

PERCEPTIONS OF 21ST CENTURY COMMUNITY COLLEGE LEADERS ON
THE ROLE OF RELATIONAL LEADERSHIP

A Dissertation
by
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ABSTRACT

PERCEPTIONS OF 21ST CENTURY COMMUNITY COLLEGE LEADERS ON
THE ROLE OF RELATIONAL LEADERSHIP
(May 2010)

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Recent research by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) has revealed that community colleges and their leaders are facing unique challenges (McNair, 2010). According to a 2001 AACC study, nearly 80% of current community college presidents cited plans to retire by 2011 (Shults, 2001). The role of tomorrow's community colleges in society will demand that leaders develop new skill sets. Of these new skill sets, community college leaders will need to nurture collaborative and consultative dispositions in order to bring their colleges and the community at large into a unified system.

Utilizing the theoretical model of Relational Leadership as the framework for this study, (Regan & Brooks, 1995), perceptions of leadership are explored through a qualitative study of current community college leaders. Through the use of exemplar case studies, specific skill sets are identified as being necessary to become an effective relational leader in a 21st century community college. In addition, personal construction of leadership and social/cultural conceptualization of relational leadership are presented.

From an in-depth analysis of the research findings, new critical elements are constructed to augment the Relational Leadership (Regan & Brooks, 1995) model for community college administrators. The nature of communication and trust in relation to the skills of caring, courage, collaboration, intuition, and vision are defined and described. The importance of reflecting on the personal construction of leadership as well as the process of blending or gendering the tenets of leadership is revealed. Implications for formal educational preparation for the 21st century community college leader are discussed, along with the recommendations by AACC for the successful community college leader. As a result of this study, a stronger framework for a new community college leadership style is presented that is most relevant in our emerging 21st century epoch of a global society.

DEDICATION

To my family for their unconditional love, encouragement, patience and support. To Jack and Leigh Ann, who have taught me the power of resiliency and laughter, to their wonderful spouses, Beth and Matt, who now share with me in loving the two best children in the world. To Lou Ann, my sister, friend, and steady rock, to Mike, my resource guide and wise counsel.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) has determined community colleges are facing an impending crisis in leadership (McNair, 2010). According to the AACC, almost 80% of current community college presidents plan to retire by 2011 (Shults, 2001). Shults states that the skill set required of future leaders must include the ability to bring a college together in the governing process, the ability to mediate, and a good command of technology. McNair concludes that the community college environment is distinct from other types of higher education and requires specific leadership skills. A study conducted by AACC indicated that within the next five years, over 3,000 presidents and vice presidents will be required to fill positions in the community colleges (Walden University, n.d.).

Furthermore, AACC concludes that skills of new and existing leaders must be transformed to meet the role of the community colleges in the current age of globalization. “Playing a key role in assisting the nation as it passes from the industrial era of the twentieth century to the new knowledge-based society of the twenty-first century” is central to the AACC mission (AACC, 2006, p.1). There is a shift in organizational culture in the nature of higher education and its leadership, according to Bornstein (2007). The paradigm shift for 21st century leadership in higher education is reflective of the current global, social, and economic dynamics. Institutions must be innovative, entrepreneurial, nimble, and flexible in this new competitive, fast-moving, global economy (Bornstein, 2007).

The successful leader will be characterized as collaborative and consultative. Relational leadership reflects qualities described as critical to success for the future leaders of higher education.

According to Lipman-Blumen (1996), the hallmark descriptors of relational leaders are collaborative, contributory, and vicarious. Research has shown that relational ways of knowing are often more aligned with Western notions of feminine perceptions of the world, compared to instrumentalism, which is more closely associated with masculine perceptions (Blevins, 2001; Bornstein, 2007; Eagly, 2007; Senge, 1990). The role of relational leaders in higher education has been explored by Regan and Brooks (1995). They define feminist attributes of leadership and offer a model that blends these attributes with traditional or masculine practices described by Senge (1990) and Hoyt (2007). However, research that explores how relational leaders develop their style is limited. Regan and Brooks conclude that “although we know that relational leaders exist, to our knowledge, no one, including ourselves has examined leadership through this lens” (p. 93). Also, there is a dearth of literature that identifies barriers existing within traditional instrumentalist leadership which prohibit the fostering of relational leadership principles. This qualitative research study will address this gap in the research by focusing on the construction of relational leadership styles as well as the role and impact that relational leaders have on the 21st century community college in a global society using an exemplar case study design.

Research Statement

In this research, I seek to understand the role and impact of relational leadership among three 21st century community college senior leaders. This project's purpose is to advance the following intellectual purposes: a) to provide a detailed description of how relational leadership is practiced, b) to provide a description of how leaders in senior positions in the community college construct and make meaning of their relational leadership beliefs and practices, and c) to identify themes that contribute to a theory of relational leadership styles and the implications of this theory on the role of the community college in a global society. Five guiding questions frame this qualitative case study:

1. What are the skills sets of successful relational leaders?
2. How are skills sets of successful relational leaders developed?
3. What do relational leaders describe as the differences between traditional leadership styles and those defined as relational leadership?
4. What are the ways in which relational leaders beliefs and practices align and misalign with the traditional and emerging mission of the community college?
5. What are the benefits of relational leadership within the current context of the community college, especially given leaders' evolving understanding of globalization and its influence in terms of economics, culture, information, and politics?

Significance of Study

The impending shortage of community college senior leaders serves as the catalyst for the need to prepare new leaders for the 21st century. Wiesman and

Vaughn (2002) cite that more than 79 % of presidents are planning to retire within 10 years. This staggering statistic suggests that future educational leaders be prepared for these executive roles.

Leadership skill requirements for the effective 21st century community college leader differ from the previous century (Evans, 2001, McNair, 2010). While bureaucratic leadership steeped in hierarchy, served the community college well for the first 20 years, the next generation of leaders requires new skills that will engage a global society and promote collaboration. AACC (2005) developed core competencies for effective leadership to determine the types of preparation graduate programs might provide. The six core competencies that resulted from the AACC's work are organizational strategy, resource management, communication, collaboration, community college advocacy, and professionalism. Specific philosophical statements were developed for each competency, therefore assisting higher education institutions to develop curriculum and learning outcomes to meet these needs.

Sufficient research studies supporting the leadership attributes required of the effective 21st century community college leader are scarce. What determines the effectiveness of the modern day global educational leader in higher education? What is evident is that the traditional models of leadership, including bureaucratic models, are not conducive in a society that values leaders embracing more transformative styles, such as relational leadership (Komives, Lucas, & McMahon, 2007). AACC's six core competencies for effective leaders include communication and collaboration within a global society, certainly a variance for

the founding community college senior leaders who concentrated on the local, limited mission of the institution.

According to a 2006 study by Francis, building meaningful relational leadership will result in the development of effective networks and partnerships with constituent groups and individuals within the community that the colleges serve. This framework supports Levin's (2001) premise in *Globalization and the Community College* that the historical role of the community colleges; education, training and community resource, evolved during the 1990's due to the process of linking localities, even though separated by great distances, for specific purposes. Francis concludes that community colleges already have the tradition of being collaborative in nature and are having positive impacts on their communities. Furthermore, Francis affirms, in order to respond to future internal and external issues and to deal effectively with change, community colleges must continue to build trust, to remove barriers, and to think inclusively and holistically about their interaction with their communities. The tenets of relational leadership described in this study examine and expand our current understanding of the impact of collaboration, caring, courage, intuition, vision, communication, and trust by community college leaders as these qualities relate to the effectiveness of accomplishing the mission of the 21st century higher education institution.

Conceptual Framework

The constructs of relational leadership as described by Regan and Brooks (1995) serve as the basis for this study's conceptual framework. Regan, educated as a chemist and science teacher, presented the analogy of the double helix to

diagram her theory. As discussed in detail in Chapter 2, the tenets of the structure are defined as collaboration, courage, caring, intuition, and vision. Regan and Brooks propose that these attributes supply the blueprint of a relational leader. The environment that surrounds and supports the viability of this leadership blueprint at the foundation or cellular level affects the potential impact of the organization.

Like Regan and Brooks (1995), my original educational preparation is in science, as a registered nurse. In studying the origin of multiple disease processes, I know that the blueprint of the cell is responsible for cell replication. If the blueprint is damaged or altered, disease is imminent. Therefore, expanding on the analogy of the double helix metaphor (presented in detail in Chapter 2) to explain the origin of relational leadership seems logical to me. In the body's use of DNA, the blueprint must be replicated to other cells. The catalyst for a double helix to duplicate is helicase, an enzyme. This enzyme must be present in order to split the strands of the double helix and allow for the communication of one cellular structure to be transferred to another cell. The process of communicating cellular information must occur in a trusting environment, if the duplicated cell is to mirror the cell of origin. If the cellular information is compromised in the transfer, the outcome will be an unintended end product that does not duplicate the original blueprint of the previous cell. In my analogy, if the transfer of leadership information is compromised, the behavior of the organization will not be reflective of one that is led by a relational leader. I suggest that the "helicase" in an organization is communication. The various methods of communication are

the means by which information is transferred and reproduced. The atmosphere in which this critical process takes place must be a trusting environment, not unlike the healthy cell in which the DNA molecule replicates.

Like the most basic anatomical operations, cell reproduction impacts the entire health of the body; similarly, leadership skills impact the health of an organization. Disease starts at the cellular level with even the slightest alteration in cellular structure. Similar to the progress of a terminal illness, lack of courage, collaboration, caring, intuition, and vision result in organizational disease. The organization will not grow or communicate in an environment of mistrust. Morgan (1997) describes organizations as organisms, living systems. He concludes just as we find polar bears in arctic regions, we know that certain species of organizations are better adapted to specific environmental conditions than others. "Bureaucratic organizations tend to work most effectively in environments that are stable or protected in some way and that very different species are found in more competitive and turbulent regions" (Morgan, p.33).

Leaders must be trusted to provide the environment that nourishes organizational structures. Trust is the central issue in human relationships within and outside organizations (Kouzes & Posner, 2003). Again, one does not have to search extensively in modern culture to learn lessons from the significant impact on organizations when leaders have proven to be non trustworthy. The message circulated to the entire organization can be similar to cancer cells that have the potential to metastasize to the entire body and cause irreversible damage.

Effective communication and trust foster an environment in which leadership perpetuates healthy growth and leaders are able to lead (Kouzes & Posner, 2003).

The foundation of the conceptual framework provides insight into the multiple data sources used in the study. Searching for themes and subthemes through in depth interviews, website review, college documents, journal articles, and curriculum vitas provides data that supports not only the tenets of relational leadership, but critical elements to the development of leadership values, and the importance of communication and trust for the 21st century community college senior leader.

Definition of Terms

The following table defines terms used throughout the research. The definitions cited served as the basis for creating themes and subthemes for this exemplar case study research.

Table 1. Definition of Study Terms as Stated in the Literature

<u>Term</u>	<u>Definition</u>
Caring	- the development of an affinity for the world and the people in it, translating moral commitment to action on behalf of others (Regan & Brooks, 1995)
Collaboration	- the ability to work in a group, eliciting and offering support to each other, creating a synergistic environment for everyone (Regan & Brooks, 1995)
Communication	- simple, truthful, human conversation (Wheatley, 2002)
Courage	- capacity to move ahead into the unknown, testing new ideas in the world of practice (Regan & Brooks, 1995)
Exemplar case study	- subset of case study methodology used to study human concept formations: can refer to either an abstraction of a concept or to an individual instance of a concept (Kibler & Aha, 1990)
Feminist attributes	- qualities realized from women's experience (Regan & Brooks, 1995)
Intuition	- the ability to give equal weigh to experience and abstraction, mind and heart (Regan & Brooks, 1995)
Leadership	- process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal (Northouse, 2001)
Transactional leadership	- leadership model which is focused on the exchanges that occur between leaders and their followers (Northouse, 2001)
Transformative leadership	- process whereby an individual engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower (Northouse, 2001)
Trust	- to be honest, possess integrity, keeps promises, loyal (Komives, Lucas, & McMahan, 2007)
Vision	- to formulate and express original ideas, enabling others to consider options in new and different ways (Regan & Brooks, 1995)

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

The following is a review of the literature related to early theories and definitions of leadership through contemporary conceptualizations. Following the presentation of leadership theory, the emerging role of the community college leader as compared with the historical perspective of this leader will be presented.

According to Bass (1990), the term leadership was originally used in the 18th century to define the political influence and control of the British Parliament. Inheritance or appointment was cited in the Anglo-Saxon countries as the most prevalent pathway to leadership. Leadership in this early era was defined as the ability to influence others (Katz & Kahn, 1966).

The evolution of the term leadership is evident in the work of Michener, DeLamater, and Schwartz (1990), which describes leadership “as a process that takes place in groups in which one member influences and controls the behavior of the other members towards some common goal” (p. 343), suggesting that the control of employees was a necessary element of effective leadership. More recently, Northouse (2001) elaborates on the definition of leadership as the ability of an individual to influence, motivate and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organizations of which they are members. Most relevant to our interest here in exploring relational leadership is the shift from the conceptualization of leadership as the ability to control to the concept of leadership as *collaborative, caring, courageous, intuitive, and visionary*. In order to gain a deeper understanding of the concept of relational leadership, the

following areas of scholarship are explored; the evolution of leadership theory, gendered leadership, transformative leadership, and relational leadership theory. The relevance that this exploration holds for community college leadership in the dynamic context of the 21st century is reflective of the society that it serves; therefore, this institution is being revolutionized and requires leadership styles that will provide vision into the 21st century. The following description of the evolution of leadership theory provides a historical perspective of leadership theory that influenced community college leaders through the 20th century and beyond.

The Evolution of Leadership Theory

According to Burns (1978), “leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth” (p. 3). Like the definition of leadership, theories of leadership have also evolved over time. In the 18th and 19th century, the “Great Man” theory assumed that the personal attributes of great men determined the course of history (Denmark, 1993). As compared to his followers, the great man was believed to have unique and exceptional qualities, abilities that were believed to be innate. Of special interest to my work has been the lack of gender consideration with respect to leadership during the initial construction of leadership theory. In the earliest conceptualizations of leadership, especially those in western culture, women were not even considered as possible leaders.

