2008, personal

interview, July 15, 2009) instead of worrying how people will perceive your leadership style. Another example of leadership confidence was shared “I think that is kind of what WILD was trying to say that you have ways of leading that you don’t have to change. Try different things and see how it works and still be a strong person and lead. But try and,...there are other ways you can do it, sit in groups, diffuse it out. (Laughs)” (Jillian, cohort 2003, personal interview, September 21, 2009).

Leadership definition altered. After a review of the W.I.L.D. inventory pre- and post-assessment qualitative data, broad themes were developed from the fall 2008 cohort relating to the open-ended question “What is your definition of leadership?” Some of the themes were only mentioned by one individual therefore it is relevant to note that the following items were mentioned by two or more individuals. The pre-assessment leadership definition themes with the respective number of program participants noting these themes included: organize people (2 participants mentioned this theme), resistance/obstacles (3 participants), solve problems (2 participants), role models (3 participants), motivate (3 participants), vision/mission (5 participants), communication (2 participants), compassion (2 participants). The most prominent theme in the W.I.L.D pre-assessment inventory was found to be vision/mission, mentioned five times in notations such as “the ability to complete necessary actions to further the vision or mission” (W.I.L.D. pre-assessment inventory, Fall 2008). Within the definition of leadership, the post-assessment themes and number of program participants noting these themes included: motivate (7 participants), team work (3 participants), role model (3 participants), communication (2 participants) and listens (3 participants). Within the W.I.L.D. pre-assessment inventory themes there were two themes that pertain to negative

concerns (resistance and obstacles) while the post-assessment themes did not represent any negative concerns. In particular, Kira's change in personal leadership definition was represented through the following example of her pre-assessment response "Leading a group to achieve the goal. Dealing with the arguments in the group. Solve the problems" compared to her post-assessment reply, "Communicate clear goals to the members, accept members' ideas, encourage each other." Kira's initial definition was intertwined with resistance, directive management issues while the post assessment remarks incorporated interpersonal, transformational (Conger, 1999), democratic characteristics (Eagley & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001). It is also worth noting that the same 2 of the 11 participants referenced a change in their leadership definition. Following the completion of the W.I.L.D. program Jessica defined leadership as "The ability to embrace team work and strive to present yourself as a good role model and example of team work. The ability to communicate to others and respect what others have to say. Good problem solving skills and compassion for everyone around you; especially fellow employees" (cohort 2008, W.I.L.D. post assessment). Similarly, Heidi reported an altered leadership definition due to her participation in the W.I.L.D. program "...it came out, that is, was a lot about cooperation and that you know, being a leader doesn't mean that you have to be everybody else's enemy or boss" (cohort 2005, individual interview, p. 3).

The W.I.L.D. inventory question "how much do you know about leadership skills?" is related to a change in definition about leadership skills. The cohort 2008 results indicate there was a statistically significant difference in the scores for pre-knowledge leadership skills ($M=3.08$, $SD=.669$) and post-knowledge leadership skills ($M=4.00$, $SD=.739$) following participation in the W.I.L.D. program $t(11)= 3.527$ $p=$

0.005. The cohort 2005 results indicate there was a statistically significant difference in the scores for pre-knowledge leadership skills ($M=3.05$, $SD=.722$) and post-knowledge leadership skills ($M=4.18$, $SD=.733$) following participation in the W.I.L.D. program $t(11)= 5.139$, $p= 0.000$. The cohort 2003 results indicate there was a statistically significant difference in the scores for pre-knowledge leadership skills ($M=3.20$, $SD=.768$) and post-knowledge leadership skills ($M=4.10$, $SD=.718$) following participation in the W.I.L.D. program $t(11)= 4.723$, $p= 0.000$. A paired-samples t -test was conducted for all combined cohort scores to compare any change (difference) in pre-knowledge leadership skills and post-knowledge leadership skills following participation in the W.I.L.D. program. There was a significant difference in the total combined cohort scores for the pre-knowledge ($M=3.11$, $SD=.718$) and post-knowledge leadership skills ($M=4.11$, $SD=.718$) after completion of the W.I.L.D. program; $t(53)= 7.888$, $p= .000$. These results suggest that participants report an increase in their knowledge about leadership skills immediately following their participation in the W.I.L.D. program. Table 9 represents the cohort mean difference for self-rating of leadership knowledge.

Table 9

Mean Difference for Self-rating of Leadership Knowledge as reported by
The W.I.L.D. Inventory

Subjects	Pre-test mean	Post-test mean	Mean Difference	t	df	P
Cohort 2008	3.08	4.00	.92	3.527	11	.005
Cohort 2005	3.05	4.18	1.14	5.139	21	.000
Cohort 2003	3.20	4.10	.90	4.723	19	.000
All Cohorts	3.11	4.11	1.00	7.888	53	.000

Note: $p < 0.05$

Other Benefits

Some of the additional themes that emerged only pertained to a few individuals however, the expressed personal growth (specifically confidence and awareness) and impact from participation in the W.I.L.D. program was so strong/great that their exemplary quotes are shared.

Jillian reported her participation in the W.I.L.D. program as having a strong influential impact on her through shared comments including “I remember, it was like one of the first things I signed up and dedicated myself to that I kind of followed through on” and she continued to explain “...that (W.I.L.D.)was one of the few things at the time that I was able to stick through. That was a big deal for me “cause it was something I knew was impacting me and it may not be a specific thing in my memory right now. And I tell people, all the time, about it.” (Jillian, cohort 2003, personal interview, September 21, 2009). Jillian further shared that she had been struggling with several personal life events at the time and ended up leaving university for a few years before returning to complete her degree. It was due to this reason she felt her commitment to the W.I.L.D program was of great importance and significant. These statements illustrate the themes of personal growth, and specifically general confidence from the W.I.L.D. program for this participant. See Table 10 for additional exemplary quotes of the benefits for participation in the W.I.L.D. program.

One woman, from a developing country, expressed her personal growth and affirmation after her participation in the W.I.L.D. program as “What touched me, as I said, was just the general thing that doesn’t pertain to only my own culture.....coming here and seeing that women are having the same cultural, you know, I think, pressures

and stress, it's really makes sense" (Amani, cohort 2008, personal interview, September 1, 2009). Amani expressed this increase in awareness has propelled her to help empower women and become "a feminist" (cohort 2008, personal interview, September 1, 2009).

Table 10

Exemplary Quotes of Additional Prominent Benefits/Impacts For W.I.L.D. Subjects

Theme	Exemplary Quote
Program Components: Exercises/Activities (7 individuals)	"...really enjoyed when we did one day, when we did like, they set up like little games" (Mya, Cohort 2008, Individual Interview, p.8)
Support: Role Model (2 individuals), and Camaraderie (6 individuals)	"I was able to see people, especially strong women who were able to navigate themselves, you know, through their life whether they were a professional or more creative" (Jillian, Cohort 2003, individual interviews, p. 3) "I even met my roommate in the W.I.L.D. program. We decided to be roommates after that particular experience and we stayed roommates all through college" is indicative of a strong camaraderie impact (Keisha, Cohort 2005, individual interviews, p. 4).
Personal Growth: Leadership Confidence (4 individuals)	"It made me a lot more confident about my abilities to lead" (Yolanda, Cohort 2005, individual interviews, p. 1).

Participant Improvement Suggestions

This study sought to evaluate the W.I.L.D. program in order to continue to enhance the participants' experience and provide quality services. As part of the evaluation, the study conducted an analysis of the suggestions for change that participants offered in relation to their experience in the W.I.L.D. program. While some participants offered suggestions for improvement it is important to note that two interviewed individuals were unable to provide an idea for change and all subjects had a positive comment/statement about the W.I.L.D. program in addition to their improvement idea.

The suggestions for changing the W.I.L.D. program offered by participants from all three cohorts (2008, 2005, 2003), were analyzed to create themes with categories. A total of five (5) broad themes were developed 1) duration, 2) structure, 3) administration/organization, 4) facilitators, and 5) content. Table 11 lists all the suggested improvements offered by the W.I.L.D. subjects. Some of the themes were mentioned by participants in only one of the cohorts however it is relevant to note that the following broad themes were mentioned by at least one individual within all three cohorts: 1) duration, 2) administration/organization, and 5) content. This supported the breadth of the themes for these participants and the frequency demonstrated the ongoing impact.

Table 11

W.I.L.D. Participant Improvement Suggestions			
	Cohort 2008	Cohort 2005	Cohort 2003
Duration	X	X	X
More In-depth	X	X	X
Time of Day - Change		X	
Structure	X	X	
Mandatory		X	
Multiple levels	X		
Administration / Organization	X	X	X
Increase Visibility for Program	X		
Increase size / participants		X	
Provide Materials			X
Enhance Skills	X		
Content	X	X	X
Removal-videos	X		X
Increase			
Interactive Activities	X		
Real life examples of Women	X		
Additional			
Expand Depth of Information	X		
International Leadership	X		
Mentors (formal)			X
History	X	X	
Communication Styles		X	

Duration. Although many participants suggested changing the Duration of the program, it was due to their positive experience in the W.I.L.D. program. One illustrative quote was offered by Jessica “There wasn’t enough time (laugh).... It seemed like once you got into it, it was like, okay, times up!” (cohort 2008, personal interview, July 21, 2009). Similarly, Heidi stated “...it was way too short, um, we met only a couple hours a week or was it every two weeks or something like that. I definitely think it could have been a lot more intense” (cohort 2005, personal interview, September 16, 2009). The recommendation for changing the duration and intensity of the program is really a reflection on the positive experience of these W.I.L.D. alumni.

Content. Within the topic of content, three categories were developed; 5.1) additional, 5.2) increase, and 5.3) removal. For the additional content theme, Amani suggested the inclusion of both women’s international leadership (different countries’ perspectives to increase the diversity) and a historical component was also suggested “There wasn’t much mention of the Policies and the Acts that was offered, ahhh, to enable more women, to empower women or to enable more women in their professional fields.... a bit of a history ummm what kind of those that made the situation possible for women now and what is missing that might be a very good thing. Especially for an international person like me I would actually, definitely try to promote the same laws if I go back.” (cohort 2008, personal interview, September 1, 2009). One participant mentioned the benefit of watching one segment of the movie *Iron Jawed Angels*, about the struggle for women’s rights to vote and her thoughts that “it was effective because it shows, like, women should vote and the price that women have paid in the past” (Janet, cohort 2005, personal interview, July 21, 2009). This film has been shown sporadically

throughout the years during the W.I.L.D. program but the impact suggests a need and supports the importance of the historical women's leadership development/understanding. The W.I.L.D. inventory question "how good are you at working with diverse groups of people?" referred to this theme of diversity mentioned by participants. A paired-samples *t*-test was conducted to compare all groups pre-diversity rating and post-diversity rating after attending the W.I.L.D. institute. There was a significant difference in the total combined cohort scores for pre-diversity rating ($M=3.89$, $SD=.769$) and post-diversity rating ($M=4.39$, $SD=.564$) following participation in the W.I.L.D. program $t(53)=4.621$, $p=.000$. The results from the W.I.L.D. inventory indicated there was significance in the pre-and post-diversity rating scores for the ratings individuals give themselves for working with diverse groups. In addition, a paired-samples *t*-test was conducted to compare each of the cohorts separately for pre-diversity and post-diversity rating after attending the W.I.L.D. institute. There was no significant difference in the 2008 cohort scores for pre-diversity rating ($M=3.75$, $SD=.754$) and post-diversity rating ($M=4.17$, $SD=.577$) following participation in the W.I.L.D. program $t(11)=2.159$, $p=.054$. There was no statistical significant difference in the 2003 cohort scores for pre-diversity rating ($M=4.15$, $SD=.745$) and post-diversity rating ($M=4.45$, $SD=.605$) following participation in the W.I.L.D. program $t(20)=1.831$, $p=.083$. However, there was a significant difference in the 2005 cohort scores for pre-diversity rating ($M=3.73$, $SD=.767$) and post-diversity rating ($M=4.45$, $SD=.510$) following participation in the W.I.L.D. program $t(21)=3.864$, $p=.001$. The results from the W.I.L.D. inventory indicated there is significance for the combined cohort scores in the pre-and post-diversity rating scores for self-ratings of working with diverse groups of

people. Table 12 reports the mean difference for the self-rating of ability to work with diverse groups.

Table 12

Mean Difference for Self-rating of Ability to Work with Diverse Groups as reported by The W.I.L.D. Inventory						
Subjects	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Mean Difference	<i>t</i>	<i>Df</i>	P
Cohort 2008	3.75	4.08	.42	2.159	11	.054
Cohort 2005	3.73	4.45	.73	3.864	21	.001
Cohort 2003	4.15	4.45	.30	1.831	19	.083
All Cohorts	3.89	4.39	.50	4.621	53	.000

Note: $p < 0.05$

Kira shared one salient quote that supports the need for the emerging category, increase (exercises/activities) within the content theme, “I think it was the second session we have many umm...we had many, we are not sit in the chair a lot of activities. I really like that was special. Have that more not only the lecture and the instructions. If we can do more activities that would be good” (Kira, cohort 2008, personal interview, September 1, 2009). The abundant number of participants (64%) who shared the significant impact of these activities would support the sentiments of increasing the interactive, engaging activities.