Following “Great Man” theory, research on trait theories emerged. According to Bass (1990), during the period from 1904-1947, self-confidence, need for achievement, the ability to have motives to carry out an action, and self-

monitoring were valued as leader traits that were unique and inborn. Once again, these traits were described in masculine terms, for only 4% of management roles were held by women (Parker & Fagenson, 1994).

After the 1940s, a new way of conceptualizing leadership was introduced. Behavioral theories of leadership suggest that desirable characteristics of leaders could be acquired or learned. Over the next 25 years, women began to emerge as contributors to leadership theory even though the percentage of women in the workplace was minimal (Book, 2000; Henning & Jardim, 1977; Hoyt, 2007).

Despite efforts by theoreticians to demonstrate women's contributions to leadership theory, the introduction of leadership styles in the 1970s continued to be heavily influenced by a bias toward masculine approaches to leadership being the most desirable and effective. Three types of leadership styles were defined: autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire (Jogulu & Wood, 2006). According to Hoyt (2007), early research examining style differences between women and men compared either interpersonally oriented and task-oriented styles or democratic and autocratic styles. In a meta-analysis by Eagly and Johnson (1990), women were not found to lead in a more interpersonally oriented and task-oriented manner than men in organizational studies unless the social role dictated the behavior in the setting. A later meta-analysis of gender differences in leadership found that women led in a more democratic or participative manner than men (Eagly, Johanneson-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003). Bass (1990) defined feminist leadership qualities as caring, considerate, and easy to compromise in addition to a sense of responsibility and attachment to followers.

Doing Gender Differently

Do women lead in a different manner and what is the impact on their effectiveness as leaders? This question has become more prevalent as more women begin to occupy positions of leadership (Hoyt, 2007). In a large scale meta-analytical review of 162 studies on gender and leadership style, Eagly and Johnson (1990) have found women to be equally capable of leading in a task-oriented fashion, and men were equally capable of leading in an interpersonal manner. The researchers have noted that women exhibited a more participative or democratic style, and men exhibited a more directive, autocratic style. In their 1990 study, Eagly and Johnson documented that 39% of management positions were held by women, resulting in a greater interest in better understanding feminine leadership characteristics and a greater valuing of what women contributed to a leadership role (Eagly & Johnson, 1990).

As previously discussed, in the late 1970's Burns described transformational leadership. Taking gender into consideration, a meta-analysis by Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, and van Engen (2003) found small but robust differences between female and male leaders' styles of leadership. "Women's styles tend to be more transformational than men's, and they also tend to engage in more contingent reward behaviors than men, all of which are aspects of leadership that predict effectiveness" (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt & van Engen, 2003, p. 267).

To this point, the biological sex of the leader has largely framed the discussion of gender. Northouse (2001) offers an analysis of discourse related to

leadership traits through a constructivist lens. Gender, Northouse concludes, refers to the way in which meaning and evaluations are associated with sex by members of a culture, a male versus female or bipolar category, when describing leadership traits.

Masculinity and femininity have various sets of characteristics; however, the traits are not necessarily confined to a specific sex. Assuming that every male and female represent the exact traits based on their gender is like assuming that all males are white, heterosexual, healthy, and middle-class, Northouse (2001) concludes. In addition, Northouse states that the bipolar categories of male and female lead to the assumption that one is superior to the other. According to Northouse, leadership research has documented the male and masculine ways to be superior to female and feminine, resulting in the workplace becoming gendered. For instance, the masculine presumption is that workers have no feelings, no gender, no body, and no reproductive needs and that men's experiences are at odds with the structure of women's lives. In other words, power and authority, work behavior, and resources have been influenced by a set of fundamental beliefs that gender is biologically determined rather than a social and cultural construction and set of conditions.

Northouse (2001) concludes that reviews of leadership research indicate very few actual differences between male and female leaders. The review documented differences in the effectiveness of leadership styles were not significant; however, female leaders use more of a participative and less autocratic style when compared with their male counterparts.

Similarly, Binns (2008) argues that the development of relational leading is embodied in self-fashioning, a gendered project in which feminized subjects have a greater capacity for embodied reflexivity, the hallmark of ethical behavior. “To be conscious of the power effects inherent in the leadership relationship and to use self-reflection to minimize the risk of one’s action harming another is embodied reflexivity” (Binns, 2008, p.601). The theoretical constructs of the self-knowledge and self-transformation process, the essence of embodied reflexivity are from Foucault’s (1988) ethics of self-care. “If you care for yourself correctly, than you cannot abuse your power over others” (Foucault, 1988, p. 18). This ontological contemplation exceeds psychological introspection to include self awareness whereby individuals act on their own bodies, souls, thoughts, conduct and way of being, so as to transform themselves (Binns, 2008). “Self-reflection must emerge from a desire to transform oneself” (Binns, 2008, p. 603). This ontological desire emancipates people from the heroic leader script of tough, self-reliant, and controlled emotion, to one who leads differently, relationally (Binns, 2008).

Recent literature suggests that feminist leadership abilities are often preferable to their masculine counterparts in today’s global society (Blevins, 2001; Bornstein, 2007; Conlin, 2003; Eagly, 2007; Sharpe, 2000). “After years of analyzing what makes leaders most effective and figuring out who’s got the Right Stuff, management gurus now know how to boost the odds of getting a great executive: Hire a female”(Sharpe, 2000, p.74). Even popular culture magazines weigh in on the topic. *Business Week* followed the Sharpe article with a cover

story in 2003, stating that “Men could become losers in a global economy that values mental power over might” (Conlin, 2003, p.78). Eagly concludes that while contemporary women are well prepared for leadership and may have some advantages over men, a clear disadvantage for leadership continues to exist within corporate culture. The current United States culture supports the superior leadership styles and effectiveness of women leaders, however, females often come in second to men in competition to senior leadership positions. Eagly poses the question, “how can women enjoy a leadership advantage but still suffers from disadvantage” (p. 1)? Eagly’s meta-analysis suggests men’s effectiveness as leaders surpasses women’s in male dominated roles, for example, the military. However, in educational, governmental, and social service organizations, women proved more effective in their managerial roles (Eagly, 2007). Women have overcome multiple barriers to leadership and now hold 24% of the chief executives of organizations and 37% of all managers in the US, according to Eagly. Again, for the purpose of this study, gender is not necessarily aligned with feminist or masculine characteristics; however, studies that have examined trends suggest that although gender equality has not arrived, women’s roles and opportunities as well as deeper understanding of their leadership styles have been reflected in major social change.

Transformative Leadership

In the late 1970s, Burns (1978) developed a comprehensive theory to explain the differences between political leaders and coined the terms “transactional” and “transformational” leadership. Burns defines transactional

leaders as people who emphasize work standards and have task-oriented aims and transformational leaders as those who identify potential in their followers.

Transactional leaders are often characterized with strong masculine qualities, such as competitiveness, hierarchical authority, high control for the leader, and analytical problem solving (Klenke, 1993). In contrast, Klenke describes feminine traits as being synonymous with cooperation, collaboration, lower control for the leader, and problem solving based on intuition and rationality. This style of leadership is closely aligned to transformational leadership. The theory development of transactional and transformational leadership marks the shift to recognize women in leadership and clearly acknowledge and value their feminine characteristics (Jogulu & Wood, 2006). It is evident that the construction of leadership has an inherent gender quality.

In 1995, Regan and Brooks expanded on the tenets of transformational leadership to describe a visionary leader who has the intellectual capacity to embrace the plausible and the implausible, who thinks globally and reaches beyond the moment, and applies both divergent and convergent thinking to affect change. The researchers describe this leader as a relational leader, a concept central to my focus in this study and one that is considered in-depth in the section that follows.

Development of Relational Leadership Theory

Researchers have conducted a number of studies that examined the community college and its partnership with specific stakeholders, such as business and industry, social services and the public school system (Barnett,

1995; Rendon, Gans, & Calleroz, 1998; Restine, 1996; Sloan, 1996). Francis (2006) utilized a relational leadership model to examine the concepts and constructs of organizational processes within a community college in building networks within a community. The framework undergirding the research draws from Komives' Relational Leadership Model (Komives, Lucas, & McMahon, 2007). Komives concluded that today's understanding of wholeness in a chaotic world leads to a flexible understanding of leadership: "The chaotic world is a quantum world – a world of wholes, not parts. It is a connected world in which relationships are everything" (Komives et al., 2007, p. 62).

Francis (2006) states that relational leadership, which proposes that the whole system of all relations, is the creative ground for relational leadership. Drawing from Drath's (2001) work, Francis concludes that networks of leaders accomplish this task even though they are not embedded in a single organizational structure. "Relational leadership is the process by which the community college and community make meaning of diverse perspectives and symbols to build a common vision and purpose and to determine the interactions and processes that will achieve the goal" (Francis, 2006, p. 9).

Further review of the relational leadership model of Komives et al. (2007) reveals five primary components. First, this leadership approach is inclusive of people and diverse points of view. Second, it is purposeful and builds commitment toward common purposes. Third, the empowerment of those involved is recognized. Fourth, the model has an ethical and moral basis. The fifth component of the model is that the four components are accomplished by

being process-oriented (Komives et al., 2007). This relational leadership model emphasizes ethical and moral leadership, meaning leadership that is driven by values and standards established by the group. The fifth component, process, defines how a group of individuals goes about becoming and remaining a cohesive group, how the group makes decisions, and how the group handles the tasks related to accomplishing its purposes. The Komives et al. (2007) model is derived from a collection of leadership theories that views leadership as a dispersed or shared process within groups or organizations, in other words, as a systemic characteristic (Gardner, 2000; Gordon, 2002; Ogawa & Bossert, 2000; Yukl, 2002). The relational leadership model serves as an alternate view to traditional leadership theories derived from a masculine perspective, that define leadership from an individual or leader-follower perspective (Yukl, 2002). This alternative model is not simply a characteristic possessed by an individual or an authority tied to a role or a situational context; leadership is thought of as a process that happens when people participate in collaborative forms of thought and action (Gordon, 2002). Komives et al. (2007) provide a succinct definition of this type of leadership as a relational process of people working together attempting to accomplish change or make a difference to benefit the common good.

Francis (2006) concludes that the goal in relational leadership is not to overcome the variations and differences among participants but to think in terms of webs of connection and to build shared purpose. The ability to collaborate and to find common ground with others is the result of being purposeful. People

support what they create, and a socialized vision is building a vision from among group members. The result of the process is the empowerment of all participants, who take more ownership of group tasks and processes and who feel committed to the outcomes.

Relational leadership is characterized as “intrinsically motivated by a moral code of conduct, a leader who empowers others to achieve mutually agreed upon goals, and, when necessary, guides others to behave in morally responsible ways” (Regan & Brooks, 1995, p.41). Regan and Brooks encourage women and men to come together and explore the world through the metaphor of the double helix, stating that:

We are hopeful that as women learn to articulate and to value the attributes that are the essence of our authentic selves, we will take the risks required to share our knowledge with others, both women and men, will be creative and respectful of the values located in each strand, feminist and masculinist, of the double helix. We believe that the more we converse with each other, the more common ground we will find, and, in so doing, we can begin to bond the double helix into a new and stronger form, the transformational model of relational leadership. (p. 105)

In an effort to develop a working definition of Regan and Brooks’ relational leadership model, the researchers gathered a group of female school administrators. Over 20 years ago, these women formed the Northeast Coalition of Educational Leaders to record reflections of East Coast leaders as they

described outcomes and processes that transformed their understanding of school leadership (Regan & Brooks, 1995). The outcome of their work was the development of three guidelines for relational leadership. First, the development of the double helix as an organizational metaphor for the essence of leadership grounded in women's experience. Second, the defining of five attributes of relational leadership: collaboration, caring, courage, intuition, and vision. Third, the recognition that relational leadership is not restricted to women. In fact, these attributes can be learned and practiced by women and men with the blending of feminist attributes and traditional practices, referred to as masculinist attributes. Regan and Brook provide an important framework for my research study. In addition to defining key attributes of relational leadership, the concept of blending of leadership types is relevant to the evolution of effective community college leadership as we move into the 21st century.

Double Helix

As a premise to the metaphor of the double helix, Regan and Brooks (1995) recount a lecture on culture delivered by Peggy McIntosh in 1983. McIntosh directed the Seeking Equity and Educational Diversity (SEED) project at the Center for Research on Women at Wellesley College. She depicted educational culture in the western United States as a broken pyramid with a collinear fault line running through the middle. The ruptures between the upper and lower fault lines were the result of the experiences of women school leaders and the observed behaviors of men in administration. McIntosh further described the world above the fault line as operating competitively in an either/or mode,

stating, “either people move up the pyramid and gain more wealth, status, and power or they don’t”(as cited in Regan & Brooks, 1995, p. 13). Due to the limited space at the narrow portion of the pyramid, failure was the outcome for those not reaching the top. “Mostly white males occupy this upper part of the pyramid, and the closer to the top, the more dominant their numbers” (Regan & Brooks, 1995, p. 14).

A diverse world lies beneath the fault line. This space, as described by McIntosh, in Regan and Brooks (1995), is filled predominantly with women, people of color, and low-status white males. As compared to the either/or mode at the top of the pyramid, this segment of the organization operates in a both/and world. The structural features within the bottom portion of the pyramid are horizontal and collaborative, as well as cyclical and repetitive. Tasks in this world must be repeated: doing dishes, changing diapers, planting the fields, and teaching. Caring, nurturing, relationship, and community building happen in this space. According to Regan and Brooks (1995), McIntosh’s broken pyramid “was the first language that seemed connected to our growing awareness that the way we as women went about our work as school leaders didn’t exactly follow the male model” (p. 17). “The metaphor allowed us to speculate that maybe there wasn’t anything wrong with us, but rather we were bringing some of our below-the-fault qualities of care and collaboration to our work as school leaders, and this was good” (p. 17). This new awareness led to the naming of feminist attributes of leadership.