Structure. Within the theme of structure, some interviewed participants suggested developing a more in-depth W.I.L.D. program to include multiple levels for the program, a mentoring component and even mandatory attendance. There is much research to support the benefits of mentoring programs (McGuire & Reger, 2003; Bauer & Mott,

1990). In particular, it was suggested that the program be expanded to include a mentor relationship with a professional in their field of interest as well as, multiple levels where "...you graduate from the W.I.L.D. program initially and then, you know, you're eligible to compete for the next level" (Mona, cohort 2003, personal interview, September 17, 2009).

Although there were constructive suggestions for changing the W.I.L.D. program, it is apparent that many of the suggestions were to improve and/or enhance the current W.I.L.D. curriculum/program. For example six subjects offered suggestions to change the programs structure or content "Well, I would include women more in leadership position and ask them to present their experiences" (Amani, cohort 2008, personal interview, September 1, 2009) and discussion about including other cultural perspectives, "...it would be good to promote the program among, from the international communities instead of just ummm the American communities" (Amani, cohort 2008, personal interview, September 1, 2009). Frequently, the same individuals who offered suggestions also made comments such as "It was a really good program and well related to women and leadership, so I felt it was a very good program" (Amani, cohort 2008, personal interview, September 1, 2009). Three additional individuals offered suggestions for changing the program to increase the duration and mentioned "I know it's only limited to a certain amount of people so maybe that's a negative" (Janet, cohort 2005, personal interview, July 21, 2009). The following example is representative of the two individuals who could not think of any suggestions for changing the program "I don't think I would make any changes. I really enjoyed myself" (Keisha, cohort 2005, Personal interview p.7).

Research Question 2: Extent of Long-term Impact for W.I.L.D. Participants

The second question examined the long-term impact of the W.I.L.D. program as reported by the participants during the individual interviews. The results were varied however, there were some common themes among the cohorts. Table 13 lists the long-term impact reported by participant cohorts.

Table 13

Long-term Impact Reported by W.I.L.D. Participants by Cohort			
Impact/Benefit	Cohort 2008	Cohort 2005	Cohort 2003
General Leadership Ability	X	X	
Managing People	X		X
Relationship Building	X		
Evaluation/ Feedback	X		
Leadership Styles	X	X	
Communication skills (conversation)			X
Leadership Confidence		X	
Assertiveness			X
Personal Growth (self care)		X	
Materials/Networking			X
Group Facilitation		X	X
Feminist Perspective	X		

One-Year Retention

The first portion of the question examined what leadership skills participants in the W.I.L.D. program reported they were using or had retained after one year. Individual interviews were conducted with four participants from the 2008 Cohort. These responses were analyzed for emerging themes and categories. Participants from the 2008 cohort responded to the standard open-ended questions and through systematic comparison 3 general themes were developed; 1) general leadership ability 2) knowledge and 3) personal growth. The emerging categories were 2.1.) general leadership knowledge, 2.2) leadership styles, and 2.3) relationship building (evaluation/feedback) and 3.1) leadership

confidence, 3.2) general confidence, and 3.3) feminist strategies. The prominent themes included personal growth categories, relationship building and general confidence. These personal growth themes were still very vivid for these participants as they shared their perspectives.

Relationship Building

Since many of the participants from this cohort (2008) were still enrolled in school, 3 of the 4 individuals expressed that their knowledge and skills have been used to enhance their personal relationships in a broader context. For example, Jessica explained that "...giving people the positive approach to things" was related to her personal life "...like, with my sister, like, my dad. Especially with my son" (cohort 2008, personal interview, July 21, 2009). "I'm better at giving people the positive approach to things" (Jessica, cohort 2008, personal interview, July 21, 2009) is Jessica's assessment of the positive feedback (evaluation/feedback) she now shares in her personal building relationships in contrast to her previous perspective for example, "I'm always about the constructive criticism" (Jessica, cohort 2008, personal interview, July 21, 2009). Similarly, related to the building relationships theme, "I understand others more. I understand them better than before so that is something that ahhh, they (W.I.L.D. program facilitators) helped achieve as well" (Amani, cohort 2008, personal interview, September 1, 2009). Mya also shared that she incorporates the information she gained about leadership styles in her personal relationship, "I use it against my husband. (laughs)" (Mya, cohort 2008, personal interview, July 15, 2009). Specifically, she explained, "...because you're a man you don't see this," and she asserted that she is "...more observant of my leadership style....the difference between gender and sex and

how that really effects our leadership style and how we look at leaders” (Mya, cohort 2008, personal interview, July 15, 2009).

Feminist Perspective

Another individual from the 2008 cohort shared the following example that related to her general confidence when she described what skills she still implements today, “well, the point about not making compromises....doing what you think is right. Trying to fit your principles and ideas with your work” (Amani, Cohort 2008, personal interview, September 1, 2009). She felt the impact of this lesson also strengthened her ability to understand others. For Amani, the learning about women’s leadership role and women’s universal struggle equated to the personal growth theme “it’s a general finding all over the world, ahh so, it made me more feminist if you want to say (laughs)” (Cohort 2008, Personal interview p. 4). Amani planned to share the knowledge she gained from the W.I.L.D. program with women in her country when she returned. Amani described new found strength and feminist perspective through her participation in W.I.L.D. with a better understanding about doing what is right and ethical for yourself and not making compromises to satisfy others.

Four-Year Retention

All four of the interviewed participants in the 2005 cohort recalled at least one currently used leadership related skill they attributed to their participation in the W.I.L.D. program. As these patterns emerged, five themes were developed to incorporate the participants’ experiences; 1) general leadership ability, 2) group facilitation, 3) leadership confidence, 4) leadership styles, and 5) program content.

General Leadership Ability, Group Facilitation and Leadership Confidence

Keisha credits her leadership confidence and general leadership ability to her participation in the W.I.L.D. program. She shared “It’s made me more confident in my leadership skills” (cohort 2005, personal interview, July 22, 2009), and “I feel like I got some kind of the background information so I could figure out how to become a better leader” (cohort 2005, personal interview, July 22, 2009). She has continued to be an active leader, volunteering in leadership positions for community organizations. In fact, Keisha demonstrated this continued leadership role/influence and group management theme through the development of her own religious affiliated student organization on campus and while her expected graduation was in one month, she “...planned the graduation ceremony for our (program name) ceremony” (cohort 2005, personal interview, July 22, 2009). Similarly, she reported that, as a result of her participation in W.I.L.D., her written goals, 4 years earlier, were to “establishing power/influential mentors” and “Being able to be a positive influence to friends/family” (cohort 2005, W.I.L.D. inventory post assessment).

Leadership Styles

Heidi gained knowledge about the different leadership styles, which she shared is incorporated within her leadership interactions and situations. Specifically, she reported “...masculine and feminine leadership styles....that’s something I think about, I guess, about more, is the way people lead especially if I go into a situation. I kinda think about, I visually have that piece of paper in front of me” (cohort 2005, personal interview, September 16, 2009). Heidi’s change in her leadership perceptions were further demonstrated when comparing her W.I.L.D. pre- and post- assessment qualitative

responses. Her original leadership definition used terms such as “conflict management, organize, and task” while her definition following participation in the W.I.L.D. modules included “effective two-way communication, incorporate others opinions, and be able to motivate and be a lighthouse to others” (Heidi, cohort 2005, W.I.L.D. post assessment). This represents a change from functional, directive terminology during the pre-assessment to words and an analogy that suggest interactive, inclusive, guiding statements for the post-assessment. These phrases demonstrate a change in thinking about the definition of leadership thus impacting the methods one uses to lead. Ryan and Bernard (2009) report researchers have effectively used metaphors to help identify themes within qualitative research.

Program Content and Personal Growth

Within the program content theme, the interactive exercises were mentioned as beneficial. Janet mentioned the journaling technique to enhance personal growth (self-care) while Yolanda discussed the beneficial exercise she planned to facilitate for another group of women “I have to do a motivational speech to a group of women coming up next month in October. I decided, before I even talked to you that, that was one of the exercises that I was going to do” (group facilitation theme) (Yolanda, cohort 2005, personal interview, August 12, 2009). Yolanda continues to reflect on her experience in the W.I.L.D. program and incorporates the teachings into her current life events. Through Yolanda’s instruction/interactions the beneficial outcomes of the W.I.L.D. program are being passed onto additional females.

Six-Year Retention

All three of the 2003 cohort individual interview participants reported at least one leadership skill they had retained from the W.I.L.D. program and were still implementing in their lives six years later. Three separate themes were developed based on the individual interview analysis of the 2003 Cohort. The three themes all related to interactions with other individuals and the best methods to engage for different situations: 1) assertiveness, 2) group facilitation 3) Managing People and 4) communication skills

Assertiveness

Jillian, a graduate student in a Fine Arts program, shared that she developed her ability for assertiveness (theme) through her vivid recollection of the W.I.L.D. speaker where she “learned how to react and how to say things that, and act upon them and not cause a problem” (cohort 2003, personal interview September 21, 2009). She further explained that she learned it was acceptable to stand up for what you believed and inform individuals when they behave inappropriately (personally and professionally). Jillian reported that this lecture was one she still recollects as beneficial.

Group Facilitation

Group facilitation was an essential skill that Mona reported as one she obtained and used in her current professional position managing individuals. “It’s kinda nice to see how different types of people work different problems so I think that translates well now with what I do. You know, I have a lot of people with very diverse backgrounds that I manage on these projects. So, I think that was a good kind of training ground you know on how do you work within a team, leading a team and that kind of thing. So, I think it was a good experience from the program” (Mona, cohort 2003, personal interview,

September 17, 2009). She was able to directly apply the skills she obtained from the W.I.L.D. program to her professional career.

Communication Skills

The direct implication and impact was demonstrated through the following example of managing people and the specific communication skill of conversation “I would say managing other employees, ah, how to handle and speak to other employees and I’m a business manager and I do contract support so it directly affects my job. It’s the main task of my job” (Maria, cohort 2003, personal interview, September 24, 2009). Maria was able to quickly relate the current beneficial components/aspects from her experience in the W.I.L.D. program.

Several emerging themes were found to have a long-term impact. Table 14 represents the prominent themes with example quotes expressed by W.I.L.D. participants.

Table 14

Prominent Themes and Long-Term Impact Reported by W.I.L.D. Participants

Emerging Theme	Quotes
Leadership Skills	
Group Facilitation (5 individuals) Long-term Impact: 2005 & 2003 cohort	“that (W.I.L.D.) was a good training ground you know on how do you work within a team, leading a team, and that kind of thing” (*Mona, cohort 2003, individual interview, p.3) “I really think W.I.L.D. prepared me for team leadership” (*Keisha, cohort 2005, individual interview, p.6) “I thought it was a great team building program....it taught me team building skills” (*Maria, cohort 2003, individual interview, pg. 2)
General Leadership Ability (4 individuals) Long-term Impact: 2008 & 2005 cohort	“...I feel like I got some kind of the background information so I could figure out how to become a better leader” (*Keisha, cohort 2005, individual interview, p.6) “It promoted leadership....it also promoted the leader in you” (*Maria, cohort 2003, individual interview, p. 3)

Table 14 Continued

Emerging Theme	Quotes
Leadership Skills	
Communication: Listening (3 individuals) Conversation (3 individuals) Long-term Impact: 2003 cohort	“Being a better listener, on taking other peoples opinions” (*Jessica, cohort 2008, individual interview, p.2) “I think being more...listening more, was one of the things I learned” (*Heidi, cohort 2005, individual interview, p. 4) “...I think most importantly was the communication aspect of it. How to talk to people” (*Maria, cohort 2003, individual interview, p. 3)
Assertiveness (2 individuals) Long-term Impact: 2003 cohort	“I’ve learned to be assertive and have my opinion taken seriously” (*Keisha, cohort 2005, personal interview, p. 3) “I learned how to react and how to say things...act upon them, and not cause a problem” (*Jillian, cohort 2003, interview, p. 5)
Knowledge	
Women’s Leadership Role (3 individuals)	“How to understand the differences in the academic and professional settings for women that was the most important thing.... leadership and women in the professional setting was the one with most impact for me” (*Amani, cohort 2008, individual interview, p.1)
Leadership Styles (4 individuals) Long-term Impact: 2008 & 2005 cohorts	“more observant of my leadership style.....the difference between gender and sex and how that really effects our leadership style and how we look at leaders” (*Mya, cohort 2008, individual interview, p.4) “I know more about leadership and about womens and mens they are different. And I get more information actually. (*Kira, cohort 2008, individual interview, p.2)
Additional Benefits	
Support: Other Participants (4 individuals) Camaraderie (6 individuals) Long-term Impact: 2008 cohort	“ I was able to see people, especially strong women who were able to navigate themselves, you know, through their life whether they were a professional or more creative” (*Jillian, cohort 2003, individual interview, p. 3) “I even met my roommate in the W.I.L.D. program. We decided to be roommates after that particular experience and we stayed roommates all through college” (*Keisha, cohort 2005, individual interview, p. 4) “...it really gave me, I think a sense of community” (*Mona, cohort 2003, individual interview, p. 2)
Personal Growth: Leadership Confidence (4 individuals) Long-term Impact: 2005 cohort	“It made me a lot more confident about my abilities to lead” (*Yolanda, cohort 2005, individual interview, p. 1). “I think that is kind of what WILD was trying to say that you have ways of leading that you don’t have to change. Try different things and see how it works and still be a strong person and lead(Laugh)” (*Jillian, cohort 2003, interview, p. 7)
*Pseudonyms have been used to protect the identity of the participants	

Interview participants from all three cohorts were asked to “describe any additional training and development experiences you have had since your attendance in the W.I.L.D. program?” in order to obtain a sense of the potential influence outside leadership experiences may have had on their leadership development. The amount of additional training was varied with five participants reporting no additional training (not surprisingly, four of these individuals were in the 2008 cohort, being the most recent participants) and six individuals reporting activities such as “Well, I have a lot of professional developmental programs. And kind of leadership developmental things at work, various ones you know I do a lot of job rotational programs....and....special mentoring programs and things like, a two-year program where they are kind of grooming you and you go through a lot of developmental things but a lot of it too is just having a mentor relationship” (Mona, cohort 2003, personal interview, September 17, 2009).

Research Question 3: Extent that Career Transitions Needs are met
through Participation in W.I.L.D. Program

Are the career transition needs of females being met through the W.I.L.D. program as measured by the Career Transitions Inventory (CTI) (Heppner, 1991)? The final question evaluated the cohort 2008 participants’ career transition decision-making through a paired samples *t*-test of the CTI (Pre, Post1 and Post2- individual interview analysis [this data also incorporated 2003 and 2005 cohorts]), and the WILD inventory open ended question remarks. The Career Transitions Inventory (CTI) was administered immediately before the beginning of the W.I.L.D. program (pre-test), immediately following the completion of the W.I.L.D. program (post1), and one year after attendance

in the W.I.L.D. program (post2). The CTI provides an overall indication of the self-perception of internal psychological resources for career transition decision-making (Heppner, 1991) in five areas; support, independence, confidence, personal control and readiness. During the personal interview the open-ended question “What impact, if any, did the W.I.L.D. program have on your transition from student to professional?” was intentionally created to allow the participants’ voices to emerge. One subject shared her perspective when asked about the impact of her attendance in the W.I.L.D. program on her transition from student to professional “It’s not only cultural or systematic obstacles that prevent women from having the initiative it has so many aspects. It doesn’t have one single components that is why women....so many, this knowledge in the program, really made me more aware of it’s not only a cultural thing it’s a collection of so many factors” (Amani, cohort 2008, personal interview, September 1, 2009). This highlights the many facets to transition decision-making and the intricacies of the process. Each of Heppner’s (1991) five areas, readiness, confidence, personal control, support and independence, was examined separately and in-depth for this study. Table 15 represents the paired samples *t*-test pre-post1 results for the Career Transitions Inventory scale scores. Table 16 contains the paired samples *t*-test pre-post2 scale scores for the W.I.L.D. participants’ Career Transitions Inventory results.

Table 15

Paired Samples *t*-test Pre-Post1 for Self-rating of Readiness, Confidence, Personal Control, Support and Independence Scores as reported by Career Transitions Inventory

Variable	Pre-test		Posttest1		Pre-Post1			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean Difference	<i>t</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>p</i>
Readiness	65.73	5.605	63.55	7.381	-2.18	-1.210	10	.254
Confidence	43.50	10.370	46.42	6.999	2.92	1.398	11	.190
Personal Control	21.17	5.237	24.50	4.482	3.33	1.913	11	.082
Support	25.27	4.384	23.91	5.281	-1.37	-2.246	10	.049
Independence	16.92	4.814	17.92	3.848	1.00	1.032	11	.324

Note: $p < 0.05$

Table 16

Paired Samples *t*-test Pre-Post2 for Self-rating of Readiness, Confidence, Personal Control, Support and Independence Scores as reported by Career Transitions Inventory

Variable	Pre-test		Posttest2		Pre-Post2			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean Difference	<i>t</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>p</i>
Readiness	67.50	3.563	69.83	4.579	2.33	1.222	5	.276
Confidence	45.67	11.961	45.83	13.423	.17	.066	5	.950
Personal Control	23.33	6.439	25.33	4.676	2.00	1.273	5	.259
Support	26.00	3.741	25.33	2.251	-.67	-.482	5	.650
Independence	17.83	5.419	22.50	7.662	4.67	1.612	5	.168

Note: $p < 0.05$

Readiness

The first scale for the Career Transitions Inventory is the Readiness scale.

According to the Career Transitions Inventory 'readiness' refers to a person's willingness to actually do the things needed to achieve her or his career goals (Heppner, 1991). A paired-samples *t*-test was conducted to compare pre-readiness for career transition and post1-readiness for career transition after attending the W.I.L.D. program. There was no significant difference in the scores for pre-readiness ($M=65.73$, $SD=5.605$) and post1-readiness ($M=63.55$, $SD=7.381$) for career transition following participation in the W.I.L.D. program $t(10) = -1.210$, $p = .254$. The results from the CTI indicated there is not a statistically significant difference in the pre and post1 scores for the measure of readiness a woman feels for how willing she is to do the required things to achieve her career goals. Additional analysis revealed there was no significant difference in the scores for pre-readiness ($M=67.50$, $SD=3.563$) and post2-readiness ($M=69.83$, $SD=4.579$) for career transition following participation in the W.I.L.D. program $t(5) = 1.222$, $p = .276$.

Confidence

The Career Transitions Inventory defines 'confidence' as the belief in one's ability to successfully perform career-planning activities (Heppner, 1991). During the individual interviews some of the participants shared comments that suggested their confidence in career planning had been impacted by the W.I.L.D. program. Heidi (cohort 2005) and Jillian (cohort 2003) both referred to receiving and still having a packet of information that would be helpful in networking during a career search.

A paired-samples *t*-test was conducted to compare pre- and post1-confidence for career transition following participation in the W.I.L.D. program. There was not a

significant difference in the scores for pre-confidence ($M=43.50$, $SD=10.370$) and post1-confidence ($M=46.42$, $SD=6.999$) for career transition following participation in the W.I.L.D. program $t(11)= 1.398$, $p= .190$). In addition, no significant difference was found in the scores for pre-confidence ($M=45.67$, $SD=11.961$) and post2-confidence ($M=45.83$, $SD=13.423$) for career transition following participation in the W.I.L.D. program $t(5)= .066$, $p= .950$. The paired samples t -test results from the CTI indicated there is not a significant difference in the pre and post1 scores, or pre and post2 scores for the scale measuring the confidence a women has in her ability to perform career planning activities. These results suggest that females do not report any change in the amount of confidence they feel in their career planning and transition following their participation in the W.I.L.D. program.

Personal Control

For the purpose of this study ‘personal control’ examined the extent to which a person feels she has power over her career planning process verses feeling that external forces determine the outcome of her career transition (Heppner, 1991). A paired-samples t -test was conducted to compare pre-personal control for career transition and post1-personal control for career transition after attending the W.I.L.D. institute. There was not a significant difference in the scores for pre- personal control ($M=21.17$, $SD=5.237$) and post1-personal control ($M=24.50$, $SD=4.482$) for career transition following participation in the W.I.L.D. program $t(11)= 1.913$, $p= .082$. The results from the CTI indicated there is not significance in the pre- and post1-scores for the measure of personal control a women feels she has in career transition. These results suggest that females do not report

a change in the amount of personal control they feel in career planning and transition following their participation in the W.I.L.D. program.

Additional analysis revealed there was no significant difference in the scores for pre- personal control ($M=23.33$, $SD=6.439$) and post2-personal control ($M=25.33$, $SD=4.676$) for career transition following participation in the W.I.L.D. program $t(5)=1.273$, $p=.259$. Although there was no statistical significant difference found in pre-personal control for career transition and post1-personal control for career transition, when using the CTI measurement scale, the participants mean CTI scores moved from the Medium Score, 19-23 (mean pre-test scores) to High Scores, 24-36 (mean post-test1 scores).

Support

According to the Career Transitions Inventory (Heppner, 1991) 'support' refers to how much backing a person feels she or he has from the significant people in her or his life as she or he contemplates a career transition. There was missing data for the support scale on one of the CTI assessments therefore, this individuals' assessment data was not complied for this scale, therefore the sample is smaller for this scale. A paired-samples t -test was conducted to compare pre-support for career transition and post1-support for career transition after attending the W.I.L.D. institute. There was a slight significant difference in the scores for pre-support ($M=25.27$, $SD=4.384$) and post1-support ($M=23.91$, $SD=5.281$) for career transition following participation in the W.I.L.D. program $t(10)=-2.246$, $p=.049$. In addition, there was no significant difference in the scores for pre-support ($M=26.00$, $SD=3.741$) and post2-support ($M=25.33$, $SD=2.251$) for career transition following participation in the W.I.L.D. program $t(5)=-.482$, $p=.650$.

The results from the CTI indicated there is significance in the pre- and post- scores for the measure of support a woman feels she has from people in her life. These results suggest that females report a decrease in the amount of support they feel from people in their lives surrounding career transition following their participation in the W.I.L.D. program. The results indicate a decrease in the means, however the pre- and post- mean scores both still fall into the CTI range of a medium score (22-25), indicating no change in the level of support. According to the CTI individuals that report a medium score indicates they are “feeling support, but perhaps not as much as you would like or feel you need as you think about going through the career transition process” (Heppner, 1991).

Additional qualitative results from different cohorts indicated the existence of support, in different formats, within the W.I.L.D. program. Janet shared a specific example of support (faculty) when asked about any W.I.L.D. program impact on her transition from student to professional. A faculty member, one of the presenters, “...reviewed my resume, so she looked at that and you know, gave me critiques of what I should do to get it prepared for a professional person” (Janet, Cohort 2005, personal interview, July 21, 2009). This personal assistance from the instructor was reported as having an impact on her level of support during career transition from student to professional. Another form of support, other participant support, was expressed by Mona who shared “...it really gave me I think a sense of community” (cohort 2003, personal interview, September 17, 2009). Additionally, Keisha reported a level of support from her participation in the W.I.L.D. program as “...it actually helped me kind of network with the faculty on campus” (cohort 2005, personal interview, July 22, 2009).

Independence

The CTI defines ‘independence’ as the level a person views career choice as being an independent decision versus a choice made as a part of a relational context such as family, friends, partners or ‘significant others’ that enter the career planning process. A paired-samples *t*-test was conducted to compare pre-independence for career transition and post1-independence for career transition after attending W.I.L.D. There was no significant difference in the scores for pre-independence ($M=16.92$, $SD=4.814$) and post1-independence ($M=17.92$, $SD=3.848$) for career transition following participation in the W.I.L.D. program $t(11)= 1.032$, $p= .324$. In addition, there was no significant difference in the scores for pre-independence ($M=17.83$, $SD=5.419$) and post2-independence ($M=22.50$, $SD=7.662$) for career transition following participation in the W.I.L.D. program $t(5)= 1.612$, $p= .168$. The results from the CTI indicated there is not a significant difference in the pre and post1 scores, or pre and post2 scores for the measure of independence a woman feels she has in her decision about career choice. These results suggest that females do not report a change in their independent decision-making regarding career choice after their participation in the W.I.L.D. program.

All of the emerging themes from the qualitative data did not relate directly to the CTI categories yet were relevant and important to report in relation to career transition. The remaining themes that emerged from the data included one student’s comment in response to the programs impact on her transition from student to professional “Kinda clarified that there didn’t need to be competition” (Heidi, cohort 2005, personal interview, September 16, 2009). Heidi reported that this knowledge continues to assist her in her interactions/work in graduate school, the realization that people can work

together toward a common goal without competition. Although still a student, Keisha recognized the career defining impact of her involvement with the W.I.L.D. program, which "...made we want to pursue leadership even within my respective major" (cohort 2005, personal interview, July 22, 2009).

This chapter examined the impact of the W.I.L.D. program on the participants' leadership skills as well as their career transition decision-making. The data derived from this study were obtained from a variety of sources. The quantitative data was gathered from two inventories, the W.I.L.D. inventory and the Career Transitions Inventory. Qualitative results were compiled from 11 individual interview transcripts, and 2 open-ended questions on the W.I.L.D. inventory.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to evaluate specific areas of the Women's Institute for Leadership Development (W.I.L.D.) program to determine the immediate impact and long-term effectiveness as well as any career transition impacts. Qualitative and quantitative data informed the results for this research. The qualitative results were obtained from 11 individual interview participants and the W.I.L.D. inventory responses to two open-ended questions. Quantitative data was acquired from the Career Transitions Inventory and the W.I.L.D. inventory results.