Regan and Brooks (1995) suggest that women and men may experience leadership differently; however, this idea does not mean that the experience is inaccessible to the other gender. “We believe each gender can learn from the experiences of the other if the experiences of the other are articulated and disseminated widely” (p. 17). Therefore, these scholars’ work becomes part of the larger feminist world project which includes valuing, articulating, recovering, and disseminating the experience and knowledge of women so that it becomes a resource for all. Ferguson (1984) says, “Feminist theory is not simply about women, although it is that: it is about the world, but seen from the usually ignored and devalued vantage point of women’s experience” (p. xii). This justice-oriented perspective is important to the community college role of leadership not only because more women are assuming top leadership positions, but also because feminist attributes are becoming essential in carrying out the mission of the 21st century community college.

Based on the concept that developing symbols is a way to expand the reader’s absorption of an idea, Regan and Brooks (1995) created a symbol to explain their model and to help navigate the political climate involved in their early work. Regan and Brooks attempted to find an appropriate symbol that represented leadership experiences of both genders, each recognized for their own merits. This metaphor would convey the balance essential to relational leadership, that is, qualities above the fault line (masculine) and below the fault line (feminine). Regan’s training as a chemist and science teacher directed her towards the double helix, the molecule of life.

The keeper of our genetic information, the double helix, is configured of two separate strands, winding around and held together by specific hydrogen bonds. Symbolically for researchers, this metaphor represents balance, a different facet of life. One strand embodies the life above the fault line (either/or), whereas the both/and life, representing collaboration, lives on the other strand. The hydrogen bonds represent the reality of passage from one mode of life to the other. Neither is superior to the other or more valuable, and their survival is mutually dependent. For Regan and Brooks (1995), the double helix expresses the concept of relational leadership:

Its power lies in its inclusiveness, itself a feminist way of being, encompassing and legitimizing as it does both terms, the either/or and both/and ways of being, each strand depending on the other. As the antithesis of hierarchical organization, the double helix makes it clear that both genders need to move back and forth from the conceptualization of the world primarily associated with their gender to that associated with the other, and that both knowledge and praxis are incomplete if articulated through the perspective of one gender only. (p. 21)

Furthermore, Regan and Brooks state that there are times when, because the strength lies in the wholeness, one strand of the double helix must take precedence over the other. Relational leaders collaborate and intuitively know when to make the shift from one strand to the other. The ability to employ

effective leadership qualities from either strand in a specific situation is an essential skill for the 21st century community college leader.

Most importantly to this study, similar to the importance of each strand of the DNA to the molecule, recognizing the value and equality of both the feminist and masculine qualities of leading is critical for the emerging successful community college leader. The majority of community colleges were established between 1901 and the mid-1960s, according to Fulton-Calkins and Milling (2005). Although current community college leaders can learn from this period, new leadership traits are essential for future leaders. Enrich the inward journey, lead from the center, and make connections are feminist leadership actions that must be part of the repertoire of the emerging community college leader (Fulton-Calkins & Milling, 2005). “The wise and successful community college leader of today respects and celebrates the successes of the past and learns from them, while staying focused on the opportunities of the future” (p. 236).

In further explanation of the double helix, Regan and Brooks (1995) provide an in-depth explanation of the feminist attributes of leadership or the missing strand. According to Regan and Brooks, the five attributes of collaboration, caring, courage, intuition, and vision are the pillars of the feminist attributes. These are each discussed briefly over the pages that follow.

Collaboration. Collaboration is defined as the ability to work in a group, eliciting and offering support to each other, thereby creating a synergistic environment for everyone (Regan & Brooks, 1995). Inclusiveness is a byproduct

of this quality, along with new leadership development and greater self-esteem for those empowered through shared ownership.

Like the dynamic process of the double helix, the web, as described by Helgesen (1995), is built from the center out and is a never-ending process. Helgesen concludes in *The Web of Inclusion* that people simply cannot think creatively and well if they do not feel valued, if they do not feel a sense of ownership of their work:

The architect of the web works as the spider does, by ceaselessly spinning new tendrils of connection, while also continually strengthening those that already exist. The architect's tools are not force, not the ability to issue commands, but rather providing access and engaging in constant dialogue. (p. 13)

Helgesen summarizes that leaders in this type of structure must manifest strength by yielding and secure their position by continually augmenting the influence of others.

Caring. Caring, the second feminist attribute of leadership defined by Regan and Brooks (1995), is the development of an affinity for the world and the people in it, translating moral commitment to action on behalf of others. Noddings (2003) defines caring as a feminine view, one that is rooted in receptivity, relatedness, and responsiveness: “Caring involves stepping out of one’s own personal frame of reference into the others” (p. 24). Noddings adds, “to care is to act not by fixed rule but by affection and regard” (p. 24). Feminist theorists, Gilligan (1982) and Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1997) conclude

that the act of giving rather than receiving leads to a greater sense of a leader's capacity for knowing and loving and are central to a women's psychological development and learning. According to Regan and Brooks, relational leaders understand that caring entails the act of receiving as well as giving. "I place caring at the top of the values hierarchy. I propose that a number of ethics have a place in educational leadership, but each needs to be informed and guided by caring" (Beck, 1992, p. 488).

Courage. Regan and Brooks (1995) describe courage as the capacity to move ahead into the unknown, testing new ideas in the world of practice. Risk taking is a major facet of this attribute. During Regan and Brooks' research, Susan shared her story defining courage:

When women are courageous, they aren't saying, "Here, look at me-look at what I'm doing"; instead they exercise courage in support of the organization. They take the high road and encourage everyone in the organization to achieve the high road with them. Their kind of leadership doesn't call attention to the leader; it calls attention to everybody because it's participatory and collaborative. (p. 30)

Noddings (2003) describes similar qualities as nonrule-bound, caring behavior. In lieu of stringent guidelines, human judgment is required across a wide range of fact and feeling, and it allows for situations and conditions in which judgment may properly be put aside in favor of faith and commitment. LeMahieu (1993), an assistant superintendent recalled a time in her career that she was

searching for a new position. She was not willing to accept just any position and stated that her new position must be in a setting in which there was caring, where the capacities for concern and connection were prized and nurtured, and where work was done collaboratively. LeMahieu wrote, “The more courage we have to be ourselves, the more chance we have of living in communities that fit us” (p. 5).

Intuition. Regan and Brooks (1995) define the attribute of intuition as the ability to give equal weight to experience and abstraction, mind and heart. Historically, women’s intuition has been associated with magical thinking and referred to as a “female thing.” “By listening to our hearts, as we call it, we come into contact with many things that are important but that our reason, unaided by intuition, would miss initially” (Regan & Brooks, 1995, p. 34). Noddings and Shore (1984) have noted that the most reliable intuitions are the result of areas in which people are most knowledgeable. Sarah, a participant in Regan and Brook’s study describes intuition:

I think an important piece for women leaders is to articulate what they do and what they feel, what they believe, and maybe some of that comes from articulating our intuition. We may know things at a gut level, (but) unless we’re articulating them, they are not going to get passed on. (Regan & Brooks, 1995, p. 35)

Vision. Vision is the last attribute described in relational leadership by Regan and Brooks (1995). The ability to formulate and express original ideas, enabling others to consider options in new and different ways, defines vision. Regan and Brooks describe vision as a product through which the leader enables

everyone to synthesize what may first appear to be disparate points of view. When synthesized, these individual viewpoints create a totally new and progressive position. “Eliciting everyone’s thoughts and creating a trusting environment where everyone feels free to offer his or her own points of view makes vision possible” (p. 36).

In describing the double helix, Regan and Brooks (1995) propose how these attributes are integrated to produce new processes in leadership. For instance, the attributes of care and collaboration operate to require one to see vision as a process. Another example of this relationship is described by the outcome of vision and intuition operating together to provide a sense of understanding the global nature of leaders. These attributes demonstrate that a leader conceives of a different world as compared to a manager, who may lack vision or the ability to foster collaboration, or the strength to be courageous, or the ability to care for others.

Relevance to Educational Leadership in a Global Society

According to the American Association of Community Colleges, AACC, (2006), the community college is being revolutionized, as are the communities in which they serve. Moving from the industrial era to the 21st century knowledge-based society demands a shift in core values that serve as the foundation of contemporary actions and policies. Despite the need for fundamental change, community college leaders of today have much to learn from their rich past, Fulton-Calkins and Milling (2005) conclude. Traditions have been established within the college and externally with the business and professional community.

Because *things* have been done right for a long time, college administrators often hear “but we have always done it this way” when embarking on change:

There is also reason to revel in the past and learn many valuable lessons from it; however, the future holds many new directions. These new directions will challenge leaders to think creatively concerning what is essential to serve the emerging needs of a more diverse student body than that of the past. (Fulton-Calkins & Milling, 2005, p. 236)

AACC’s response to this societal evolution was the development of seven core values that reflect the appreciation of the rich history of the community college while preparing the institutions for the 21st century. The following seven values reflect AACC’s essential and enduring tenets: integrity, excellence, leadership, learning, diversity, commitment, and connectedness. These values undergird the AACC’s vision of being a bold leader in creating a nation where all have access to the learning needed to participate productively in their communities and in the economy. The community college, according to AACC, is recognized as the gateway to the American dream. One of the key action steps in this vision is to develop community college leaders at all levels that understand and share a deep commitment to the community college mission and core values. The priorities of connectedness, collaboration, vision, integrity, and diversity have significant implications for the 21st century community college leader. The emphasis on leadership will not be on the gender of leaders but on their ability to lead with these key attributes of relational leadership.

As previously presented, AACC concludes that critical emerging skill sets will be required for success as a 21st century community college leader (Shults, 2001). The important skills identified for future leaders, according to Shults, include the ability to bring a college together in the governing process, the ability to mediate, a good command of technology, and the ability to build coalitions. Electronic technology has exploded and coalitions have expanded beyond local geographic borders. “For community colleges, economics, electronic technology, and immigration patterns serve as dominant globalizing influences upon the institutions” (Levin, 2001, p.14). McNair (2010) claims higher education programs that prepare graduates for the top job in the community college system which must focus on curriculum that is consistent with the six core competencies that AACC states are requirements for the emerging leader.

The American Association of Community Colleges has served as the voice of America’s community colleges since 1920 (AACC, 2005). “Building a nation of learners by advancing America’s community colleges” guides the organization as its mission statement. The six critical core competencies of AACC developed by the key stakeholders are considered to give value and vitality to this organization. In addition to being the leading advocate of the community college, the tenets that perpetuate the strategic action of AACC are: serving as the national information resource, creating networking and community-building, facilitating collaboration among staff and members, and sharing commitment to the community college movement and leadership and career development.

Literature has yielded definitions and context to leadership as it relates to the changing world and the impact on community colleges. Lipman-Blumen (1996) in *The Connective Edge; Leading in an Interdependent World*, describes relational leadership as collaborative, contributory, and vicarious. Hockaday and Puyear (2000) document the need for the development of specific traits for effective community college leadership in the new millennium. The traits they identify include the ability to develop a vision of where the college should go, integrity, confidence and courage, technical knowledge, a collaborative spirit, persistence, good judgment, and a desire to lead. Again, these concepts are consistent with relational leadership characteristics identified as keys to success for the 21st century community college leader.

Chapter Summary

The mission of the AACCC is to “assist the nation as it passes from the industrial era of the twentieth century to the new knowledge-based society of the 21st century” (AACCC, 2006). This mission statement has been expanded from the one developed during the mid 20th century largely due to inquiry into the impact that globalization and shifts, related to evolving as a knowledge based society, will have on the leadership skills required for an effective president. The relational leadership model of Regan and Brooks (1995) provides a framework to describe AACCC’s vision of the leadership skills needed for the 21st century. The ability to blend or gender between the traditional modes of leadership; authoritative, bureaucratic and a post-structural perspective of collaboration, caring, courage, intuition and vision offer leaders the skill sets required to guide a

community college into the 21st century. No longer will colleges thrive in isolation with limited exposure to their geographic surroundings. A global perspective for the community college will require leadership that is willing to share resources; physical, intellectual, and personnel, in order to promote the 21st mission of the community college. AACC purposes that the community colleges will increasingly be recognized as the gateway to the American dream – the learning resource needed to sustain America’s economic viability and productivity (AACC, 2006).

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

This qualitative study was designed using an exemplar case study that examined the personal and situational factors that influenced feminist community college senior administrators in their development as relational leaders. The exemplar case study approach is used in various studies (Kibler & Aha, 1990; Merriam, 1998; Smith & Medin, 1991) yet is under articulated in the methodological literature. Kibler and Aha cite that exemplar models represent an individual concept as a set of exemplars. For the purpose of this study, individual responses were used to describe specific concepts related to relational leadership. In addition to the interviews of community college presidents, multiple data sources provided important information, including but not limited to: mission statements, curriculum vitae, college publications, journal articles, web sites, and metaphors.

Glesne (2006) states that qualitative research seeks to make sense of personal narratives that assist with the understanding of social phenomena. Basic assumptions of qualitative research include the facts that reality is socially constructed and the variables are complex, interwoven, and difficult to measure. As the researcher, I have served as an instrument, employed inductive reasoning, and provided a descriptive conclusion. In keeping with the nature of qualitative research as discussed by Glesne, I viewed my personal involvement with the research process and professional investment in the topic as unavoidable element of the research design, one that helped facilitate rapport and added depth to the

meaning of the work. Acknowledging subjectivity does not eliminate or overwrite ethical considerations, a point discussed later in this chapter.

The research problem determined the research approach. In this study, the research questions focused on the identification and development of the qualities of relational leadership, the understanding of relational leadership held by senior administrators in community colleges, and the identification of the benefits of the relational leadership style for 21st century community colleges. These research foci were best explored by employing the exemplar case study approach because it provided a way to investigate the complex relationships in the development between leadership styles and their meaning and benefits to an organization. Merriam (1998) observed that the case study describes lived experiences. As a result, research efforts were developed towards a rich and holistic account of the phenomenon of relational leadership in practice, offering insights and illuminating meanings that expand readers' understanding.