Discussion

As discussed in Chapter 2, due to an increase in women's representation in positions of leadership during the 1980's and 1990's, much of the leadership literature examined the role of females (Billing, & Alvesson, 2002; Carli, & Eagly, 2001; Clark, Caffarella, & Ingram, 1999; Alimo-Metcalf, 1995; Denmark, 1993). The literature, relating to women, implies that building relationships, support, and interactions are important. The literature also suggests female adults should be actively involved in the creation of "connected teaching" which will engage them in successful learning (Belenky et al., 1997). Furthermore, females are more likely to use leadership theories and styles that encourage participation, connections, and building relationships between the various members (i.e., democratic, interactive, and transactional) (deCasal & Mulligan, 2004; Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001; Rosener, 1990).

The importance of career transition and the implications for an individual have been examined by several authors (Beeber, 1999; Scharf, 2002; Rayburn, 1986). The different types of career transitions (i.e., voluntary, planned, involuntary etc.) impact the outcomes and most effective interventions. The most beneficial career counseling approach is a holistic approach which provides a multi-faceted perspective, incorporating many items of concern to females in higher education (i.e., assessing interests, receiving necessary counseling, learning about leadership training related to career development, and consideration of barriers such as stereotypes, power and building relationships) (Brown & Crace, 1996).

A supportive atmosphere seems to be one of the most effective characteristics in a group format for women (Kees & Leech, 2004). The group literature finds interpersonal and intrapersonal learning to be one effective function of the group for its members (DeLucia-Waack, 1997). Additional group format considerations include an all-women exclusive group and the promotion of self-care issues (Forester-Miller, 1999; McManus, Redford, & Hughes, 1997; Sullivan & Mahalik, 2000).

As mentioned previously, many higher education institutions provide leadership development programs to female students in various formats (on-campus, on-line, self-directed) and the Women's Institute for Leadership Development (W.I.L.D.) has offered an on-campus leadership development program to its female students since 1996.

Two primary research questions were studied to evaluate the immediate and long-term effectiveness/impact of the Women's Institute for Leadership Development (W.I.L.D.) program. The final research question and secondary focus was to examine any career transition decision-making impacts the W.I.L.D. program had on recent

participants. The results provided information relating to the effectiveness of the program regarding female leadership development and career transition decision-making in order to accurately meet the needs of this population.

Research Question 1: Extent Women's Institute for Leadership Development Serves as an Integral part of Leadership Development for Participants

To what extent does the Women's Institute for Leadership Development (W.I.L.D.) program serve as an integral part of leadership development? This research question was the first focus for the evaluation of the W.I.L.D. program. The qualitative and quantitative data informed the results. The effective areas emerged as themes and participants shared their suggestions to improve and enhance the W.I.L.D. program.

Leadership Development Skills

The findings indicate there was evidence of leadership skill development for those women who participated in the W.I.L.D. program. This was revealed through the qualitative interviews and the W.I.L.D. inventory results. There is evidence of leadership skill development in the following areas: general leadership ability, assertiveness, listening, group facilitation, communication skills (including listening and conversation) reinforcement, and empowering women.

General leadership ability. From the analysis of the data one can assume that women's leadership skills were impacted by participation in the W.I.L.D program. A very strong indicator of this was in the area of general leadership ability, where 4 individuals out of 11 reported that the W.I.L.D. program had influenced them. Participants from each of the cohorts indicated the development of leadership skills. An example of this is demonstrated in the statement "It promoted leadership....it promoted

that leader in you” (Maria, cohort 2003, personal interview, September 24, 2009). In addition, the W.I.L.D. inventory indicated a significant change in both W.I.L.D. participant reports of rating themselves as leaders and their perception of others rating them as leaders. These findings reveal an improvement in general leadership skills following participation in the W.I.L.D. program.

Assertiveness and group facilitation. Two of the 11 participants reported assertiveness as an emerging theme for an influenced leadership skill. Assertiveness was indicated as a developed leadership skill in all three cohorts suggesting an impact over time. Five of the 11 subjects pointed out that the W.I.L.D. program had impacted their group facilitation leadership abilities. In addition the W.I.L.D. inventory results indicate that participants reported an increase in their ability to talk to groups and communicate, immediately following their participation in the W.I.L.D. program. These results suggest an improvement in group leadership skills after completion of the W.I.L.D. program.

Communication and reinforcement. Communication skills were indicated as having an impact on leadership skills through specific areas of listening and conversation. The W.I.L.D. inventory indicated a significant difference in participant’s written communication skills. Listening skills were reported by 3 of the 11 subjects which indicates the W.I.L.D. program had an impact in the area of listening as it relates to leadership. For example, Yolanda shared that the W.I.L.D. program helped her be “...able to listen to others ideas” (cohort 2005, personal interview, August 12, 2009). This implies that the participant’s experienced an improvement in their communication skills at the conclusion of the W.I.L.D. program. Although it was not reported as a new skill, reinforcement was reported as an important aspect in retaining leadership skills.

Three interview participants pointed out that the W.I.L.D. program had impacted the reinforcement of current leadership skills. Furthermore, these individuals indicated the value of positive reinforcement for existing skills and refreshing of leadership skills.

Additional Beneficial Skills

The second part of research question one examined any additional skills that proved beneficial to W.I.L.D. participants. Measures included the individual interviews and the W.I.L.D. inventory. The data indicate that there are additional skills reported as beneficial in the development of leadership. Emerging themes defined the prominent additional beneficial areas for development; program components, support (other participants, and camaraderie), personal growth (leadership confidence and general confidence) and leadership definition altered.

Program components. The data results indicated that program components and in particular the exercise/activities were beneficial to the W.I.L.D. program participants. Seven of the 11 participants indicated the exercise/activities were beneficial to their development and added to the experience. This suggests that the exercises/activities format had a beneficial impact for the W.I.L.D. participants.

Support. Support (other participants, professional) was reported by 4 of the 11 participants, spanning all the cohorts, as having had an impact upon them. The W.I.L.D. participants reported the support from the other participants impacted their skill development. For example “I’m meeting other women that were interested in leadership” (Heidi, cohort 2005, personal interview, September 16, 2009). The support (i.e. camaraderie) that was reported to have extended beyond the W.I.L.D. program had a beneficial result. Six of the 11 participants shared comments that related to this theme.

The literature findings compliment that interpersonal relationships are an important component to women's' leadership development (DeCasal & Mulligan, 2004; Eagley & Johannessen-Schmidt, 2004).

Leadership confidence. The results indicate there was evidence of personal growth (leadership confidence) for women who participated in the W.I.L.D. program. Attributing the impact of the W.I.L.D. program, comments such as “you have ways of leading that you don't have to change, try different things and see how it works and still be a strong person and lead”(Jillian, cohort 2003, personal interview, September 21, 2009) represent this theme which was mentioned by 4 of the 11 interviewed participants. This suggests the W.I.L.D. program impacts the development of leadership confidence for women who participate in the W.I.L.D. program.

Leadership definition altered. The findings of this study suggest the W.I.L.D. program has impacted the leadership definition for participants. The results from the W.I.L.D. inventory open-ended question about leadership definition denote a change in the focus of the common themes and patterns after participation in the W.I.L.D. program. Participants expressed a change from more negative items, in the common themes reported before and after participation which indicates a change in leadership definition and could guide future behavior and performance in leadership positions. Kira's initial definition was intertwined with negative, directive management issues while the post assessment remarks incorporated interpersonal, transactional and democratic characteristics. This indicates a significant or major change in her leadership definition. This was further supported during Kira's individual interview through this illustrative quote “...before I attended (W.I.L.D.) I thought leadership was, the leader's need to come

up with everything for the members and then after that, I feel leadership even those members need to share their opinions to leaders, and the leaders and members should respect each other” (Kira, cohort 2008, personal interview, September 1, 2009). In other words, Kira’s participation in W.I.L.D. altered her leadership definition to incorporate the members’ thoughts in decision-making, and inclusion which is a move to a transformational style. Participation in the W.I.L.D. taught Kira the benefits of a leadership style that incorporates members. She learned this through the role modeling of facilitators, participation in the interactive exercises, and gaining information and knowledge.

Participant Improvement Suggestions

Participants’ voices were heard during the individual interviews. There was evidence that the W.I.L.D. program could be improved as mentioned in the individual interviews. The suggestions that span all three cohorts are: duration, administration/organization and content.

Duration. Examination of the items for changing the duration of the W.I.L.D. program resulted in a reported satisfaction with the current program; participants wanted more time or intensity. Although nine individuals offered suggestions to improve the W.I.L.D. program, three of these individuals’ suggestions were related to increasing the time or enlarging the size of group to allow more individuals to attend. Similarly, the change in content included subcategories for additional, removal or increases in the existing format and/or material. The results indicate that W.I.L.D. alumni would like the program to be longer with an increase in the exercises/activities. This finding is similar to other beneficial findings which showed that components which actively engaged

participants promote successful learning and program success for female students (Belensky et al., 1997). As suggested by 7 of the 11 participants an increase in these types of activities (exercises/activities) will promote an engaging atmosphere and learning for the students.

Other suggestions. W.I.L.D. alumni subjects requested an increase in the examples of positive women. Amani suggested more inclusion of real women's real-life stories (cohort 2008, individual interview) while Mona mentioned the value of adding a mentoring component for the participants (cohort 2003, personal interview, September 17, 2009). The benefits of mentoring for women in leadership positions have been recognized (Dickerson & Taylor, 2000; Gibson, 2004; Portman & Garrett, 2005). The individual interviews and W.I.L.D. inventory results suggest there is a need to increase the diversity content within the W.I.L.D. program. Although a significant difference was found in the 2005 cohort for the self-report pre- and post- diversity scores after participation in W.I.L.D., significance was not found in the 2003 and 2008 cohorts. These scores coupled with the participants request for more diversity within the W.I.L.D. program suggest a need for this content area. Another content area that would be beneficial is the inclusion of history as suggested by both Amani (cohort 2008) and Heidi (cohort 2005). The impact from the Iron Jawed Angels mentioned by Janet (cohort 2005) suggests this would be valuable to incorporate.

Research Question 2: Extent of Long-term Impact for W.I.L.D. Participants

To what extent did the effects of participation in W.I.L.D. extend beyond the completion of the program? The second research question examined the long-term impact of the W.I.L.D. program for each of the cohorts. To derive the results for the skill

retention subjects were asked “What other teachings, if any, from the W.I.L.D. program do you still implement or use today and how do you use these skills?”

One-year Retention

The analysis suggests that several skills are retained one year after participation in the W.I.L.D. program. After systematic comparison of the individual interviews from the 2008 cohort several themes emerged. The qualitative data from the individual interviews informed the results. Analysis of the data revealed there is evidence that there were effects of the W.I.L.D. program that remained one year after completion. There is evidence of long-term effects in the following emerging themes: general leadership ability, applying knowledge, and personal growth. The categories that surfaced within applying knowledge included: general leadership knowledge, leadership styles, and building relationships (evaluation/feedback). The personal growth categories reported as maintaining their effects after one year include general confidence and feminist perspective. This suggests several effects are still experienced/implemented one year following completion of the W.I.L.D. program.

Four-year Retention

The present findings indicate there was evidence of effects four years beyond the completion of the W.I.L.D. program. This was revealed through the qualitative analysis of the 2005 cohort open-ended interviews. There is evidence of maintained effects in the following areas: general leadership ability, group facilitation, leadership confidence, leadership styles, and program content. The exemplary statements indicate that W.I.L.D. participants experience these benefits/effects four years following participation.

Six-year Retention

The study results reveal that the long-term impact of some effects spans six years after completion in the W.I.L.D. program. This was indicated through the 2003 cohort qualitative interview results. There is evidence of long-term impact and effects in the following areas: assertiveness, group facilitation, and managing people and communication skills. The statements of the participants support the conclusion that there was impact from participating in the program.

Combined Retention

The common themes, that were reported to have a long-term effect by both the 2005 and 2008 cohort participants, were: general leadership ability, and leadership styles. This frequency suggests certain W.I.L.D. program influences have an effect over time for several individuals. In addition, long-term effects were reported by both the 2008 and 2003 cohort participants for the managing people theme. Group facilitation was reported as a beneficial long-term theme by both 2005 and 2003 cohort participants.

Research Question 3: Extent that Career Transitions Needs are met through Participation in W.I.L.D. Program

To what extent are the career transition needs of females being met through the W.I.L.D. program as measured by the Career Transitions Inventory? This final question explored the secondary focus of decision-making for career transition in five subscale areas. Although the W.I.L.D. program was not specifically designed to assist women with supporting their career transition decisions, there is a connection between leadership development and career preparation (Dickerson & Taylor, 2000). These results were derived from the data provided by Career Transitions Inventory (2008 cohort: pre-12

individuals, post1-12 individuals, post2- 6 individuals) and the emerging themes from the open-ended question “What impact, if any, did the W.I.L.D. program have on your transition from student to professional?” Since the W.I.L.D. program offers one module about careers, the CTI may be more of an evaluation of the module entitled “Build your stairway to success: Women’s Career Development” where participants learn strategies for creating action plans, networking, career decision-making skills etc. In which case, the pre and post-CTI should have been administered to individuals immediately before and following this module.

Readiness, Confidence, and Independence

The findings showed no statistical significance for ‘readiness’ related to career transition after participation in the W.I.L.D. program. From the results, the W.I.L.D. program had no measurable statistical difference in impact for participants career decision-making related to confidence and independence. However, the individual interview themes suggest there is an influence on confidence as it relates to career transition. The reference to the helpful materials for networking and career planning by two of the interviewed participants demonstrates this impact.

Personal Control

The results from this study indicate that there was no statistical significant difference found for the W.I.L.D. program participant’s impact on personal control as it relates to career transition. However, the mean CTI scores changed from the Medium Score level, 19-23 (mean pre-test scores) to the High Score level, 24-36 (mean post-test scores). This suggests a group movement/change from feeling “that some aspects of the career transition process may be in your control while others are out of your control” to

“being in control of your career transition process. You view factors such as effort, interest, and personal energy to be the most important factors” (Heppner, 1991).

Support

These results suggest that females, following their participation in the W.I.L.D. program, report a change in the amount of support they feel from people in their life surrounding career transition. The Career Transitions Inventory (CTI) indicated a statistical significant change in the amount of “support” women reported after completion of the W.I.L.D. program. The results indicate a decrease in the mean scores, however the pre- and post-mean scores both still fall into the Career Transitions Inventory (CTI) range of a medium score (22-25), indicating no change in the level of support. According to the CTI, a medium score indicates an individual is “...feeling support, but perhaps not as much as you would like or feel you need as you think about going through the career transition process” (Heppner, 1991). Interestingly, contradictory evidence was found in the emerging themes, about the amount of support expressed during the individual interviews. It is possible that these are different types of support expressed by individuals in a specific career transition related support.

The number of W.I.L.D. program participants reporting natural camaraderie (six participants) and support within the other participants (four participants) suggests a high level of support. Within the emerging category of support, subcategory other participants, the 2008 cohort mentioned it one time, while the 2005 cohort referenced this theme two times and all three of the 2003 cohort participants indicated this as a valuable leadership development indicator. These findings are similar to the literature findings about support

(Berman et al., 1977) and contextual relationships (Gilligan, 1991) which have been found to be important elements in women's decision-making and leadership interactions.

The variance in the relevance of the support theme for each of the groups suggests that participants in the different cohorts have different experiences and outcomes. The CTI scores for the 2008 cohort are similar to the findings from the theme representation. Given that only the 2008 cohort completed the CTI assessment, it is not surprising the theme development is more closely aligned with this groups CTI scores.

It is worth noting that several of the participants inquired about the applicability of the Career Transitions Inventory (CTI) during the initial administration of the assessment. The definition of career transition shared with the participants was "When thinking about the terminology *transition* please remember that a person experiences many transitions in life and this can be considered the transition from student to career (if you've never had a career) or education may be a stepping stone in a long line of career transitions (with the transition from student to a new career)." This W.I.L.D. description was shared during the administration of the CTI. The CTI may have been too specific for W.I.L.D. participants to see any connection between the program (leadership content) and its relationship with career transition decision-making/planning.

Limitations

This study does have some limitations. The major threat to internal validity in this study was selection bias. The sample in this study was one of convenience and was limited to individuals who volunteered to participate. Other alumni may have different insights but were not part of the study. In reality the population that attended the W.I.L.D. program was selected due to their leadership tendencies, experiences, and/or desires to

strengthen their leadership skills. Therefore this group was different than the general university population and as such offered an advantage for the study. In addition, there was a great deal of variance in the number of participants (cohort 2008, 12 participants; cohort 2005, 22 participants; cohort 2003, 20 participants) for each cohort in the study. The small sample size created a limitation in reaching statistical significant results and could lead to unstable estimates.

One program within one institution was included in the study. This institution is a large public coeducational university; therefore, the results cannot be generalized to other programs, and/or types of institutions. Only one researcher examined the data. As a female, having held leadership positions, the researcher naturally brings biases which shaped the interpretation of the data. To provide a broader perspective, data were analyzed from three different cohort results and both qualitative and quantitative data were obtained.

It is not possible to account for outside influences (confounding variables) that may impact the results for this study. The subsequent leadership training, mentioned by several of the interviewed W.I.L.D. participants, may have impacted the long-term outcome reported by W.I.L.D. alumni. Additionally the W.I.L.D. inventory and Career Transitions Inventory (CTI) are self-report assessment tools. The interpretation of the definitions for the Career Transitions Inventory (CTI) could have impacted the results.

The fact that the second administration of the CTI was completed close to the end of the fall semester when students have obligations for school, may have contributed to the decrease in support score obtained from the Inventory. Participants who were asked to respond to statements such as “the risks of career transition seem too great given the

responsibilities I feel for people in my life” and “People who I respect have said they think I can make this career transition successfully.” (Heppner, 1991) may have had a difficult time responding to these statements if no one has made a direct comment to them. In addition, the feelings of separation (Corey & Corey, 2002) that individuals naturally feel during the final stage of a group may have impacted/influenced the CTI scores, and particularly the area of support.

Another effect of the interviews was that they solicited individual self-perceptions, and relied on memory. Since alumni from the program from several years previous (some as long as six years ago) were asked to recollect their experiences, some individuals may not have accurately recalled events/specifics. The qualitative data represented the perceptions of individuals at a specific point in time which may have been influenced by current personal external experiences. In addition, the three cohort groups were examined for common themes but direct comparisons between the groups was not possible.

Conclusions

The results of this study indicate that the Women’s Institute for Leadership Development (W.I.L.D.) impacts both leadership and other skills found to be beneficial to the participants. Additional findings demonstrate the W.I.L.D. program does not impact participants’ career transition decision-making. However, all W.I.L.D. alumni participants in this study recollected positive attributes, skills or relational experiences that they attribute to their participation in the program. Both immediate and long-term benefits were found through participation in the W.I.L.D. program.

The results of the Career Transition Inventory (CTI) indicate there was little to no impact on career transition decision-making following participation in W.I.L.D.. Since the W.I.L.D. program was not designed to assist career transition decision-making for the participants, the CTI may not have been the ideal inventory to utilize. In addition, the student participants enrolled in the W.I.L.D. program may not have yet been thinking about career transition, which was supported by the many individuals who inquired about the applicability of the assessment tool during its administration. Themes related to career development emerged within the data supporting the findings of the connection between career preparation and leadership development (Dickerson & Taylor, 2000) however, none of the themes were directly related to career transition decision-making further suggesting the inappropriate use of the assessment tool. The slight decrease in the CTI support scale could have been indicative of the natural feelings of separation (Corey & Corey, 2002) that individuals experience during the final stage of a group.

Three of the four participants from the 2008 cohort were students who expressed that the impact (one year later) on their development was retained in the specific areas of building relationships, leadership styles and general confidence even as students. As these individuals graduate they will likely carry these skills to additional leadership positions.

A feminist perspective focuses on empowering women and helping develop various skills including assertiveness. The current research results found that W.I.L.D. participants (one from each cohort) reported the emerging themes of women's empowering knowledge, feminist perspective and assertiveness. Amani (cohort 2008) expressed the theme of developing a feminist perspective (personal growth) as well as the

empowering knowledge theme. The assertiveness theme, representing feminism in action (the action theme of a feminist perspective), is demonstrated in the statements of Keisha “I’ve learned to be assertive and have my opinion taken seriously” (cohort 2005, personal interview, July 22, 2009), and Jillian “I learned how to react and how to say things that, and act upon them and not cause a problem” (Jillian, cohort 2003, personal interview, September 21, 2009). Furthermore, Janet’s W.I.L.D. inventory response, “It (W.I.L.D. program) has already helped. This last week I submitted a suggestion for employee motivation at work.” (Janet, cohort 2005,) indicates additional supportive data for the empowerment and feminist perspective. This research demonstrates that the W.I.L.D. program is empowering the alumni female student participants to use assertiveness skills as they feel empowered. This is consistent with Macalister’s (1999) finding that female students experienced a change in their sense of empowerment through a feminist teaching approach.

The literature has found same gender group facilitators tend to be the most effective (Bernardez, 1996; McManus, P.W., Redford, J.L., Hughes, R.B., 1997). The present study found similar results as W.I.L.D. participants reported the benefits of faculty (one individual) and female role models (two individuals). Mona’s statement about the facilitator and participants “It was a very powerful group of women, you know, it was nice to see people did a lot of stuff in the community, were very active” (cohort 2003, personal interview, September 17, 2009) supports the benefit of positive female role models.

Amani (cohort 2008), Jillian (cohort 2003), and Heidi (2005 cohort) all reported the knowledge itself had an impact. Although they did not attribute any new skills, the

information obtained was valuable to their development. This was demonstrated through statements such as “Well, to be honest, I didn’t get the skills but, ahh, the most impressive thing I learned is how to rate others regardless of their backgrounds or gender” (Amani, cohort 2008, personal interview, September 1, 2009). This knowledge obtained during W.I.L.D. was determined to be valuable for the participant and would be applied later in leadership positions.

W.I.L.D. alumni would like the program to be lengthened and include more exercises/activities. Belensky et al., (1997) assert that actively engaged components promote successful learning and program success for female students, therefore this idea is parallel with the literature findings. Additionally, 64% of subjects found the existing exercises/activities to have great impact on their development. There were some suggestions for changes to the content areas as well as including diversity and an historical perspective. The addition of a mentoring component with professionals in the field was also suggested as a valuable addition to the W.I.L.D. program. Mentoring has been mentioned as an effective method to propel females’ comfort and participation in leadership positions (Dickerson & Taylor, 2000).

The W.I.L.D. program shows evidence of long-term impact. The results of this research indicate that participation in a different cohort can lead to different experiences and outcomes and thus impact differently on individual participants, however there were some overlapping themes. The two dominant themes to emerge that seem to be retained over time are general leadership ability and leadership styles. General leadership ability was mentioned by 36% of participants and reported as retained by 2008 and 2005 cohorts. Leadership styles were mentioned by 27% of subjects, and reported as retained

by cohort 2008 and cohort 2005. Personal growth was reported as a valuable benefit from the program and emerged as the theme of support which was reported by several individuals. Specifically, two types of support were measured, 36% of subjects mentioned other participants as influential in their development while 55% of subjects made reference to the importance of camaraderie. Group facilitation was reported as a valuable impact by 45% of subjects and retained by cohort 2005 and 2003 cohorts.

One of the strengths of the W.I.L.D. program is the broad range and different information shared during each of the separate seven modules (i.e., team building, leadership styles, diversity, communication skills, career development, and self-reflection). There is enough information that each of these modules could be offered as their own individual course and as Jessica stated “It seemed like once you got into it, it was like, okay times up! (laughs)” (cohort 2008, personal interview, Jul 21, 2009). Several individuals mentioned increasing the duration (length and intensity) and/or changing the structure (mentoring component) of the program, however this may not be a feasible possibility.

Recommendations/Implications

This study can inform the W.I.L.D. program of new developments and growth in order to support females in higher education to assist them with leadership development. The results from this study found there is both an immediate and long-term impact following participation in the W.I.L.D. program. Additionally, the W.I.L.D. objectives are being met as demonstrated through the emerging themes. In consideration of the results, there are some recommendations.

1. It is recommended that additional long-term research be conducted with other female student leadership development programs at other institutions. Ideally a random sample from several women's leadership programs should be used as a means of enhancing the long-term research findings.

2. It is recommended that the post W.I.L.D. inventory be administered, for a second time, one year after completion of the program in an effort to determine the retention of leadership skills. Additionally, it would be beneficial to administer a standardized leadership assessment tool to determine the effectiveness of the current W.I.L.D. inventory.

3. It is recommended that W.I.L.D. participants develop an awareness of additional leadership-related campus programs and resources through the direct notification and distribution of materials and information by W.I.L.D. facilitators. One of the strengths of the W.I.L.D. program is that a broad spectrum of knowledge and skills is offered during the modules. For those individuals desiring additional information/experience in a particular area, it would be valuable to share related, in-depth information about available on-campus resources for specific topic areas (i.e., Diversity Institute, Career Management Center, etc.).

4. The W.I.L.D. program participants would benefit from the inclusion of content regarding the historical aspects of female leadership. This valuable suggestion should be strongly considered as this idea was offered by two W.I.L.D. program alumni. Specifically, the inclusion of the Iron Jawed Angels movie segment was expressed as a beneficial theme by one individual. This inclusion would provide an understanding and perspective regarding historical female leadership development struggle.

5. It is recommended that the W.I.L.D. program be offered to more female students. The creation of two separate programs, one for emerging leaders and one for experienced leaders would be beneficial. Each group could meet separately each week to develop independently and then meet jointly on occasion to enhance the mentoring for participants. Mentoring has been found to improve career exploration in higher education (Bauer & Mott, 1990), growth in learning (McGuire & Reger, 2003) and beneficial leadership development (Dickerson & Taylor, 2000; Gibson, 2004; Portman & Garrett, 2005). The W.I.L.D. program currently supports mentoring and role-modeling informally through the successful, experienced female W.I.L.D. program facilitators.