Exemplar case studies, a sub-genre of more general case research, have been used to examine human concept formations (Kibler & Aha, 1990; Smith & Medin, 1991). These studies demonstrate concepts learned from the examples or exemplars studied. The term *exemplar* can refer to either an abstraction of a concept or to an individual instance of a concept (Kibler & Aha, 1990). In this study, I used individual responses to represent concepts. For instance, when the presidents were asked to discuss the significance of each of Regan and Brooks' (1995) tenets of relational leadership, the responses were grouped into the concept of feminist attributes of leadership. Explicit details of the construction of ideas

and processes are obtained from in-depth interviews with the participants, observations of individual groups or organizations, and review of publications, memos, and other written documents. According to Stake (1995), a common denominator of any type of case study is a bounded integrated system with working parts. Various methods and methodologies can be employed to complete case study research (Stake, 1995). In my research, a combination of in-depth interviewing, document and website review, article examination, metaphors, and observation were used to study the concept of relational leadership through the lens of three successful community college presidents.

Selection of Participants and Sites

Three community college senior administrators were selected for this study. Key factors in the purposeful selection of these participants were their contemporary notions of the mission and vision of the 21st century community college and their ascension “through the ranks” in the community college system. At the time of the study participants were serving in their first five years as community college presidents. The selection of the individual participants was based on the following additional criteria: (a) employed as a community college president for more than one year (b) employed in community college education for a minimum of five years prior to current position, and (c) self-described as a relational leader. Gender of the participant was not used as a selection criterion for my research based on the assumption that relational leadership is not gender specific.

Each participant was electronically sent an invitation to participate in this research study. In the document, the purpose of the study was stated and the tenets of relational leadership were described. In addition to agreeing to participate in an interview about their perception of being a relational leader, the volunteers were asked to provide a brief employment history that assisted the researcher in determining if the participants met the selection criteria for the study. The invitees were instructed that a form would be signed giving the researcher permission to tape and use notation during the interview. In addition, the participants had the opportunity to review the transcript and revise any comments for clarity.

The community college where the participant served as president was a consideration for study participation as well. Diverse geographic locations for the three colleges were important. Not only urban and rural areas were represented, but colleges in different parts of the United States were included. The sizes of the institutions varied as well: a large institution with over 60,000 students and a smaller college with 2,300 students were part of this study. This broad perspective was beneficial to the study in assessing if the location or size of the institution altered the leadership perspective of the college president.

Data Collection Procedures

The following research techniques were employed in this study: interviews, participant observation, document collection, field log, and website information. In addition, participants provided a metaphor depicting their meaning of leadership. All of these techniques assisted me in understanding the

role and impact of leadership among a group of 21st century senior community college leaders. Individual, in-depth, semi structured interviews were the primary method of data collection for this study.

Glesne (2006) proposes that researchers ask questions in the context of purposes generally important primarily to themselves. Respondents answer questions in the context of dispositions (motives, values, concerns, needs) that researchers need to unravel in order to make sense out of the words that their questions generate. The following are excerpts from the interview questions (see Appendix A for the entire interview protocol). These questions were constructed from three main areas: personal construction of leadership, description of belief and styles of leadership, and relational leadership as it relates to practice.

- How would you describe the major principles that guide your leadership practice?
- Contrast your perception of leadership principles with those of community college leaders in the early 1970s.
- What was the catalyst for this evolution in leadership beliefs and styles?
- What significance do you place on the following attributes: collaboration, caring, courage, intuition, vision?
- How did you construct your leadership beliefs?
- How were your skills sets developed?
- Will you describe a situation in which these attributes guided you to an action and how the outcome may have been different using a more traditional decision making process?

- What impact, if any, does gender have on the impact or effectiveness of your leadership style/beliefs?
- Metaphors often help to paint a picture of our beliefs and practices. Will you describe your leadership practice in terms of a metaphor?

Through the use of interviews, I explored each participant's understanding and experience of leadership. Patton (2001) has suggested the use of questions that presuppose "that the respondent has something to say" (p. 369). Asking the participants to compare and contrast their leadership practices to the community college leader of the 1970s provided rich conversation of the evolution of community college leaders. In addition to the specific leadership skills that have changed, the participants were asked to reflect on the events that served as catalyst for the phenomenon. Specific situations that reflected how the interviewee employed their beliefs as community college senior leaders were elicited, along with the barriers that might prevent them from using these skill sets.

In contrast to leading questions, presupposition items are useful and do not lead the interviewee to answer in a way desired by the interviewer. In addition to careful construction of interview questions, time was spent on rapport development and learning from the respondent. As Glesne (2006) suggests, I began interviews with a "Grand Tour" item that allowed for the expression of experiential detail and could be easily answered. For instance, "how would you describe the major principles that guide your leadership practice?" initiated the in-depth interview. Spradley (1979) refers to this type of question as a request for the

respondent to verbally take the interviewer through a place, a time period, a sequence of events or activities, or some group of people or objects.

Subsequent questions were formulated into a semi structured interview protocol, which allowed for flexibility during the interview in order to probe ideas more fully and clarify responses. A pilot of the interview questions was implemented to assess the construction of each question for easy understanding. Minor revisions of question structure were made on several items to assist with clarity of the item.

The formal interviews were conducted in the offices of the participants at a time convenient for them. Each participant was interviewed for a minimum of 90 minutes. According to Glesne (2006), an hour of steady talk is generally an appropriate length before diminishing returns set in for both parties. A follow-up second interview was held by phone or electronic mail, discussing various clarifications on data received in the initial interview. Engaging in a minimum of two interviews assists with obtaining trustworthy results (Glesne, 2006). Each interview was tape recorded with some hand written memos recorded by the researcher. I requested that participants be open to a third interview should I or they feel the need to explore or give more depth to a response. Verbatim transcriptions were constructed and sent back to the participants for their review.

Metaphors

In addition to traditional story-telling questions, participants were asked to reveal a metaphor that described their evolution as a relational leader. Linguist George Lakoff and philosopher Mark Johnson have presented evidence that

metaphors may actually be people's primary mode of mental operation (Yero, 2003). Maxine Greene (1995) in *Releasing the Imagination* has stated that the use of metaphors engages the domain of imagination resulting in meaning making in an indecipherable world. Crystal Ozick (1989) argued "that metaphor is one of the chief agents of our moral nature, and the more serious we are in life, the less we can do without it" (p. 270). One example of a metaphor is a mosaic. Williams (2008) defines a mosaic as a conversation between what is broken. The author continues by further describing a mosaic as a conversation that takes place on surfaces, a conversation with light, with color, with form, and with time. These descriptors, metaphors, have offered the participants in this study an opportunity to reflect on their leadership beliefs and practices within the context of their current role as president of a community college.

Metaphors have often been used to illustrate complex ideas, for example offering meaning to conceptual frameworks that undergird new thoughts. For instance, the use of music as a metaphor united a group of leadership scholars striving to describe a Social Change Model in 1996, according to Komives and Wagner (2009). The outcome of these leaders' collaborative effort portrayed the description of their web of leadership development.

Almost any kind of music, from rock to jazz to country, is a mixture of melody (individual) and harmony (community), and requires both to produce the desired sounds. Each instrument, even when playing the same note, contributes uniquely to the overall tune. The sum of a musical composition is somehow greater than the whole of its parts and,

just as in the context of leading, demonstrates the importance of diversity, common purpose, self-knowledge, knowledge of others, feedback, listening, and the respect needed and necessary to practice collaborative leadership. (Higher Education Research Institute, 1996).

Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1997) conclude in *Women's Ways of Knowing* that metaphors give way to language, often referred to as a consensually validated symbol system, allowing for more precise communication of meaning between persons. My specific interest in the use of metaphors is toward providing a deeper understanding of relational leadership. As readers submerge themselves in others' stories, their ability to find meaning for themselves can be realized. Chapter 4 will introduce the participants and reveal a self-selected metaphor used to describe their meaning of leadership.

Observation

During the interview process I observed participants, noting voice intonation, posture, and speed of verbalization. This assisted with my interpretation surrounding the meaning making of their voice. In addition to the voice of the participant, I noted the environment surrounding the participant. Each interview was conducted in the participant's office, therefore, the style, room design, and furnishings were observed. Glesne (2006) describes participant observation in terms of seeking to make strange familiar and the familiar strange. "The strange becomes familiar in the process of understanding it. To make the familiar strange is often more difficult because you must continually question

your own assumptions and perceptions, asking yourself: Why is it this way and not different” (Glesne, p. 51)?

Document Review

In addition to interviewing and observation, document and resource review are key elements to a case study approach. Each college’s website has been reviewed in depth. The photographs and video tapes contained the website were analyzed to gain insight into the environment in which each leader presides. The presidents’ messages reflecting their belief in the college’s mission were compared to the interview data. The college mission statement, activities, and news releases assisted in the development of understanding of the participant’s role in college leadership.

Participants provided curriculum vitae, and journal or magazine articles highlighting their leadership roles, along with selective emails that were evident of their leadership beliefs. These documents provide historical and contextual dimension to the observation and interview process. According to Glesne, (2006):

documents and artifacts enrich what you see and hear by supporting, expanding and challenging your portrayals and perceptions. Your understanding of the phenomenon in question grows as you make use of the documents and artifacts that are a part of people’s lives. (p. 68)

A field log was kept during the entire research process. It served as my primary recording tool to capture descriptions, ideas, reflections and notes during the entire research process.

Data Analysis

Data analysis has been described as the process of moving between, exploring, and enhancing the design and findings as a study proceeds (Caudle, 2004). Analysis, Caudle stated, works on the data. When I was constructing the interview questions, I kept my research questions nearby in order to ensure that my inquiries were relevant to the study purpose. Detailed sub-questions were also formed as additional guidelines for the interviews and document reviews.

Each recorded interview was transcribed by a certified court reporter. The transcription was a literal recording of all words communicated during the interview. “The interview notes or recording should be complete even if material does not appear directly relevant” (Caudle, 2004, p. 419). The transcripts were not categorized or interpreted while being transcribed. This provided me with direct quotes and meaningful data to analyze. Literal transcription of data allowed me to return to the data when new themes emerged. This would not have been possible if only relevant data were transcribed, resulting in data being reduced prematurely.

Transcripts were sent to each participant to review for accuracy. Upon receipt from the participant indicating agreement with the accuracy of transcription, the transcripts were coded for themes. While interviews served as the primary data source in the study, coding was also implemented for all of the

other data sources, such as articles, websites, and emails. Glesne (2006) defined coding as “a progressive process of sorting and defining and defining and sorting those scraps of collected data” (p. 152). Making sense of relevant data gathered from sources such as interviews, documents, field logs, websites, and on-site observation, thinking about these data with relevant scholarship, and presenting what the data revealed was my analysis (Caudle, 2004).

Data organization was essential in the analysis process in order to ensure that all relevant data were considered. Various documents were organized with binders. Research design notes, interview questions, consent forms, definition of concepts, and participant contact information were in one binder. A second binder held the literal transcripts of the formal interviews, along with a chart indicating the color coding key used to identify and code data. Emails, documents, website information, brochures, curriculum vitas, and other relevant data were organized into a third binder.

The descriptive analysis answers the question, “what is going on here?” (Glesne, 2006, p. 164). The research includes an inductive analysis based on the findings of the interview and document review. This analysis offers a broad stroke review, as well as reveals minute details that reflect meaning to a specific theme or subtheme. In addition, the analysis reflects the study purpose of the research.

Formal analysis of all data began with multiple readings of all documents. The first read of all of the transcripts, memos, notes and documents revealed two types of data: descriptive and interpretative. Caudle (2004) described descriptive data which names things. For example, in this study, the information regarding

the participants' family, mentors, and educational background lent descriptive context to the construction of their leadership style. Interpretative data gave additional meaning and identified patterns and answers the "why" questions (Caudle, 2004). Again, from this study, detailed participant vignettes illustrating leadership skills, such as president's forums, meetings with new faculty and written communication, provided meaning to data categories. In order to manage codes accurately, I kept the definitions and parameters of key concepts close so that data would be categorized consistently. Various pieces of like-minded data were aggregated into major codes and then broken down into smaller subthemes. Prior to placing material in a specific code, the information was compared to my definition of that category. Each major code had an established central idea or concept.

The second read of all of the data sources provided what Caudle (2004) referred to as confirmatory data collection. This process deepened the insights into the perceptions of relational leadership and confirmed or disconfirmed the identified patterns. I made remarks ranging from brief notations in the margins of the transcripts to adding field log entries which assisted the analysis. Maxwell (2005) has stated that researcher memos or remarks can range from brief marginal comments to a theoretical idea in a field journal to a full-fledged essay. I placed my comments in the margins of transcripts; highlighted text in colors that had been associated with themes; placed markers in documents; and made notations of interpretations, settings, and feelings in my field log. In reviewing the other documents for a second time, I rearranged emails, website notations, and

curriculum vitae to further define categories, as well as made notations to their meaning within the context of the study.

After the third review of the entire data set, I stepped away from the data sources relevant to individual responses and took a broad look at all of the comments, summaries of findings, and charts of coded materials. An organizing framework for representation was constructed and included the three major themes: personal construction of leadership, key attributes of relational leadership, and blending of leadership qualities. Again, due to the nature of the qualitative research, this framework remained fluid during the analysis portion of the research. Chapter 4 will provide an introduction to the participants, including key factors from their curriculum vitae, college websites, printed materials, and their metaphors describing relational leadership. An in depth analytical discussion of the major themes that emerged is presented in Chapter 5.

Ethics and Trustworthiness

Ethical considerations surrounding my research were followed throughout the research process. Glesne (2006) has concluded that ethical considerations are inseparable from everyday interactions with research participants and with the research data. Five basic principles of ethical research were employed in my research process: (a) research participants had adequate information to make an informed decision about participating in the study; (b) research participants had the ability to withdraw, without penalty, from the study at any point; (c) there were no unnecessary risks; (d) benefits to the subject and society outweighed all

potential risks; and (e) interviews were conducted by a qualified investigator (Glesne,2006).

Beyond these basic principles, several specific ethical issues were considered pre-study and throughout the research process. The selection of participants was not a blind process. I knew all three participants prior to the study. Two participants had actually been my colleagues in previous community colleges. The third I had met through a professional organization. Anonymity with regard to name and college was guaranteed for the participants. Informed consent was established prior to the interview. All participants were informed they would be given a copy of the interview transcript to review and revise if needed. The purpose of the study was clearly stated at the beginning of interview.