6. The W.I.L.D. program could be implemented at other institutions to develop leadership skills and competencies in female students. The research results demonstrate that the W.I.L.D. program can offer a valuable model for women's leadership programs in university settings.

The study results demonstrate there is both an immediate and long-term benefit to participation in the W.I.L.D. program for female students. Some benefits were reported by one individual while other benefits were mentioned by more than one participant over a six-year retention period. Many W.I.L.D. participants mentioned the leadership skill benefits they obtained from the program and other subjects shared their individual stories of the powerful personal impact from the program. All W.I.L.D. participants in this study were able to share benefits from their participation in the program.

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Appendix A

W.I.L.D. INTERVIEW PARTICIPANT DESCRIPTIONS

Name: Amani

W.I.L.D. Cohort: Fall 2008

Date: September 1, 2009

W.I.L.D. Cohort: Fall 2008

Time: 4:06 Length: 31 minutes 05 seconds

Location: A study room in the campus library, sitting at a table across from each other.

Subject: Amani (pseudonym) was a 37 year old female in graduate student in Health Services Research at an urban university on the eastern coast of the United States. She was from Saudi Arabia and plans to return to her native country to improve the system, when she completes her education. She was not married and does not have any children however, her nephews (6years old and 9 years old) temporarily lived with her, while the boys' mother was in Saudi Arabia working and finalizing her divorce. She also shared that she represented a minority in her culture and country; women working in positions of leadership. While in Saudi Arabia she worked in the health field in a position of leadership, where she promoted the right to hire qualified women to work.

Notes: After a personal email request to participate in the study, Amani agreed to participate in the interview. It was difficult to find a time to meet, Amani had family visiting from Saudi Arabia and she is responsible for many family commitments (taking care of nephews). During the interview, it seemed she had given some thoughtful consideration about the W.I.L.D. program and seemed very comfortable speaking with me. The interviewer had a cough which I hoped did not interfere with our interview. My initial thoughts, after the interview were that Amani seemed to have gained a great deal of personal growth from participating in the W.I.L.D. program.

Name: Jessica

W.I.L.D. Cohort: Fall 2008

Date: July 21, 2009

Time: 9:40 Length: 8 minutes 01second

Location: A study room in the campus library, sitting at a table kitty-corner from eachother.

Subject: Jessica (pseudonym) was a 24 year old Caucasian female enrolled on Biology in an urban university on the eastern coast of the United States. She was not married and a single mother to a 3 year old son. She hoped to enter the nursing program at this Virginia University. She worked part time as a manager at a local restaurant.

Notes: Jessica was one of the first individuals to agree to participate in the interview, following an email invitation. We had a difficult time finding a time to meet for the interview, we needed to reschedule one appointment and Jessica was 20 minutes late for the interview. Jessica seemed excited about school and a little nervous about the interview but more distracted by a scheduled class quiz she had to take immediately following the interview. Jessica's immediate family (sister and father) are active in her life and she frequently referenced them during the interview.

Name: Kira

W.I.L.D. Cohort: Fall 2008

Date: September 1, 2009

Time: 10:34 Length: 21 minutes 31 seconds

Location: Initially Skype interview, due to technical difficulties switched to telephone.

Subject: Kira (pseudonym) was a 34 year old female who self reported as Asian Pacific from Taiwan. She graduated in May 2009 with a marketing degree from an urban university on the eastern coast of the United States. She was not married and did not have any children. At the time of the interview she was searching for employment. During her attendance in the W.I.L.D. program she worked part-time on campus

Notes: Kira responded to a Facebook request to participate in an interview. After the recorder was turned off Kira mentioned that she thought she would have to return to Taiwan as she had not been able to find a job and could not remain in the United States legally.

Name: Mya

W.I.L.D. Cohort: Fall 2008

Date: July 15, 2009

Time: 10:00am

Length: 19 minutes 9 seconds

Location: A study room in the campus library, sitting at a table across from each other.

Subject: Mya (pseudonym) was a 25 year old African American Female enrolled in Engineering Program in an urban university on the eastern coast of the United States. She is the mother to a two year old girl and her husband is a “stay at home dad”.

Notes: Mya was the first to participate in the interview. She contacted me in response to the initial email request. She seemed very comfortable during the interview and laughed a lot.

Name: Keisha

W.I.L.D. Cohort: Fall 2005

Interview Date: July 22, 2009

Time: 10:20 a.m.

Length: 18 minutes 10 seconds

Location: A local public library, sitting at a table across from each other.

Subject: Keisha (pseudonym) was a 22 year old, African American female who does not have any children and who was engaged to be married. At the time she participated in the W.I.L.D. program she was 18 years old and a sophomore student attending the University in the Biology program. She expected to graduate in August 2009 in the nursing program.

Notes: She seemed to be very confident in herself. Keisha was friendly and outgoing and seemed very comfortable speaking with me. She reported active involvement in many community activities and campus organizations. Interestingly, she met her current roommate (who will be a bridesmaid in her wedding) while attending the W.I.L.D. program, who was also a W.I.L.D. participant (Fall 2005).

Name: Janet

W.I.L.D. Cohort: Fall 2005

Date: July 21, 2009

Time: 1:00 Length: 13 minutes & 11 seconds

Location: A local public university meeting room, sitting at a table across from each other.

Subject: Janet (pseudonym) was a 29 year old Caucasian married female and does not have any children. At the time she attended the W.I.L.D. program she was 25 years old and married. Janet has an engineering degree but went back to school in Fall 2005 to major in business management. In August 2007 she graduated and she recently (within the past month) started a new position at a bank. Janet also completes tax returns, bookkeeping and payroll for her own small side business as a CPA. Janet plans to eventually go back to school to complete her Masters degree.

Notes: Although Janet was the first person to respond to my email request to participate in the interview, we initially had a challenge finding a convenient time to meet. During the interview she seemed a little reserved and nervous at times but responded to all the questions. Interestingly, when she had something negative to share about the W.I.L.D. program she blamed it on herself...it's probably just me.

Name: Heidi

W.I.L.D. Cohort: Fall 2005

Date: Sept 16, 2009

Time: 12:30 Length: 22 minutes 17 seconds

Location: Skype interview with video (it appeared that this was her room).

Subject: At the time of the interview, Heidi (pseudonym) was a graduate student in industrial psychology organization, at a eastern coastal university, expecting to graduate December 2009. During her participation in the W.I.L.D. program, Heidi was single, 19 years old, did not have children (and currently does not). She graduated with her Bachelors degree in the industrial psychology program in May 2008. She is from Norway and is Scandinavian.

Notes: Heidi responded to a personal message sent via Facebook. She seemed like a strong, confident individual and had a lot to share about her experience. We spoke via Skype at her request and at times it was difficult to hear her as the reception faded in and out. Following the interview, she also shared that she had a internet stalker and therefore was cautious about her online interactions, so I felt pleased that she had agreed to

participate. Her interactions during the interview were straightforward and she seemed genuinely interested in the outcome of the results.

Name: Yolanda

W.I.L.D. Cohort: Fall 2005

Date: August 12, 2009

Time: 10:35 a.m.

Length: 22 minutes 23 seconds

Location: A study room in the campus library, sitting at a table across from each other.

Subject: Yolanda (pseudonym) was an African American nontraditional student (working on a masters degree in communication. Her ultimate goal was to be able to teach in the higher education setting. She graduated with a bachelors degree in communication from the same university in 2007. Yolanda is married (she mentioned it being a biracial marriage) and does not have any children.

Notes: Yolanda seemed very confident. Initially, she was very pensive/thoughtful about her comments and as the interview continued she became more verbal and responded quickly to the questions. She did mention being a nontraditional student several times however complimented the students/faculty and campus interactions yet she mentioned she felt like a “sore thumb” sticking out.

Name: Jillian

W.I.L.D. Cohort: Fall 2003

Date: September 21, 2009

Time: 10:25

Length: minutes seconds

Location: A study room in the campus library, sitting at a table across from each other.

Subject: Jillian (pseudonym) was a single 26 year old Caucasian female enrolled in the Masters of Fine Arts (MFA) program at an urban university on the eastern coast of the United States. When she participated in the W.I.L.D. program Jillian would have been 20 years old and was attending the same university studying arts, with an emphasis in creative writing and a minor in women’s studies.

Notes: Jillian eventually responded to a personal email request for an interview. She expressed hesitation to participate in her email, as she was uncertain she could contribute and had received the various other requests but after reviewing the interview questions we scheduled an interview. Jillian seemed very nervous about providing the correct answers for the interview; she spoke quickly and laughed frequently. She seemed to become more comfortable, near the end of the interview when she shared very personal insights. I offered much validation throughout the interview. At the time she attended W.I.L.D. she shared that she was not especially committed to school (in fact she left school for a few years and returned later to complete her degree).

Name: Maria

W.I.L.D. Cohort: Fall 2003

Date: September 24, 2009

Time: 2:10 Length: 11 minutes 25 seconds

Location: We spoke on a cellular phone (I was at my home, while Maria was at work)

Subject: Maria (pseudonym) was a 28 year old single, female who racially and ethnically describes herself as an Italian, White American. She currently works as a business manager in contract support. When she participated in the W.I.L.D. program Maria was 22 years old and was attending the urban university on the eastern coast of the United States. In 2008, she graduated with a degree in Business Management- double major: Ethics and Business Management.

Notes: Maria agreed to participate in an interview after a personal email request. She seemed hurried and distracted at times during our conversation (I could hear an occasional discussion with colleagues in the background). The audio was a little difficult at times and echoed. Although brief, Maria answered the questions thoroughly.

Name: Mona

W.I.L.D. Cohort: Fall 2003

Date: September 17, 2009

Time: 7:30pm Length: 17 minutes 34 seconds

Location: On the telephone, while Mona was driving home from a business trip.

Subject: At the time of the interview, Mona (pseudonym) was working at a eastern coast shipyard in a managerial position determining accounting costs for restructuring. She holds an accounting and database degree, does not have children and is single. During her participation in the W.I.L.D. program, Mona was single, 33 years old, with no children. At the time of participation, Mona was a student in Information systems, at a eastern coastal university, she graduated with her Bachelors degree in database management in 2005.

Notes: Mona responded to a personal email after several attempts. She seemed like a strong, confident individual and had a lot to share about her experience. We spoke via cellular telephone at her request, during her work travel time as she was driving home. Although I was not aware of it at the time, my five year old could be heard in the background singing occasionally (Mona did not mention this). Her responses during the interview were straightforward.

Appendix B

W.I.L.D. APPLICATION

Women's Institute for Leadership Development Application

Name: _____

Address: Street: _____
City/State/Zip _____

Day Time Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

UIN #: _____

E-Mail: _____

Birthday: _____ Race: _____

Class:	<input type="checkbox"/> Freshman	Major: _____
	<input type="checkbox"/> Sophomore	Cumulative GPA: _____
	<input type="checkbox"/> Junior	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Senior	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Graduate	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	

Why do you want to participate in the Women's Institute for Leadership Development?

How do you think you can contribute to the Institute?

In what organizations, groups, councils, etc., have you been active at Old Dominion University, in your community? What did you gain from this involvement?

What specific leadership skills are you hoping to gain from being a participant in the Women's Institute for Leadership Development?

Please continue.....

What would you like to see your self doing five years from now?

Describe the person who has most influenced your leadership style or whose leadership you most admire.

It is required that you attend all modules other than unexpected emergencies. If you are not able to fully participate, it would be best for you to wait and apply during a semester where you can be present for all modules.

Can you commit to attending all modules? Yes ____ Maybe ____
If maybe, please explain.

Appendix C

W.I.L.D. INVENTORY PRETEST

Women's Institute for Leadership Development
Old Dominion University

Pre Test

Questions	Very Low	Low	Ave.	High	Very High
1. How would you rate yourself as a leader?					
2. How do you think others would rate you as a leader?					
3. How much do you know about leadership skills?					
4. How likely are you to introduce yourself to people you don't know in unfamiliar surroundings?					
5. How much do you know about how to motivate people?					
6. How good are you at talking to groups and communicating?					
7. How would you rate your written communication skills?					
8. How good are you at dealing with difficult people?					
9. How good are you at working with a diverse group of people?					
10. How would you rate your organizational skills?					
11. How well do you work under pressure?					

What is your definition of leadership?

Briefly describe your three most important leadership experiences and/or positions.

Appendix D

W.I.L.D. INVENTORY POSTTEST

Women's Institute for Leadership Development
Old Dominion University

Post Test

Questions	Very Low	Low	Ave.	High	Very High
1. How would you rate yourself as a leader?					
2. How do you think others would rate you as a leader?					
3. How much do you know about leadership skills?					
4. How likely are you to introduce yourself to people you don't know in unfamiliar surroundings?					
5. How much do you know about how to motivate people?					
6. How good are you at talking to groups and communicating?					
7. How would you rate your written communication skills?					
8. How good are you at dealing with difficult people?					
9. How good are you at working with a diverse group of people?					
10. How would you rate your organizational skills?					
11. How well do you work under pressure?					

What is your definition of leadership?

Briefly describe the three most important leadership goals and/or future leadership position you envision for yourself as a result of W.I.L.D.?

Appendix E

CAREER TRANSITIONS INVENTORY

Name _____

CAREER TRANSITIONS INVENTORY

Mary J. Heppner, Ph.D. University of Missouri-Columbia

Instructions

This instrument is designed to assess the resources and barriers you experience in making a career transition. On the next page is a list of 40 statements. Read each item, and then indicate to what extent, at this particular point in your life, you agree or disagree with that item. Do this by circling the appropriate number on the answer sheet. Make your responses in the following manner:

- Circle a 1 on the answer sheet if you **strongly agree (SA)** with the statement.
- Circle a 2 on the answer sheet if you **moderately agree (MA)** with the statement.
- Circle a 3 on the answer sheet if you **slightly agree (SA)** with the statement.
- Circle a 4 on the answer sheet if you **slightly disagree (SD)** with the statement.
- Circle a 5 on the answer sheet if you **moderately disagree (MD)** with the statement.
- Circle a 6 on the answer sheet if you **strongly disagree (SD)** with the statement.

Example

If you **strongly agree** with the following statement:

0. In making a career transition, I believe that if I do what I love, the money will follow.

You should circle a 1 on the answer sheet, as follows:

	SA	MA	SA	SD	MD	SD
0.	①	2	3	4	5	6

To begin, just turn the page.

© 1991, Mary J. Heppner, Ph.D.,

Below is a list of 40 statements. Read each item, and then indicate to what extent, at this particular point in your life, you agree or disagree with that item. Do this by circling the appropriate number on the answer sheet. If you make a mistake or change your mind about an answer, cross out the incorrect answer and circle the new answer. Be sure to press firmly.

1. I believe I am ready to risk some of the security I now have in my current career in order to gain something better.
2. This career transition process may be too complex for me to work through.
3. I feel as though I have a driving force within me to work on this career transition right now.
4. I never have been able to go through career transition very easily. I doubt I will this time.
5. If you think you are really calling the shots in your career transition, you are only fooling yourself.
6. People in my life are disappointed and resentful that my career transition affects their lives adversely.
7. Career choices affect others and I must take the needs of others into account when making a career transition.
8. Even though there are risks, I think there is a realistic hope of finding a better career choice.
9. The risk of changing careers seems serious to me.
10. My effort, creativity and motivation will lead me to a new career.
11. Some would say that this career transition is a risky venture, but the risk doesn't bother me.
12. I am hoping that the right career counselor will tell me what I should do with this career transition.
13. People whom I respect have said they think I can make this career transition successfully.
14. I am concerned about giving up the security of what I am presently doing to make a career transition.
15. The risks of this career transition are high but I am willing to take the chance.
16. I don't feel that I have the talent to make a career transition that I will feel good about.
17. This isn't one of those times in my life when I really feel propelled to make a career transition.
18. It seems natural with something as scary as a career transition, I would be preoccupied with worry about it.
19. The outcome of this career transition process is really up to those who control the "system".
20. Significant people in my life are actively supporting me in this career transition.
21. While family and relationship needs are important to me, when it comes to this career transition, I feel I must focus on my own needs.
22. I don't feel much internal "push" to work hard at this career transition.
23. I am not one of those people who was brought up to believe I could be anything I wanted to be.
24. At this point in my life I really feel the need for more meaning in my work, that need keeps me moving at this process.
25. In dealing with aspects of this career transition, I am unsure whether I can handle it.
26. If my career transition is destined to happen it will happen.
27. The risks of career transition seem too great given my current resources and the potential pay-offs.
28. It is hard for me to juggle this career transition given the responsibilities I feel for people in my life.
29. Each day I do something on this career transition process, I would say I'm motivated.
30. I feel confident in my ability to do well in this career transition process.
31. I am feeling challenged by this career transition process and this knowledge keeps me motivated.
32. The magnitude of this career transition is impossible to deal with.
33. It would be awful if this career transition didn't work out.
34. Important people in my life (partner, teacher, parents) have said things that led me to believe I should limit my career options.
35. My family (partner or friends) are important to me but I can't put too much importance on their desires with regard to this career transition.
36. Even though the solution to this career transition is not readily apparent, I believe I will successfully work through it.
37. The number of unknowns involved in making a career transition bothers me.
38. Recent events in my life have given me the shove I needed for this career transition.
39. Luck and chance play the major role in this career transition process.
40. Even though this may not be the best time for other people in my life, I feel the need to go for it.

ANSWER SHEET

1 = strongly agree (SA)	4 = slightly disagree (SD)
2 = moderately agree (MA)	5 = moderately disagree (MD)
3 = slightly agree (SA)	6 = strongly disagree (SD)

	SA	MA	SA	SD	MD	SD		SA	MA	SA	SD	MD	SD		SA	MA	SA	SD	MD	SD	
1.	1	2	3	4	5	6															
							2.	1	2	3	4	5	6								
3.	1	2	3	4	5	6		4.	1	2	3	4	5	6							
															5.	1	2	3	4	5	6
							6.	1	2	3	4	5	6								
														7.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
8.	1	2	3	4	5	6															
							9.	1	2	3	4	5	6								
10.	1	2	3	4	5	6															
							11.	1	2	3	4	5	6								
														12.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
							13.	1	2	3	4	5	6								
														14.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
15.	1	2	3	4	5	6															
							16.	1	2	3	4	5	6								
17.	1	2	3	4	5	6															
							18.	1	2	3	4	5	6								
														19.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
							20.	1	2	3	4	5	6								
														21.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
22.	1	2	3	4	5	6															
							23.	1	2	3	4	5	6								
24.	1	2	3	4	5	6															
							25.	1	2	3	4	5	6								
														26.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
							27.	1	2	3	4	5	6								
														28.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
29.	1	2	3	4	5	6															
							30.	1	2	3	4	5	6								
31.	1	2	3	4	5	6															
							32.	1	2	3	4	5	6								
														33.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
							34.	1	2	3	4	5	6								
														35.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
36.	1	2	3	4	5	6															
							37.	1	2	3	4	5	6								
38.	1	2	3	4	5	6															
														39.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
40.	1	2	3	4	5	6															



Personal Control

Your Score: _____

This scale measures the extent to which you feel you have personal control over this career planning process rather than feeling that external forces will determine the outcome of your career transition.

High Scores (24-36) indicate that you see yourself as being in control of your career transition process. You see outside, environmental, luck and chance factors as having little effect on your career planning process. You view factors such as effort, interest, and personal energy to be the most important factors.

Medium Scores (19-23) indicate that you may feel that some aspects of the career transition process may be in your control while others are out of your control. It may be important to analyze which parts you feel you can control and which you feel are not within your control. It may be helpful to check out if others view these assessments as realistic. Finally, put energy into the things you do have control over.

Low Scores (6-18) indicate that you may be seeing barriers to your career planning process that come from external sources. A low score indicates you are likely to see something or someone outside of yourself as being in charge and controlling the outcome of your career transition process. You might be thinking that luck or chance control the outcome, or that the outcome will come from "those who control the system." You are less likely to feel that you can have a powerful effect on your own career transition process. While some parts of the career transition process may be out of your control, a much greater portion is in your control. In order to do an effective job of career planning, you may benefit from taking as much control as possible.

Support

Your Score: _____

This scale relates to how much support you are feeling from people in your life as you contemplate a career transition.

High Scores (26-30) indicate that you are feeling a fair amount of support as you go through this career transition process. You may feel that people are providing you with various forms of support (emotional and tangible) which is making the process easier for you.

Medium Scores (22-25) indicate that you are feeling support, but perhaps not as much as you would like or feel you need as you think about going through the career transition process. It may be helpful to think about what support you are already receiving and what support you need and who can provide that support for you.

Low Scores (5-21) indicate that you are feeling barriers related to the level of social support from friends and family you are experiencing. Since career transitions can be difficult times for individuals, many people feel that having supportive people around them is very important. A low score on this scale is, in essence, saying that you don't feel a strong level of the support you need in this process. You may also feel that this lack of support affects your own ability to maintain the motivation and risk-taking you will need to be successful in this process. It may be helpful to think about what support you need and who can provide that support for you.

Independence

Your Score: _____

This scale indicates the level at which you view a career choice as being an independent decision as opposed to a choice that is made as a part of a large relational context. This relational context may be family, friends, partners, or other "significant others" that may enter into your career planning process.

High Scores (20-30) indicate you are isolating your career decision as a decision that you are making independent from significant people in your life. This may be because you are presently living in an independent fashion or, even if you have significant people in your life, you are seeing this decision as one you will make independently. It may be important for you to examine this independence to determine if it may create negative consequences in the lives of people close to you.

Medium Scores (16-19) indicate you probably see your career decision as independent and interdependent. You may be feeling ambivalence about how much independence or interdependence you want to have in these decisions.

Low Scores (5-15) indicate you see your career decisions as very intertwined with relationships you have in your life. You think of the career choices in terms of how they will effect other people you are close to, and you may have concerns as to whether the change you are contemplating will be uncomfortable for them. It may be important for you to analyze how much this focus is keeping you from moving ahead with your career choices. Perhaps you could have discussions with those significant people regarding your career needs to ask for their help in working them out.

Appendix F

W.I.L.D. INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

As you reflect on your participation in the W.I.L.D. program please answer the following questions honestly. Your perspective and information may contribute to the ongoing effectiveness of the program. Your answers will remain confidential and your identity will not be attached to the report. Do you have any questions before we start?

- What impact, if any, did the W.I.L.D. program have on you?
- What were some positive aspects of the W.I.L.D. program?
Please explain.
- What were some negative aspects of the W.I.L.D. program?
Please explain.
- What impact, if any, did the W.I.L.D. program have on your transition from student to professional?
- What leadership skills did you get from W.I.L.D.?
- Which other teachings, if any, from the W.I.L.D. program do you still implement/use today...how do you use these skills?
- Please describe any additional leadership training and development experiences you have had since your attendance in the W.I.L.D program.
- If you could change anything about the W.I.L.D. program what would it be?
(The same prompt will be used as needed until the respondent has shared all additional changes.)
- Is there any additional information you would like to share about your experience in the W.I.L.D. program? (The same prompt will be used as needed until the respondent has shared all additional information.)

Appendix G

W.I.L.D. DATA COLLECTION TIMELINE

Cohorts*	Cohort One (Graduated Fall 2008) N=25	Cohort Three (Graduated Fall 2005) N=25	Cohort Five (Graduated Fall 2003) N=25
Individual Interviews	3	3	3
W.I.L.D. Inventory Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre & Post (Fall 2008) comparison 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre & Post (Fall 2005) comparison 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre & Post (Fall 2003) comparison
Career Transitions Inventory Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre & Post (Fall 2008) comparison • Post2 (Fall 2009) comparison 		

* W.I.L.D. past participants from the noted semester create the cohort to examine.

Appendix H

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

July 2009

Dear Past Participant of W.I.L.D. (Women's Institute of Leadership Development),

I am in the process of completing my doctoral studies at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia. In an effort to continue to provide effective services, I am currently conducting an evaluation of the Women's Institute of Leadership Development, (W.I.L.D.) offered through the Women Center.

As a portion of this evaluation, I am contacting past W.I.L.D. participants to participate in short interviews about the W.I.L.D. program. The interviews may last approximately forty-five (45) minutes and will be conducted in a mutually convenient location (Old Dominion University campus, public library, church etc.) or via telephone/Skype if geographically necessary. In recognition of your valuable time all interview participants will be given a \$15.00 gift certificate.

Participation in this study is voluntary and your information will remain confidential. Your contributions will provide information for the ongoing improvement of the W.I.L.D. program.

If you are interested and able to participate, please contact me as soon as possible to schedule a time to speak at your convenience. If you need additional information about participation in this study please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns. My contact information is located below.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. I appreciate your assistance and look forward to meeting you.

Sincerely,

Kirsten S. Ericksen
Ph.D. Candidate
ksericks@odu.edu
XXX-XXX-XXXX

Appendix I

INFORMED CONSENT

Women's Institute for Leadership Development (W.I.L.D.)
Program Evaluation**Interviewer:**

Kirsten S. Ericksen

Ph.D. Student

ksericks@odu.edu (preference)

XXX-XXX-XXXX

Background:

Before you decide to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take the time to read the following information carefully. Please ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information.

The Research Description provides a detailed account of the purpose of the study and its results and is yours to keep.

Study Procedure:

Your expected time commitment for this study is: forty-five (45) minutes for an individual interview.

Risks:

The risks of this study are minimal. These risks are similar to those you experience when disclosing professional development information to others. You may decline to answer any or all questions and you may terminate your involvement at any time if you choose.

Benefits:

All interview participants will receive a \$15.00 gift card upon completion of the interview.

In addition, we hope that the information obtained from this study may provide ideas and suggestions about the immediate and long-term improvement of the Women's Institute of Leadership Development (W.I.L.D.).

Confidentiality:

Every effort will be made by the researcher to preserve your confidentiality including the following:

Assigning pseudonyms for participants that will be used on all researcher notes and documents.