Trustworthiness was related to research validity and was as a critical consideration during research design. According to Creswell (1998), trustworthiness can be clarified through the reflection upon one's own subjectivity and how the researcher will use and monitor it in her research. Clarification of research bias was documented as a verification procedure used in this qualitative research. Through maintaining a field log, chronicling my leadership beliefs and skills, and researching multiple leadership theorists, I documented my value statements and beliefs. Triangulation of data contributed to the trustworthiness of the findings by attempting to relate data to counteract the threats to validity identified in each data set (Glesne, 2006). The following chapter will introduce the reader to each participant, along with a self-reflection in order to provide insight when reading the findings of the study.

CHAPTER 4

Leaders and Their Muses

This chapter introduces the reader to three community college senior leaders. In addition to a glimpse of their curriculum vitae, you will find personal notes and reflections on their views of leadership. The participants also reflect and share a metaphor they used to define their beliefs of a leader. As has been discussed previously, metaphors have often been used to illustrate complex ideas, offering meaning to conceptual frameworks that undergird new thoughts. Names and other identifiable information have been changed in an attempt to protect the anonymity of the participants.

Eleanor Davis

Dr. Davis is a 56 year old community college president. Hailing from the Northeast, Dr. Davis became the first female president of one of the largest community colleges in the United States. Notably, she is one of two female presidents of the western states' institutions of higher education.

West River Community College welcomed this visionary leader in 2005 bringing over 30 years of experience as an educator and an administrator to a college with over 60,000 students. She was recognized in 2009 as one of the state's most influential women for her role in promoting the community college in workforce development and for her innovation with cutting-edge educational programs (Swindle, 2009). This leader earned her Bachelor of Science and Master of Arts degree in special education. Her Doctor of Philosophy degree was completed in Educational Studies with a concentration in adult learning and

educational leadership. When asked how it feels to often be the only woman in the boardroom, she replied, “The best solution is to simply take the gender out of the equation.” Her success is credited to her for the focus on issues and ideas. “We come around the table and focus on the goals and beliefs we share. That gets the agenda far further forward than focusing on how we’re different,” she said.

Dr. Eleanor Davis serves in multiple college, community, state, and national positions. She supports the notion that more women should join the conversation about women. In the spring of 2009, Dr. Davis became the president of a national professional organization of her peers, and she serves on her state’s forum for women. She states:

Women bring a sense of inclusion, a willingness to be vulnerable and a desire to learn from mistakes. I think women are poised to help the country go forward in a global economy and society. I want to inspire women to tell themselves, “I can do it.” It is hard work, but the rewards are unimaginable.

Dr. Davis vividly describes her view of relational leadership with the metaphor of a mosaic:

The big picture, when you look at a mosaic from afar, is a glorious picture and you can make out the big picture. You can make out the big symbols or shapes and sizes and frames. You have all different colors that from afar create a magnificent picture and that’s leadership as a whole. But when you get closer and you pick the different pieces, quite honestly one piece that creates that

beautiful big mosaic might be quite ugly up close. It might be very jagged, a jagged shape and a not so attractive color. But when blended with all of the other shapes and colors, it makes a magnificent picture. I think this is the metaphor that explains that leadership as a whole is a wonderful thing.

Mark Bailey

Charismatic and engaging would describe this 42 year old community college president. In 2006, he became the third president of Central Lake Community College. This married father of three has held positions within the community college since his graduation from college in 1990. Starting in the occupational extension division of a rural college, Bailey steadily advanced both his educational degrees and his job responsibilities. In addition to acquiring a Master of Arts degree in Higher Education Administration in 1996, he became the Dean of Continuing Education at his worksite. Moving to a larger community college in 2000, he assumed the role of Dean of Student Services while beginning his doctoral education. In 2004, Dr. Bailey completed his work at this community college as the Vice President of Student Services and earned his Educational Doctorate Degree in Adult and Community College Education. Due to his reputation of building networks and commitment to the community college mission, he was tapped as the president of Central Lake Community College.

Dr. Bailey is active in a number of community and educational initiatives. He serves on the United Way Board, County Economic Board, and a regional higher educational center, to name a few. He describes himself as someone who

values people and is committed to demonstrating that attribute within the college. Dr. Bailey hails from a rural county in a southern state. His parents were both community college faculty members. Growing up on a tobacco farm, he credits his family with instilling in him the value of individuals and the positive impact that results from relationships. Dr. Bailey's self-reflection with regard to the hierarchy of the college structure states:

I'm on the very bottom of the organizational chart. I'm pushing resources. I'm pushing ideas, pushing innovation, trying to assure that every individual who chooses to work here or chooses to learn here has the opportunity to reach their full potential and the only way you can do that is—is to really get to know them in a very personal level from the standpoint of what types of resources will they need to be able to reach their maximum capacity.

When asked to choose a metaphor that exemplifies his view of relational leadership, without hesitation, Dr. Bailey stated a jigsaw puzzle:

You think about those 1,000 piece puzzles that you put together when you were growing up and how long it took you----to find the intricacies of this piece and how does it fit in here. You always have that one piece that you spend days on, trying to figure out where it goes. And I guess that is the visual I have in terms of building the organization is that sometimes it is so frustrating that you can't figure out exactly where that piece really fits. But you've got to value that piece, because without that piece, you are

never going to get the picture done. Everybody is an important part. Every aspect of the community, the people are important to really making this vision become a reality and that's what I see – you have to know how to handle your pieces. You have to know how to organize them. You put all of the yellows up there and you put all of the greens over here and then you take them and you begin to mesh them into your vision.

Ruth Sales

Like Dr. Davis, Dr. Sales is the first female president of her community college. Set in a rural community, Golden View Community College has over 3,000 curriculum and continuing education students. This 62 year old leader states, “I followed a 15 year veteran male president, who was revered in the community and state, whose track record was rarely challenged, except by me, and he liked that!” Dr. Sales received her Bachelor of Science in Home Economics and Consumer Education, followed by a Master of Education in Special Education and a Doctorate in Early Childhood Education. When commenting on her formal preparation for her current position, Dr. Sales credits her study in psychology and communication, along with family, teachers, and presidents, for modeling effective leadership. “Actions have consequences and we have to live up to that. We all need to know that, you can redirect, and that you can reinforce and get a lot of what you want” the president concludes.

When asked to describe her leadership style as a metaphor, this college president pensively thought and emphatically responded, a dots picture.

We often have the image of a vision or picture, and however, it is outlined with extraneous dots. Until the leader encourages the connection of the dots, does the image truly reveal itself? That is why I say so often, we must connect the dots. Connectivity is so important and reflects a unified whole. Every dot is important in providing the completed image; it provides shape and meaning to the overall image.

Self-Reflection

I am a community college administrator who has served in over six community colleges during the last 25 years. Undergraduate and graduate degrees in nursing prepared me for nursing faculty and leadership roles. I believe in the community college vision and credit mentors, opportunity, and personal values for my commitment to the constructs of relational leadership.

A quilt describes my metaphor for leadership. The individual pieces of cloth are specifically chosen for their beauty and color. They are given a specific shape and carefully placed in a larger work. When glimpsing the entire quilt, a pattern emerges, but the viewer must focus on a smaller section to see the individual color and shape of a specific piece of cloth. Every piece of cloth is essential to the quilt. The way the pattern emerges tells a story and holds meaning to the viewer of the work. Flannery (2001) describes scientific inquiry through quilting in "Quilting: A Feminist Metaphor." The quilter-scientist concludes that doing science is like quilting because it often involves much defined patterns, as does science, and, like science, quilting has communal connotation. As I gaze at a

treasured quilt hanging in my home, I notice all of the intricate stitches that hold the various pieces of material in a precise pattern. Each center is unique; each square is special, and then the piece as a whole tells a story and depicts a meaning. So it is with organizations. The outcome is more than just the fabric and thread; it is made whole by the entwining of all of the pieces, valuing each section as an integral part of the whole.

CHAPTER 5

Narrative of the Case Study

This chapter provides the reader with an in-depth description of three major themes that emerged across the case study. The chapter that follows, Chapter 6, will provide an analytic discussion of the themes, along with an interpretation of the findings. As stated in Chapter 3, the findings of this qualitative research study are based on an exemplar case study model. Glesne (2006) notes, qualitative research seeks to make sense of personal narratives that assist with the understanding of some social phenomena. Again, basic assumptions of qualitative research include the facts that reality is socially constructed and the variables are complex, interwoven, and difficult to measure.

Three major themes provided the framework for discussing the various descriptions and ideas from the data that assisted with the understanding of the research problem. The first theme is the personal construction of leadership. This theme captures the participants' family and educational background as well as a discussion of the role of mentors. The second theme, key attributes of relational leadership sheds light on the participants' perspective of Regan and Brooks (1995) tenets of caring, collaboration, courage, intuition, and vision. In addition, the values of communication and trust are discussed. The third theme, blending of leadership qualities, reflects the relational leadership model that describes the intertwining of transactional and transformative qualities of leadership. Overall, findings reflected the conceptual framework of relational leadership, formulated by researchers, Regan and Brooks with two important additions I saw emerge as

critical to the development of the 21st century community college senior leadership. Each of these themes and related subthemes are discussed in detail below.

Personal Constructions of Leadership

Max DePree (2004), chairman emeritus of Herman Miller, Inc. a major furniture manufacturing company, and author of *Leadership is an Art*, artfully describes how the values of his father, the founder of Herman Miller, continue to drive the energy of the company today. The commitment to understanding diversity in the workplace and recognizing the special gifts of each employee is the legacy of the elder Mr. DePree. Today, Herman Miller, Inc., is noted as one of Fortune 500's 25 most admired companies in the United States, thriving on the values of a leader during the early 20th century. According to the younger DePree, he learned his values and beliefs at the feet of his father, not only with words but from the actions that his father displayed with each employee and business partner.

As a constructivist, I was inquisitive about each participant's perspective on who and what shaped their leadership beliefs. Participants were asked to describe how they acquired their leadership beliefs and how their leadership skills were developed.

Family. When describing their leadership beliefs, the participants reviewed the impact of their families, the importance of a mentoring relationship, and their educational preparation as keys to the development of their leadership

style. For instance, the influence of Dr. Bailey's family of origin was obvious.

Dr. Bailey immediately reflected on his childhood in a rural county:

I was raised on a tobacco farm. My parents were both faculty members in the community college system. They always instilled in me that if you value individuals and you really demonstrate to them that they are valued, their productivity will be greatly enhanced.

Dr. Davis cited the influence of her family on what a meaningful life would mean in reference to business and family:

I grew up in the Northeast in a very traditional family in the 1950s; it provided a very constrained experience for me as a young girl. I had a grandfather who was very influential to me and taught me the love of people. My grandfather contracted polio when he was 27 years old and walked on crutches for all of his life. I only knew my grandfather as a person who walked on crutches and yet he never once allowed his disability to impede or impair him. And his determination to provide for his family, to create a life, to create a business, to create control where he had none taught me such determination, such determination.

Mentors. Dr. Sales reflected on the power of role models and mentors in the construction of her leadership beliefs:

I had some incredibly good models, starting with family, then with some of my earlier teachers and presidents who I felt were engaged

in a relational leadership even though we hadn't coined it as such.

The president's leadership trickled to their management teams and

I felt that it was a major part of how I learned to lead.

According to Weisman and Vaughn (2006), more than half of current presidents have a formal mentoring relationship with a potential future community college leader. Dr. Sales credits a former president as being an example of a leader who she modeled. Dr. Davis describes a male mentor leading her through assertiveness activities, eventually transforming a shy girl, following a traditional female role, into a holistic learner and engaged role.

"He was such a turning point in my development," she noted. In addition to this mentor, Dr. Davis encountered a female president upon her return to the world of teaching, after being a stay at home mom for 12 years. This president-mentor took notice of this enthusiastic instructor. Dr. Davis recalled how this mentor watched her and guided her development, offering her committee positions that stretched her. After serving on the college strategic planning committee, this mentor said, you must go back to school for your doctorate. Dr. Davis attempted to explain, "I have two kids in college, I can't be going back for my doctorate. Then my mentor proceeded to take me with her to meetings where I met Carol Gilligan and Howard Gardner from Harvard." This mentor's commitment to Dr. Davis's development set her on the path to reaching her potential as a leader in the community college setting. Similarly, Dr. Bailey cites the power of learning from good examples and not so perfect ones:

There were several people along the way that I would latch onto, successful people and some not so successful people that I would just watch and learn from. You have to learn everything about every type of leader and make up your own mind based on the situation, asking how I can use this to be successful.

Educational background. Reviewing the curriculum vitae of the participants revealed that both Dr. Sales and Dr. Davis hold graduate degrees in special education. In discussing the acquisition of leadership beliefs, both of these leaders cited their educational experience as critical to their success as leaders. Both of these leaders consider themselves as behaviorists. Dr. Davis recalled how her educational background prepared her for her role as a relational administrative leader:

I was trained as a behaviorist in my early years in college. As an educator for people with special needs, I watch people's behavior and understand how my behavior affects the frequency of another person's behavior or decreases frequency of behavior. That blending really set the framework and foundation for relational leadership in not only my classroom teaching, but then as I gained administrative experiences, I realized that everything starts with building a relationship. Everything starts with building a rapport.

Dr. Sales has a similar background to Dr. Davis in that her formal educational experience with special needs children prepared her for working with all types of situations and people:

I have been treated with dignity and respect. I think some of it has to do with your own personality style. I mean I really am very much a believer that we have an innate style. We have an innate personality, which would just lead you to do some of those things more intuitively. Some of it comes truly from my study. You can't work successfully with children and families if you don't have respect for them. These are just basic principles of psychology; actions have consequences and we have to live up to that.

When the participants were asked, how did you acquire the belief that relational leadership attributes were essential to effective leadership and how were your skill sets developed, three variables emerged: family, mentors, and educational backgrounds. Responses regarding the importance of early family interactions, as well as the importance of a mentor in their professional life, were similar among all three presidents. It became evident that the skills sets that these successful leaders possess were not all acquired in a graduate program or professional development seminar on leadership. At the feet of their parents and families, the tenets of trust, communication, and caring were instilled in their young minds. These attributes were deeply ingrained into their way of thinking and knowing. Therefore, as more formal leadership training in concert with rising responsibilities occurred for these college leaders, their fundamental beliefs, learned in childhood, were entwined with new skills.

Of special note was the discussion about respecting and acknowledging the credibility of these constructed tenets from the early years. The participants

recalled that the early college organizational structure in the 1960's resembled their manufacturing counterparts. The bureaucratic leadership of this period was steeped in transactional methods, often learned in a business course or through corporate training. Methods of leadership were taught as tasks to implement. Little regard in early leadership training was given to reflecting on the meaning of decision-making in light of the construction of the leader's values and belief. The participants cited the expectation of their faculty and staff to be involved with college planning and leading as a direct result of the leader's demonstration of value of their opinions and worth. The confidence to lead in a more transformational way is evidence of leaders who have explored the origin of their personal beliefs and values.

The participants in this study not only brought a heightened sense of self-awareness, but formal educational preparation. All presidents are educationally prepared at the doctoral level in the field of education. In addition, the intense review of their curriculum vitae documented a commitment to on-going professional development, such as presentations at conferences, published articles, and leadership positions in multiple professional organizations.

Key Attributes of Relational Leadership

When prompted to discuss the impending crisis of the deficit of community college senior leaders, the participants offered thoughts regarding change in roles of the emerging leader and what qualities the new community college leader must possess. Dr. Sales concluded, "Leadership today is different than it was even a decade ago or even five years ago." Dr. Bailey added, "We rely

too much on the way things have always been done and relied too much on the history of our systems. I believe the new leader must have a whole different dynamic in order to engage with the community and the students.”

As stated in Chapter 3, the conceptual framework of Regan and Brooks (1995) guided the research inquiry. The participants were given the tenets of relational leadership as defined by Regan and Brooks, then asked to discuss the significance and their perspective on each attribute as it related to the 21st century community college leader. In the following discussion, the tenets of relational leadership-- collaboration, caring, courage, intuition and vision as defined by Regan and Brooks-- are evidenced by the participants’ responses. In addition, the American Association of Community Colleges’ (2005) mission statement, principles, values, and priorities were reviewed and integrated into the discussion. Finally, communication and trust are presented as additional key attributes relevant to the 21st century community college leader.

In the construction of Regan and Brook’s (1995) model of relational leadership, the feminist attributes are reflective of experiences that have emerged from women. As clearly stated in their work, these values are not limited to females and can be learned and practiced by both genders. Again, according to these theorists, relational leadership is created in practice by the union of the feminist attributes with the traditional practices described in works such as those by Senge (1990). In the double helix model, traditional attributes are referred to as masculinist to signal their source in man’s experience, in contrast to the feminist attributes which have their source in women’s experience (Regan &

Brooks, 1995). Effective leadership practices can be analyzed by exploring the tenets of feminist attributes--collaboration, caring, courage, intuition, and vision--and their impact on organizations. The leadership practices of community college presidents within their first five years of service in a variety of college settings will offer valuable insight into the perceptions of relational leadership for the 21st century community college. The following discusses how the research participants viewed and employed these tenets, along with the outcomes realized as a result of these feminist attributes of leadership.

Collaboration. The attribute of collaboration is defined by Regan and Brooks (1995) as the ability to work in a group, eliciting and offering support to each other member and thereby creating a synergistic environment for everyone. For further understanding of collaboration, I used Helgesen's work (1990, 1995) which describes a revolutionary approach to management for the postindustrial economy. Helgesen (1995) creates a web on inclusion and shared ownership when describing the power of connectedness. Leaders envision themselves in the center of their organization, reaching out, rather than being on top looking down. Helgesen describes the image of a spider web, with an intricate, strong center structure, bound with interrelated invisible orbs, drawing other creatures to it. For the purposes of my interviews, I used these two definitions when describing the tenet of collaboration.

When asked about the importance of collaboration as a tenet of his leadership style, Dr. Bailey replied with the following:

Collaboration is the name of our environment now. I mean everything that we are doing, we have to leverage resources. We have to work together. We have flattened the organization somewhat. We've created systems or we are creating systems that drive the opportunity for people to be involved at the college. It doesn't matter who is sitting in the president's chair or vice-president's chair or the faculty member's chair. When you build relationships, you build partnerships.

When Dr. Sales discussed the value of collaboration as a tool for successful leadership she recalled the following:

My predecessors did not have to be so engaged in raising external funds. As funding streams become tighter and audits and accountability restrict the use of funds, we have got to get out there and find funds. I have to build friends. This is how I conduct business for the institution. I can rely on these networks, not just internally, but externally. If you don't form partnerships you are going to lose out. Seriously, forming relationship and partnership and having that inside knowledge of what is really happening in your community is absolutely essential. Collaboration makes you a part of strong partnerships within your community.

Dr. Davis agrees, "You have to be very willing to collaborate." She notes that she does not have all of the answers nor know it all. Dr. Davis jokes with her

vice presidents that they talk her out of things more times than she talks them into things:

I think that it is really true and important to understand that collaboration is so critical because it brings different pieces of different perspectives to a common situation and a common solution. Their opinion is valued or they wouldn't be in that role if I could not trust their opinion.

Caring. Caring, according to Regan and Brooks (1995) is “the development of an affinity for the world and the people in it, translating moral commitment to action on behalf of others” (p. 27). Noddings (2003) argues that human caring and the memory of caring and being cared for are the foundation of ethical response. “Apprehending the other’s reality, feeling what he feels as nearly as possible, is the essential part of caring from the view of the one-caring” (p. 16). Kegan and Lahey (2001) describe the expression of the appreciation that one is valued as the language of ongoing regard. This language distributes precious information that one’s actions have significance; it infuses energy into the system (Kegan & Lahey, 2007).

Caring proved to be a critical tenet for each of the presidents interviewed. Without exception, caring was manifested in a variety of ways and was essential to success in a leadership role. Dr. Bailey stated, “Understanding the value of people is my guiding principle.” When reflecting on the lessons from the past and the growth of the community college over the last 40 years, Dr. Bailey commented,

When you look at some of the greatest leaders that have been in our system for the past 50 years, they all have one key component: They cared about the people and how those people were integrating into the systems that they were building.

Dr. Bailey believes that if you care about people and those people feel that you care, then they are going to perform with and for you. When asked if he had an example of a specific expression of caring, resulting in an employee being caught off guard by a president's caring way, Dr. Bailey is summarized by this statement:

I had a 45 minute conversation with somebody just this morning. They were dealing with a situation they created for themselves and I helped them to understand their issue and why they made the decision. This person was in tears at the beginning of our talk and left rejuvenated and told me how much it means to have the president of the college spend face-to-face time with him. Now, when I make a mistake as president, that person is going to say, you messed up, but let's just correct it and move on. Caring differentiates the mediocre leader from the great leader.

Dr. Sales discusses the impact of caring on student engagement: "Success for students often happens beyond the classroom. When a faculty member cares and encourages a student with the positive message of *you can do this* and I will help you do this, that is caring."

When Dr. Sales was asked to identify a situation that reflected a caring approach, she quickly spoke about her goal of wanting everyone to understand:

I value people enough to know that they deserve the same information as everyone else. I really believe that almost everything we do here is based upon the fact that I want everyone to understand. You don't have to like it, but I want you to know where I'm coming from versus we're going to do it because I said we're going to do it.

As Dr. Bailey discussed with collaboration, Dr. Sales believes that the leaders' expression of caring trickles down throughout the organization:

Just before Christmas, a maintenance staff member came by my office to say "Dr. Ruth, I know that you've got a sister who's got cancer. I am saying my prayers." This was out of the blue my eyes got real wet and again, I had no idea that he knew...it was his generosity and faith that was really special, that is caring.

I mentioned to Dr. Sales that I had seen her interact with 20 of her faculty at a dinner during a recent state community college convention. My son and I were dining in the same restaurant, and I commented to him about the engaging communication that Dr. Sales was displaying with her colleagues. I asked Dr. Sales to comment on that evening and to validate the appearance of the sincere enjoyment that she appeared to be having

with her employees. She reflected on the many expressions of gratitude that she had received as a result of that evening:

You get so isolated in what you do in your every day routine. It was a great opportunity for the leaders to share with each other; in fact, I have since discovered that the nursing faculty and the automotive faculty there have formed this wonderful relationship.

Prior to my scheduled interview with Dr. Davis at West River Community College, a review of the college website disclosed an invitation to the college employees' to attend a President's Forum. The flyer stated the purpose of the event was to provide a chance for "us" to talk with President Davis face-to-face in a relaxed setting. The faculty, staff, and administration were invited to bring questions, concerns and feedback. The following was included as part of an email received by Dr. Davis from an employee after attending one of these sessions:

Dear President Davis,

I just wanted to thank you so much for taking the time out of your busy schedule to meet with us yesterday. I am so glad that we have you as our president at this time as you have a really positive attitude, and really care about the college, it's employee's, students, and community. I can't thank you enough for all that you do.

In a reflective email to me, Dr. Davis expresses what this experience meant to her and how the forum is an example of her commitment to caring as a leader:

I thought I might forward an email I just received from one of our facilities carpenters as it brought home to me the smallest of gestures in leadership that apparently mean a great deal to folks on the ground. You see, with severe budget cuts looming for this year and next, our college is being asked to return 10 million now and brace for a 20% cut for the next fiscal year. I have been trying to keep employees at the college informed, but every newspaper and message is doom and gloom, and people are scared. On a whim, I decided in one of my bi-weekly president's messages to the college, to invite folks that might be interested to join me in small "Food for Thought" lunches where they could come and talk with me about creative belt-tightening measures or budget strategies they see from their corner of the college. Anyone and everyone were invited. I felt this would engage all into the solutions and empower them to be problem solvers instead of victims. Well, in less than 1 hour after my message went out, we had filled 8 lunches and had waiting lists – which I will continue after the holidays. Faculty, student services folks, carpenters, plumbers, students—all have come. People are responding with ideas of things I never knew about or could have thought of on my own, and the real important part of this experience has been for people to understand I care about them, though this email is one of many that show how much they care too.

Dr. Davis exudes her ability to connect and care for others, and it is evident from the beginning of our interview. At the beginning of the conversation, I verbalize an acknowledgment of my appreciation to her for sharing with me. Those words were immediately followed by, “I’m actually hoping to learn as much from you as I am sharing with you.” Her sincere interest and care is demonstrated in other ways as well:

I write handwritten notes to community members, to potential donors, to current donors. When I read the West River paper, or the national newspapers... If there are people I know that are in the newspaper or magazine, I cut out the article and jot “Congrats, Bravo.” I get more return on investment and comments in the community about that handwritten note than formal recognitions. These are the little things, the little details that build relationships.

Courage. Courage is the capacity to move ahead into the unknown, testing new ideas in the world of practice, according to Regan and Brooks (1995). Risk taking is the major facet of this attribute. The researchers, Regan and Brooks, agree that “it takes courage to enter an alien world, struggle to decipher and apply a different set of rules, and then go on to change them when it becomes apparent that they may conflict with ones’ core values as women” (p.32). It is courageous to move ahead into the unknown in a different way. The first female president of Golden View Community College describes courage as a tenet of her leadership in terms of the role and the implementation of new policies.

Dr. Davis described in detail the challenge of following a long-term president with a successful track record. Although no one challenged him on issues, she often did and he admired her courageous thoughts. When she followed him as president, she faced challenges with the Board of Trustees who were not ready to embrace changes implemented by her predecessor. Dr. Sales concluded that it takes courage to step forward with change and courage to step back with patience:

Every day it takes courage to do what you do and I don't necessarily see courage as being something heroic. I think courage sometimes is just – is just getting through days and being – doing the best you can at that particular moment and listening to folks who might say, “let me help you find another solution for this or we need to sit down and we need to talk about this because there is another way.” It requires courage to take giant steps. I think of students who never thought they were going to graduate from high school, much less get a certificate or a diploma or a degree. That takes courage.

Dr. Davis is the seventh president of West River Community College, an urban multicampus college of 60,000 students situated on 14 sites throughout the area. Not only is she the first female president of this premier comprehensive college, but also represents the only female in the top tier of candidates for the position. “Courage-there is not a day that goes by that I don't have to be brave. There are some decisions that are so difficult and you just have to bite the bullet

and make that decision, make the hard decision because it's the right decision.” Dr. Davis chuckles when explaining that she has both local papers delivered to her home each morning. “Over coffee, I flip through the paper to make sure my institution is not on the front page for undue reasons.” All of these presidents have expressed the value of courage, the ability to move ahead, even in uncertain times.

Intuition. The ability to give equal weight to experience and abstraction, mind and heart is the essence of intuition (Regan & Brooks, 1995). Intuition has been hesitantly used by professional women due to the skepticism that it would be viewed as a female trait. However, intuition is not magical, rather a natural mental ability strongly associated with experience. “By listening to our hearts, as we call it, we come into contact with many things that are important but that our reason, unaided by intuition, would miss initially” (p. 34).

When Dr. Bailey and I discussed his role as president, he shared the following comments that evidenced aspects of intuition. “Your views on things change, depending on your position. I could not be any more comfortable right now in this role and where I am morally and ethically. That is intuition.” This president’s response caused me to wonder about the potential of organizational conflict simply due to the person position within the organization. The implications of decisions and policies may be well understood by the president that made those changes or mandates, but how will this change be understood by the maintenance worker. Perhaps this is the reason that all of the presidents cited open communication, relationships, and trust were the most vital aspect of their

leadership. If that maintenance worker knows that the president will explain a college decision to him in the way that he understands the impact on his particular situation, that a bond will be formed and the web of trust will be built.

Dr. Sales concluded that intuition is a normal reaction in her daily decision making:

I learned the skill when I was teaching. Intuition is a part of intelligence, but intuition is based up on lifetime experiences and an educational set, whether it is informal or formal education. For me, it is an accumulation of knowledge. It's the gut.