- Participants involved in this study will not be identified and confidentiality will be maintained.
- Each participant has the opportunity to obtain a transcribed copy of their interview. Participants should tell the researcher if a copy of the interview is desired.

Participant data will be kept confidential except in cases where the researcher is legally obligated to report specific incidents. These incidents include, but may not be limited to, incidents of abuse and suicide risk.

Voluntary Participation:

Your participation in this study is voluntary. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part in this study. If you decide to take part in this study, you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. You are free to not answer any question or questions if you choose. This will not affect the relationship you have with the Women's Center and/or Old Dominion University.

Unforeseeable Risks:

There may be risks that are not anticipated. However every effort will be made to minimize any risks.

Consent:

By signing this consent form, I confirm that I have read and understood the information and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason and without cost. I understand that I will be given a copy of the Research Description, which I keep for my records. I voluntarily agree to take part in this study.

Print Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix J

PARTICIPATION NOTIFICATION DOCUMENT

PROJECT TITLE: Evaluation of the Women's Institute for Leadership Development (W.I.L.D.) program

RESEARCHER

Kirsten S. Ericksen
Doctoral Student, Darden College of Education
ECI 137, Education Bldg.
Norfolk, VA 23529

DESCRIPTION OF EVALUATION

The W.I.L.D. program is undertaking an evaluation of its services to students. As part of this evaluation, you will be asked to complete surveys at the beginning and end of the program.

If you decide to participate, then you will join an evaluation of the W.I.L.D. program. If you say YES, then your participation will last for the duration of the W.I.L.D. program.

RISKS AND BENEFITS

RISKS: There are minimal risks to participating in this evaluation. Your inventory responses will be kept in confidence and all data will be reported in aggregate as to protect participants' identities.

BENEFITS: The main benefit to you for participating in this study is improvement in the W.I.L.D. program as well as feedback about your career development.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information obtained about you in this study is strictly confidential unless disclosure is required by law. The results of this study may be used in reports, presentations and publications, but the evaluator will not identify you.

WITHDRAWAL PRIVILEGE

It is OK for you to say NO. Even if you say YES now, you are free to say NO later, and walk away or withdraw from the study -- at any time. Your decision will not affect your relationship with Old Dominion University, the W.I.L.D. program or otherwise cause a loss of benefits to which you might otherwise be entitled.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions about the evaluation, please contact Kirsten S. Ericksen, at ksericks@odu.edu or 757-683-5449, or Dr. Jill Jurgens, jjurgens@odu.edu or 757-683-4722.

If at any time you feel pressured to participate, or if you have any questions about your rights, then you should contact the Old Dominion University Office of Research, at 757-683-3460.

INVESTIGATOR'S STATEMENT

I certify that I have explained to this subject the nature and purpose of this evaluation, including benefits and risks. I have described the rights and protections afforded to human participants and have done nothing to pressure, coerce, or falsely entice this subject into participating. I am aware of my obligations under state and federal laws, and promise compliance. I have answered the subject's questions and have encouraged him/her to ask additional questions at any time during the course of this evaluation.

Evaluator's Signature

Date

Appendix K

POTENTIAL RESOURCES

**Old Dominion University
Potential Resources**

Center for Major Exploration (CME), Advising Services:

Location: 1500 Webb Center

Website: <http://uc.odu.edu/cme/>

Telephone: 683-3699

Office of Counseling Services:

Location: 1526 Webb Center, ODU campus

Website: <http://studentaffairs.odu.edu/counseling/>

Telephone: 683-4401 (please note one needs to call to schedule an initial appointment)

Career Management Center:

Location: 2202 Webb University Center, ODU campus (hours- 8:00 am- 5:00 pm)

Virtual Career Center: <http://www.odu.edu/ao/cmc/index.php> (hours-24/7)

Telephone: 683-4388

Office of Public Safety:

Telephone: 683-4403

Emergency on call counselor will be contacted

Appendix L

OPENING SCRIPT FOR INTERVIEWS

Thank you for agreeing to meet today. I really appreciate your time. My name is Kirsten S. Ericksen and I am a student at Old Dominion University. For an evaluation of the Women's Institute of Leadership Development (W.I.L.D.) I am interviewing individuals about personal experiences from their participation in the program. The interview should take about forty-five (45) minutes. I am really interested in your feedback and thoughts about the W.I.L.D. program. Please keep in mind that all feedback is relevant, interesting and important and there are no correct or incorrect answers, simply different perspectives and experiences.

Do you mind if I record during our discussion, it helps me to fill in my notes later and I can concentrate on what you are saying while we talk? If permissible, TURN ON RECORDER

Again, thank you for your willingness to participate in this interview. Will you please sign this consent form, which basically states:

- Your information will remain confidential and will not contain any identifying information. (my supervising professor, committee members and a trained transcriptionist may review the interviews for clarification as needed)
- Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw your participation at any time.
- You agree to the recording of the interview.

GIVE INDIVIDUAL CONSENT FORM WHILE I PROVIDE THIS OVERVIEW

Please let me know if you have any questions or need clarification about the form.

Appendix M

W.I.L.D. RESEARCH DESCRIPTION

Women's Institute of Leadership Development (W.I.L.D.)
Research Description

I am a Ph.D. student at Old Dominion University currently completing my doctoral studies. In order to fulfill the requirements of the program I am in the process of conducting an evaluation of the Women's Institute of Leadership Development (W.I.L.D.) in the Women's Center.

The purpose of this particular research is to explore the factors that could contribute to improving the Women's Institute of Leadership Development (W.I.L.D.). I am interested in looking at the factors related to participants' leadership experiences in the W.I.L.D. program. This research project draws on a variety of data sources including interviews with past participants. These data will be compiled in the form of a dissertation for the PhD in Urban Services Program (Education Concentration, Counseling Cognate).

The information gathered will remain confidential. Thank you in advance for your time and feedback!

Please feel free to contact myself or the supervising faculty member if you have any questions, concerns or would like to share more information about the interview. Please see the contact information below.

Contact Information:

Student:

Kirsten S. Ericksen

ksericks@odu.edu

XXX-XXX-XXXX

Old Dominion University Supervising Faculty Member:

Dr. Jill Jurgens

757-683-4722

Appendix N

COMMUNICATIONS WITH DR.HEPPNER

RE: RE: Career Transtions Inventory
Coats, Linda [CoatsL@missouri.edu]

Sent: Tuesday, August 12, 2008 3:53 PM
To: Ericksen, Kirsten S.

Would you be willing to pay a \$5 shipping fee?

Linda Coats, Admin. Assoc.
Career Planning/Placement
201 Student Success Center, Univ. of MO
Columbia, MO 65211-6060
Ph. 573-882-1657 Fax 573-882-5440
career.missouri.edu

From: Kirsten S Ericksen [mailto:KSericks@odu.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, August 12, 2008 2:48 PM
To: Coats, Linda
Cc: Heppner, Mary
Subject: Fw: RE: Career Transtions Inventory

Dear Ms. Coats,

I am beginning my dissertation process and plan to measure both the career transition and leadership components of the W.I.L.D. (Women's Institute for Leadership Development) program at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia. As I mentioned in a previous message (please see below for forwarded message from Mary Heppner dated March 27, 2008) I would like to use the Career Transitions Inventory (CTI) to measure the impact of a particular campus service/program on the career transition for the female participants. I appreciate Ms. Heppner's permission and willingness to donate the Career Transition Inventory (CTI) instrument for this research with the understanding that the final results will be shared with Ms. Heppner. This is a formal request for the CTI instrument, I have included the information located on the order form below:

Name: Kirsten S. Ericksen Day Phone:
Shipping Address:
City, State Zip: Virginia
Institution: Old Dominion University
Requesting: 4 packets (total of 100 forms)
Administration to begin: September 2008

Thank you for the generosity and consideration.
Much appreciation,
Kirsten S. Ericksen, M.S.W.

Ph.D. Candidate

-----Forwarded by Kirsten S Ericksen/DO/EDUC/ODU on 08/12/2008 03:45PM -----

To: "Kirsten S Ericksen" <KSericks@odu.edu>
From: "Heppner, Mary" <HeppnerM@missouri.edu>
Date: 03/27/2008 07:19AM
Subject: RE: Career Transtions Inventory

Thanks for your interest in the CTI--I will forward your e-mail to my assistant Linda Coats and she can send you one if you like. I am currently on our spring break in New Mexico. If you are using it in research though--I tend to just give the permission to do so as long as you furnish me with the results--so there is no need to purchase it. I will ask Linda to send a copy and ordering information in case you need it...sounds like an interesting project! Mary

From: Kirsten S Ericksen [<mailto:KSericks@odu.edu>]
Sent: Wed 3/26/2008 7:32 PM
To: Heppner, Mary
Subject: Career Transtions Inventory

Dear Dr. Heppner,

I am a doctoral student at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia. I have been working on the literature review for my dissertation and the broad topic area I am interested in researching is mothers entry in higher education and the impact of campus services on their career transition. I have read your research and would like to use the Career Transitions Inventory as a self-reporting instrument for the mother participants in my research. I am having a challenge locating the inventory (for purchase) and wondered if you would please share the contact information with me?

Thank you in advance.

Sincerely,

Kirsten S. Ericksen

Appendix O
EMERGING THEMES FROM W.I.L.D. INTERVIEWS

Emerging Themes from W.I.L.D. Interviews				
THEMES/ CATEGORIES	2008 N=4	2005 N=4	2003 N=3	T N=11
1 Leadership Skills				
1.1 Evaluation/Feedback	3		1	4
1.2 Group Facilitation		3	2	5
1.3 Skill Reinforcement	1	1	1	3
1.4 Assertiveness		1	1	2
1.5 Motivating			1	1
1.6 General Leadership Ability				
1.61 Managing People	1		1	2
1.62 Conflict Resolution			1	1
1.63 Organization Management		1	1	2
1.64 Time Management		1		1
1.65 Networking		1	1	2
1.7 No Skills		1	1	2
1.8 Communication Skills				
1.81 Listening	1	2		3
1.82 Conversation		2	1	3
2. Knowledge/Information				
2.1 Leadership				
2.11 Leadership Styles	1	1		3
2.12 Altered Leadership Definition	1	1		2
2.14 General Leadership Knowledge	1			1
2.2 Women				
2.21 Women's Leadership role	1	1	1	3
2.22 Empowering knowledge	1			1
2.23 Women's universal struggle	1			1
2.3 General knowledge				
2.31 Diversity	1			1
3. Additional Area of Benefit				
3.1 Personal Growth				
3.11 Leadership Confidence	1	2	1	4
3.12 General Confidence	1	2	1	4
3.13 Sharing Experiences	2	2		4
3.14 Feminist Strategies	1			1
3.15 Awareness	1			1
3.16 Career Defining		1		1
3.17 Self-care		1		1

THEMES/ CATEGORIES	2008 N=4	2005 N=4	2003 N=3	T N=11
3.2 Support				
3.21 Other participants (prof.)		3	1	4
3.22 Faculty		1		1
3.23 Role Models	1		1	2
3.24 Camaraderie	1	3	2	6
3.3 Environment/Atmosphere				
3.31 Positive		1	1	2
3.32 Convenient	1			1
3.33 Staff			2	2
3.4 Program Components				
3.41 Team Exercises		1		1
3.42 Activities	3	2	2	7
3.43 Materials		1	1	2

VITA
KIRSTEN S. ERICKSEN

EDUCATION:

- Ph.D. in Urban Services** December 2009
Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia
Education concentration, human services cognate
Emphasis: Women, Higher Education, Professional Development, Careers
- Master of Social Work** May 1994
Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, Illinois
Emphasis: School Social Work, Child Welfare
- Bachelor of Arts** May 1991
Concordia University, Montreal, Quebec
Major: Child Studies Minor: Sociology

CERTIFICATION:

Illinois School Service Personnel Certification (School Social Work endorsement), Type 73 Certificate

TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

- Adjunct Faculty** Spring 2006, 2005
Old Dominion University, Darden College of Education •Norfolk, Virginia
 - TELETECHNET distance-learning, Psychoeducational Groups (HMSV 444)
 - Human Services Methods (HMSV 343)
 - Psychoeducational Groups (HMSV 444)
- Graduate Teaching Assistant** Fall 2003
Old Dominion University, Darden College of Education •Norfolk, Virginia
 - Introduction to Human Services course (COUN 341)
- Adjunct Instructor** Spring 2000
Christopher Newport University, Anthropology, Sociology, and Social Work • Newport News, Virginia
 - Social Work “Volunteer Services” course, (SOWK 200)

PUBLICATIONS:

Ericksen, K.S., Jurgens, J.C., Garrett, M.T., & Swedburg, R.B. (2008).
Should I stay at home or should I go back to work? *Journal of Employment Counseling*, 45(4), 156-167.

Schwitzer, A.W., Duggan, M. H., **Ericksen, K. S.**, Moncrief, K.O., & Nelson, E.K. (2006). Program evaluation in human service education: Applying a chain of objectives model. *Human Service Education*, 26(1), 33-48.