When discussing what is critical to decision making, the president of West River responds about the value of intuition. She reflects on Gladwell's (2008) reference to 10,000 hours of practice: what you learn through practice, what you learn through 10 years of doing something or 20 years of doing something becoming a logical process:

Then decision making becomes an intuitive process. And there is *gee, that just doesn't sound right. You know, something is missing here*. Often I'll have something posed to me and I'll just say, "But logically something is missing. There is a piece of information we're missing here. What is it?" It is listening to my inner voice and my intuition because my intuition has been created through a mosaic of experiences, of trial and error, of making mistakes, of reflecting on those mistakes, and saying, how would I have done this differently and /or what have I learned from this? I can

understand multiple kinds of people and how they behave. So my intuition at this point in time is a much broader and richer source of influence and information for me than it was when I was 20 years old. And it is very, very important to use that in making those kinds of tough decisions.

The study participants' responses generate the thought that people develops their own abilities regarding intuitive thought based on their experiences and beliefs. Gladwell (2008) encourages readers to observe the surroundings of successful leaders in order to discern what makes them thrive. Leaders' families, birthplace and even their birth date may influence leadership development, Gladwell concludes;

Each of us has his or her own distinct personality. But overlaid on top of that are tendencies and assumptions and reflexes handed down to us by the history of the community we grew up in, and those differences are extraordinarily specific. (p. 204)

Vision. The ability to formulate and express original ideas, enabling others to consider options in new and different ways, defines vision according to Regan and Brooks (1995). It is described as a process through which the leader enables everyone to synthesize what may first appear to be disparate points of view but that, when synthesized, create a totally new and progressive position. Vision is made possible by eliciting everyone's thoughts and creating a trusting environment where everyone feels free to offer his or her own points of view.

The president of Central Lake Community College, Dr. Bailey, likes to call his movement towards a new vision controlled chaos. He believes that if new solutions are to be found for existing issues, then an environment where everybody can ask questions should be created. The focus or vision needs to transform to 20 years from now, not a satisfaction in the way it has always been done. When addressing the challenges of the 21st century community college leader, Dr. Bailey reflects on his specific geographic location:

Our region has the lowest educational attainment in the state.

Furniture manufacturing has served this region well for over 40 years. A good wage was determined on how well one followed in the family footsteps and mastered the craft of fine woodworking.

Now, industries require new skill sets for their employees including critical thinking and problem solving. Leading a change throughout our community's infrastructure which reflected forty years of manufacturing to one of valuing higher education requires vision. I want people to have a vision and then be able to set up their ladder to be able to accomplish that vision over time.

This leader not only values vision, he believes in enabling the college to achieve the vision.

Dr. Sales expressed a more traditional view of vision, however, as equally critical to her success. "I think it is so extremely important to plan and have a good strategy in order to create a culture of evidence that supports your vision." Interestingly, Golden View's first female president exclaimed that when she

approached her board of trustees, she was always over-prepared. Dr. Sales stated that maintaining a vision is critical to her success as a leader. From a practical perspective, she expressed that managing a complex budget requires vision. “We’ll probably have less money next year; therefore I need to explain how people can earn performance money and how it can be spent. I have to deal with trustees, elected officials, and our own faculty and staff,” she exclaimed.

Because I had researched the evolution of leadership styles and theory, I found Dr. Sales account of the change in leadership style intriguing. Dr. Sales recalls the variety of approaches to presidential decision making when she discussed the evolution of decision making, especially about budget issues, during the various presidential tenures. The previous president served for 20 years and his predecessor served from the late 60s to 1982. Both leaders, according to Dr. Sales, operated in a largely closed system. They often bartered for services with local merchants and full disclosure was not a mandate. In fact, Dr. Sales exclaimed to the former president, “ if I would do those types of things today, I would be in jail,” She replied, “I know.”

Today’s president, concludes Dr. Sales, requires strategic planning, transparency, and evidence-based decision making. All of these must be in compliance with the vision of the college. Where does this vision begin? Dr. Sales discusses the importance of a collective vision:

A vision is collective. And again, that comes about with trusting your people, having the right people in the right places, and respecting input from everyone. I don’t think any one person does

that. I think creating a vision is a collective activity. I kept asking 18 months ago: What is your vision for the institution? What is your vision for the institution? And I would say, here are my objectives, here are my immediate goals, but the vision comes from the collective thinking.

As presented previously, Dr. Davis demonstrates her commitment to a shared vision by the involvement of faculty and staff in the President's Forums. This overwhelmingly successful outlet has proved effective in bringing colleagues together to discuss the future of the college. Like Dr. Bailey, Dr. Davis describes her institution as one that is often challenged by deep cultural roots. West River Community College is composed of people with proud religious roots:

It is beautiful here and it is because of a group of people from the late 1800s coming here and setting up shop and really working very, very hard. That pioneer spirit still maintains itself and the people of the state that they want to remain here. I have to help folks look outside the mountain range, look outside of the state, not only to other parts of the country but the world. These are the things a community college must do. I, as a president, need to be out there engaging in environment forecasting and really connecting nationally and internationally with other community college leaders to understand where the trends are going.

Participants describe the important element of vision in their role as a 21st century community college leader. As Regan and Brooks (1995) describe, vision

is the ability to formulate and express original ideas, enabling others to consider options in new and different ways. Whether it is the financial crisis, as Dr. Davis describes or the smoking cessation program in a community built on raising tobacco cited by Dr. Sales, these leaders constructed visions and brought people together and inspired them to create a shared vision, endorsed by empowered faculty that share in the success and failure of their own ideas and plans.

The tenets of relational leadership--collaboration, caring, courage, intuition, vision--as described by Regan and Brooks (1995) have been illustrated by the responses of the study participants. In reviewing the transcripts, documents and other data sources from the participants, two additional themes have emerged: communication and trust. I propose that in addition to the established tenets of relational leadership, as defined by Regan and Brooks, communication and trust are the conduits that allow the double helix to replicate. In my conceptual framework, I suggest that the replication of the double helix model impacts the organization as a whole. Trust, for instance, was noted multiple times throughout the interviews as imperative to the integrity of the organization. Meaning that the information provided to the president, by the teams they have established, will be forthright. Dr. Davis commented that her expectation of the cabinet was to present to her arguments about the topic of discussion. She entrusted them to have honest dialog and to bring integrity to every discussion. If trust is not established, in this case the organizational leaders, the decisions which impact the entire college will be tainted and will not replicate the original intent.

I have presented the essential elements of communication and trust as the process and environment that are crucial to the process of effectively replicating relational leadership within an organization. Interestingly, each of the study participants have described communication and trust as essential skill sets in their roles as leaders in higher education. Not only were the tenets verbally noted as critical skill sets, communication, for example, was demonstrated in other data as well. The website posted; calendar of events, mission statements, and employee links to meeting meetings, flyers announced a Presidential Forum to discuss the impact of the state's financial woes on the West River Community College, and emails to individuals regarding an accomplishment or celebration were a few of the indicators by which these participants demonstrated their belief in the tenet of communication.

Communication. My meaning of communication is constructed through the works of Margaret Wheatley. This pioneer of leadership is convinced that the world can be changed if we start listening to one another (Wheatley, 2002). Personal, community and organizational change can cultivate shifts through human conversation. "If we can sit together and talk about what's important to us, we begin to come alive" (Wheatley, 2002, p. 3). Referring to the working world, Wheatley describes the plight of workers:

Good people are finding it increasing difficult to do what they know is best. Whether we're in an a small village or a major global corporation, in any country and in any type of work, we are being asked to work faster, more competitively, more selfishly—and to

focus only on the short-term. These values cannot lead to anything healthy and sustainable, and they are alarmingly destructive. (p. 7)

Using the principles of Wheatley's (2002) effective conversation as the barometer to measure and identify quality communication, I reviewed my collected data. These criterion include "acknowledge one another as equals, stay curious about each other, recognize we need each other's help to become better listeners, slow down to have time to think and reflect, remember that conversation is the natural way humans think together, and expect it to be messy at times" (p. 29).

Dr. Bailey cites the need to communicate quickly and in a manner that the stakeholder's demand as critical for the 21st century community college leader. For instance, he states that traditionally faculty would go to work at the college at 8:00 am and leave at 3:00 pm. "Today this schedule is often not conducive to the needs of our students. We need to be available in the evenings, on weekends, by phone, or by email to effectively communicate with our students," he concludes.

Even communication needs have changed for the college president. No longer are leaders involved with the day to day intricacies of the college, Dr. Bailey proclaims, but looking globally for trends and solution. "We need to communicate differently and effectively if we are going to be prepared to lead the community college systems across this country to play a key role in the productivity of the United States." He adds:

I think the more you communicate, the more people gain confidence in you and understand where the institution is heading.

It is like trying to push a flywheel and you push and you push and you push and the thing never budge, but once it starts, it begins to move, faster and faster and faster.

Dr. Sales at Golden View Community College states that there has never been a time when communication has been more important, not with just one target group but across the board. In addition, she addresses the comparison of communication from the origin of the community college until the present:

We're dealing with so many different generations of people and issues, from social networks to texting to live chats to webinars... at one point in history it might have been fine for a president to say, we do not need that new technology. It would have been perfectly fine for a president to say, nope don't need it, but not now.

Communication is so different that in the 1970s. All of us are so much larger. They just communicate in different ways, particularly internally. I think as the institutions started out and they were small, there was a lot of familial feeling, a lot of camaraderie. Hopefully, we still have some of that. But, again, as the institutions have grown, we have lost a little bit of that family feeling. And we are certainly much more businesslike in our thinking. That's why I believe it is so important not to lose some of the personal contact.

Dr. Davis's academic preparation as a behaviorist prepares her for valuing communication as a key element of effective leadership. She is an observer and listener of other people's behavior and words. She believes that everything starts

with building a relationship, building rapport. The power of the handwritten note to college donors and faculty has proven effective for this college president. This method of personal communication reveals the priority of expressing caring through the written word. Methods of communicating for this chief operating officer are always purposeful and meaningful. Each Christmas she sends a pewter tree ornament to the *friends* of the college as a thank you for the support rendered during the past year. This tangible gesture of appreciation is a reminder that their contribution, large or small, is important to the college.

When asked how communication styles have evolved in the community college system, Dr. Davis smiled. “I do rejoice in the fact that I was born at a different time and prepared for leadership at a time where my natural skills and ability of building relationships speaks to the needs of the community colleges of the future.” She continues with the reflection, stating that the bureaucratic insular leadership served colleges well 20 years ago because the country was very different. Leadership and communication styles mirror sociological and cultural evolution.

The president of West River Community College brings gender into the conversation of the importance of communication. “I think women in leadership are more easily able to engage and include. We don’t think we have to know it all,” she concludes. Her ability to gather people around the table who think differently from herself, both men and women but with different life experiences and longevity is essential to this leader. She explains the issue at hand for the college and asks, how do we approach this?

Here is what I'm thinking. Tell me the gaps in my thinking from your perspective. When leaders communicate in this fashion you have a much more holistic and comprehensive solution than if the president sat at her desk by herself in her office and closed the door and decided how to solve the problem.

Dr. Sales notes the change in communication in light of the evolution of leadership as it relates to gender:

I look around the president's meetings and now we have women. Good for me. I mean, women do respond differently in many cases—and it is not, you know, laden with emotion. We just juggle very differently than I think men juggle things. I think we communicate in a different way.

I have observed differences and how the genders respond to specific situation, people/actions, those types of things, and I've seen how others—both individually and collectively--respond back to that gender. One of my funny stories illustrates this point. I left my office one day to visit the nursing department. Before I arrived, someone had called and told them I was having a good hair day and had on my high heels, apparently meaning I was in a good mood. Now, that would have never happened with Dr. Smith and his grey suits.

With regard to communication among the now gender mixed presidents group, Dr. Sale comments, “sarcasm is very often used among my male colleagues. They do not use it nearly as much now that the population of women

presidents is growing. There are 17 female presidents now and we are starting to see the dynamics change now.”

Trust. Trust is the central issue in human relationships within and outside organizations (Kouzes & Posner, 2003). Leaders are not able to effectively lead without trust. Kouzes and Posner suggest that individuals who are unable to trust one another fail to become leaders precisely because they cannot bear to be dependent on the words and work of others. The most effective leadership situation is evident when each member of the team trusts the others. Kouzes and Posner describe the significance of a trusting environment;

People are free to innovate and contribute; they nurture openness, involvement, personal satisfaction, and levels of commitment to excellence. Knowing that trust is essential, leaders make sure that they consider alternative viewpoints, and they make use of other people’s expertise and abilities. Because they’re more trusting of their groups, they’re also more willing to let others exercise influence over group decisions. It’s a reciprocal process. By demonstrating an openness to influence, leaders contribute to building the trust that enables their constituents to be more open to their influence. Trust begets trust. (p. 66)

Trust joins communication as the ingredient required for the duplication of the DNA of relational leadership. Simply defined, trust is the reliance on the integrity, strength, ability, surety, of a person or thing (Dictionary.com, 2010). Trust is the central issue in human relationships within and outside organizations

(Kouzes & Posner, 2003). As a result of a leader's lack of trust, others will not be trusting of their leaders. Therefore, the most effective leadership is embedded in organizations where each member of the team trusts the others. Like the tenet communication, I have found the description of trust repeated as a necessary skill for the 21st century community college leader by my participants.

The president of Central Lake Community College succeeds a president with an 18 year tenure. Dr. Bailey recognizes that instilling a different type of leadership, relational in nature, takes time. It takes time for the employees to be comfortable expressing ideas and having the opportunity to disagree:

I think the biggest thing that I had to do for the first 2 years is to put some actions behind my words in for them to begin to trust that we were creating a new environment and not that the old environment was bad, but it is not what we need now. The new way of doing things is more focused on 20 years from now and making sure that we are laying the foundation so that 20 years from now we will be ready. I brought controlled chaos. Again, the more that you assure people that what you're saying is actually going to occur, the more confidence they gain in you and they understand.

Creating a trusting environment is also evident by Dr. Bailey's belief that micromanaging is not part of his style. He clarifies that in his college, people are granted the ability to craft solutions to issues; with that comes the responsibility to deal with the outcomes. That is scary for people, he remarks. "When our

employee's ride by the Welcome to CLCC, they'll feel like that is their home. It is not just a place they visit; they are part of the construction," he claims.

Golden View Community College is located in the same county as a major military base. This is a major economic force for the community, along with the county's educational and healthcare sector. Building a trustful relationship with these key stakeholders is paramount to Dr. Sales. "It is all about friend building. I build friends individually, as well as for the institution. Trust is a key element of friendship. These partnerships are essential for the sustainability of the college." Dr. Sales chuckles, "It is almost like a mafia mentality, you know, you pat my back, I'll pat yours." "Seriously," she adds, "we must trust our partners for the economic stability in our otherwise rural area."

Interestingly, Dr. Sales adds another trusting relationship that is vital to her role as president of the community college:

I entered this presidency alongside a chief financial officer who had held the position for over 40 years. It was not news to me that he held the most control of anyone on campus. I knew that I must be accountable to the trustees, elected officials, state governments, and my college in the area of fiscal management. I pushed myself to learn way beyond the normal understanding of the finance and business end of the college. This was critical to trust building with my financial officer.

Trust is critical in developing relationships within the college, the community, and among peers, according to Dr. Davis. As previously stated, this

college president is the first female leader in a community steeped in religious tradition. When asked about key relationships in her role as leader, she quickly talks about a prominent church leader:

I befriended this church official and showed a genuine interest and respect for his work and community. He trusted my sincerity and invited me to speak at meetings that had never been open to non-religious leaders. Introductions were made to all-male meetings and behind the scenes meetings. My circle of influence was substantially widened due to the trust that I had developed with this leader. I subsequently met with multimillion dollar businessmen, a bishop of the church, two newspaper owners and publishers, and the owner of the State Bank. I have been a member of this circle for over 3 years now, and they even recently invited another woman! She is a state senator.

Again, the double helix serves as the model for relational leadership, according to Regan and Brooks (1995), and we know that in order for this molecule to reproduce and grow, the blueprint must be communicated to other cells. As previously discussed, the process of transferring information must occur in a trusting environment in order for the desired outcome to become reality.

Blending of Leadership Qualities

As Regan and Brooks (1995) describe, relational leadership employs tenets from transactional and transformative leadership styles. The relational leader knows which tenet will yield the desired outcome in a given situation. This

movement between masculinized and feminized cultural construction of concepts is referred to as gendering by Binns (2008). The heroic leader, similar to a pure transactionalist, describes the tough, self-reliant, combative man who works long hours, controls emotions, never shows weakness, and prioritizes result over family and relationships. The relational leader, more evident of the transformative leader, according to Binns, is characterized as caring for colleagues, enabling others to act, acknowledging and learning from one's mistakes, and being emotionally authentic. Instead of constructing a dichotomy, Binns suggests that gendering describes the movement between the cultural concepts in leadership.

This fluid motion or gendering as defined by Binns (2008) may result in tension and contradictions which is inherent in the process. Sinclair (2007) encourages leaders to do identity work or reflexive practice to uncover, challenge, and change the discourses which shape their own subjectivity and result in damage to organizations, individuals, and society.

The conceptual evolution of Regan and Brook's (1995) model of relational leadership is based on the following a central belief:

Life can be lived on both sides of the fault line, necessitating movement across it depending on circumstances, which in turn is an expression of the idea that both either or and both/and behaviors are required for competent administering. (p. 20)

The fault line refers to the metaphor of a pyramid describing the differentiation of people, power, and status in Western culture. The fault line, running through the middle of the pyramid, separates the wealth, status, and power that people who

are above the line possess, from the world of people performing repetitive, undervalued duties of daily life. Typically, white males occupy the upper part of the pyramid, whereas the lower half of the pyramid is comprised of women, people of color, and low-status white males. According to this theory, it is within these tasks of daily living that caring, nurturing, relationship, and community building happen. The either/or structure above the fault line stands in opposition to the below the fault line world which is a both/and operation (Regan & Brooks, 1995).

When participants were asked to describe the perception of the leadership principles prevalent in the community college leaders of the early 1970s, the responses reflected above-the-fault line leaders. Dr. Sales confirmed, “It is still a bureaucratic system, but now with the increased accountability, all of the i’s have to be dotted and the t’s crossed.”

Regan and Brooks (1995) further explain the enrichment of leadership by a synthesis of the attributes found in each section of the pyramid, a blending of qualities grounded in both male and female experiences. In this model leaders are not erroneous when they implore the notion of caring and collaboration nor discompassionate when exercising firm decision making. The leaders are bringing to consciousness and naming the feminist attributes of leadership.

When Regan and Brooks (1995) offered the new understanding of a broken pyramid, they clearly noted that accepting that gender is a category of experience does not mean that learning arising from the experiences of the other gender is inaccessible. Thus the development of the double helix as a metaphor

was introduced. Instead of the pyramidal thinking, the form of the double helix depicted movement across the two strands as constant, a fluid motion, and necessary for the whole structure. Power rested in inclusiveness, encompassing and legitimizing the either/or and both/and ways of being, each strand depending on the other. Both genders needed to move back and forth from the conceptualization of the world primarily associated with their gender. The metaphor explained that both knowledge and praxis are incomplete if articulated through the perspective of one gender only (Regan & Brooks, 1995).

When asked to discuss the perception of their leadership principles in contrast to the community college leader of the early 1970s, the participants described the gendering process. Bailey stated:

The leaders serving in the infancy of the community college in the 70s, focused on day-to-day operations and within the constraints of their geographic location. Today's senior leaders must be visionaries that have a broader view of the impact of our colleges.

Dr. Davis reflected on the evolution of the community college presidency as well, glimpsing the gendered "identity work" (Sinclair, 2007) that she has enfolded into her day-to-day perspective:

I think that perhaps bureaucratic insular leadership served colleges well 20 years ago because our country was very different. Our world was very different. I do rejoice that I was born at a different time and prepared for leadership at a time where my natural skills

and abilities of building relationships speaks to the needs of the community college of the future.

As previously mentioned Binns (2008) describes movement between masculinized and feminized cultural construction of concepts as gendering. Regan and Brooks (1995) use the metaphor of a double helix to describe the amalgamation of traditional gender specific roles to form a leadership style known as relational. Both of these models are proponents of a both/and leadership style as opposed to one entrenched in an either/or mandate. The study participants have referred to this blending process often as they reflect on their diverse leadership styles, styles highly attuned to the context, people, and power relationships most impacted by their decisions as president. For instance, Dr. Sales recalls her first meeting with the Board of Trustees:

I over-prepared for this inaugural session. I was mindful that everything that the previous president presented was virtually rubber-stamped. I knew that I must meet them in their comfort zone and be self-assured. Over time, as the Board has begun to have confidence in my abilities, I can approach them with a more relational style of leadership, a more authentic one from my perspective.

Gender issues. Gender issues appeared as a byproduct of the research process. While discussing the blending of transactional and transformative leadership styles, the female presidents offered their perspective from a female perspective. Both of these leaders represented the first female presidents of their

respective institutions. Both followed white, male leaders who held the top college position for over 10 years. The previous leaders could be described as typical for the community college system in the 1980s; white, middle-aged men, well-respected by community and religious groups in the community. Dr. Davis reflected, “I feel I have to work twice as hard to gain access to opportunities in leadership than my male counterparts of my same age.” Dr. Sales reflected on a recent situation with the college attorney:

In referring to him questioning a solution to an existing issue, I remarked, now Joe, that occurred 5 years ago with our previous president and you never questioned it. Just tell me what the difference is. He paused and grinned when I remarked; it is the male/female thing isn't it?

Even in the 21st century, leaders are not shielded from the impact of gender bias. Dr. Sales chuckles as she recalls the day she was asked to come to the nursing department to address an important issue:

While walking over to the building, a representative from the nursing department called the president's office to ask if I was wearing high heels, apparently from their perspective, I am in a great mood when I wear these shoes. Now, a male president's demeanor would never be associated with a pair of shoes!

In the Summer of 2009, Dr. Davis was selected as one of her state's *Women Who Make a Difference* (Hall, 2009). As one of only two female

presidents in the state and the first female president of WRCC, Davis often finds herself as the only woman in the boardroom;

The best solution is to simply take gender out of the equation. If you focus on gender, it could get discouraging. I would get caught up on that and feel it was a mountain too high to climb. My success has come by focusing on the issues and ideas. We come around the table and focus on the goals and beliefs we share. That gets the agenda further forward than focusing on how we're different. Bringing women to the table challenges homogenous viewpoints. Women also bring a sense of inclusion, a willingness to be vulnerable and a desire to learn from mistakes. I think women are poised to help the country go forward in a global economy and society. I want to inspire women to tell themselves, 'I can do it. It is hard work, but the rewards are unimaginable'.

(Hall, 2009, pp.10-11)

The historical dichotomy of bureaucratic leadership, illustrated by the fault line metaphor (Regan & Brooks, 1995), is not limited to the individual leaders in the community college setting, but also the larger macro-structures within which these leaders must function. The social-cultural constructs of the community is steeped in the bureaucratic origin. For example, the community of Central Lake Community College was built on the manufacturing markets. Bailey states, the infrastructure for 40 years was that as long as they had a job in the plant, there was no need to pursue a high school or college education. Generations of family

members often worked in the same plant. Increased automation and the acceptance of global markets have dramatically decreased the need for manufacturing workers in this local community. Plants have closed and unemployment has risen sharply. Like the 21st community college, new industry demands a workforce with new skills, employees with critical thinking and problem solving skill sets, Bailey adds.

This emerging era in the workplace has significant gender issues. Historically the physical demands of the manufacturing plants required the muscle strength of men, reflecting the cultural phenomenon of the early and mid 20th century where the female stayed at home and the male worked outside. The skill requirements for the 21st century worker, as Bailey describes, are not restricted to a specific gender, but of intrinsic qualities. Current employment data demonstrates the significant percentage of females in the workplace, including the community colleges. Like Dr. Sales states there has been a sharp rise in the number of women community college presidents. The shift in gender demographics in the workplace through the mid to late 20th century and into the 21st century illustrates the frailty of the fault line as described by Regan and Brooks (1995). I am not suggesting that gender disparity has vanished, however, breakthroughs of opportunity and successes have demonstrated a shift.

Environment. Several references across interview narratives pointed to the important role that the gendered physical spaces and material objects played in helping shape these president's own and others' perceptions of their leadership. Observations surfaced visual and sensory patterns that reinforced or challenged

gendered perspectives of their experiences in college environments. Regan and Brooks (1995) cited how research participant, Susan Villani, an elementary principal, discussed feminist attributes and how they brought clarity to her role as a leader. She described the former principal's office with a large gray metal desk and two gray filing cabinets in a row, facing the entrance to the office. She knew this arrangement would not work for her:

In the spirit of finding a way to make my office reflect my style, I set about to find some wooden furniture, scouring the attics of many of the schools and the administration buildings. People were confused by my unwillingness to accept their generous offers to offer some new metal office furniture. Eventually, I pieced together just what I wanted. I placed a refinished oak desk at a diagonal to the doorway, with a chair to the side of the desk; peering over my desk was not the way I wanted to begin conversations. (p. 45)

Like Ms. Villani, Dr. Davis described to me the changes that she made at West River Community College to reflect her relational leadership style. Demonstrating her value of the students and her power as president, she created a contest for the Interior Design students to draft designs for her office. Working with the director of the program, Dr. Davis selected the winning design and all of the students worked on the project. Her office incorporated beautiful warm colors, lovely drapes, a large conference table, and meaningful pictures and

artwork from her personal and professional life. Her space then reflected her leadership style.

As Dr. Davis exhibited, the hallmark of a relational leader is the ability to blend leadership qualities in order to reach outcomes that meet the mission of the community college, in this case, to demonstrate the value of the students' design work. This beautiful office space presents a demonstration to all visitors to the president's office the quality of instruction and the skill sets of the design students. The students are able to use pictures of the office in their professional portfolios. Intuitively knowing which leadership trait will yield the intended result is evidenced through the practice of mindfulness, discovery and authenticity (Stoeckel & Davies, 2007). Stoeckel and Davies's phenomenological study has addressed how community college presidents experience self-reflection in their leadership roles. Reflection is the result of internally examining and exploring an issue of concern, caused by an experience, resulting in the clarification of self followed by a change in the conceptual perspective of the subject of thought (Stoeckel & Davies). It is through the process of reflection that community college presidents use intuition to guide their leadership decisions and actions.

Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed study participants' responses to the interview questions and findings from other data sources. Each president reflected on their meaning and understanding of the tenets of relational leadership. In addition, the interviewees shared their thoughts on the evolution of the community college and the leadership skills needed for becoming and being a successful leader.

Websites, articles, emails, and documents provided additional insight into the perception of relational leadership of the participants. Three themes emerged from the data: personal construction of leadership, key attributes of relational leadership and blending of leadership qualities.

Personal construction of leadership revealed the meaning of family, mentors, and educational background regarding the development of the participants as relational leaders. The analysis explored the responses to the perception of Regan and Brooks' (1995) feminist attributes as significant tenets to relational leading. In addition to Regan and Brooks' model, the attributes of communication and trust were found to be essential to effective leadership among participant community college presidents.

Of special interest in this analysis is the importance of blending leadership qualities in order to be most effective in a leadership role. The data reveals that the ability to intuitively know which tenet, whether transformative or transactional in nature, will yield the optimal resolution, followed by mindful actions is a hallmark of an effective relational leader. The following chapter extends this descriptive and preliminary analytic discussion to include an interpretive account of the study's findings. I also offer implications for educational practice and suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 6

Discussion and Implications

Community colleges in the 21st century are facing imminent shortages in senior leadership (McNair, 2010; Shults, 2001; Weisman & Vaughan, 2002). The scarcity of top leaders is due to the combination of impending retirements and the decrease in graduate students preparing for community college administration (McNair, 2010). This phenomenon suggests the critical need for future educational leaders prepared for the executive level of leadership in the community college.

As colleges seek to fill the vacancies of senior leaders over the next few years, the question becomes what skill sets are required to lead the institution in the 21st century? The American Association of Community Colleges recognizes that the preparation for the emerging president requires unique skill sets. As previously presented, AACC (2005) has developed core competencies that are essential for this vital role in the college: organizational strategy, resource management, communication, collaboration, community college advocacy, and professionalism. Of great significance is the development of leaders who are prepared with these competencies and skill sets required for the future community college.

This study explored the perception, development, and skill sets of current community college presidents in relation to the emerging 21st century community college. The qualitative design provided an inductive process in order to understand the meaning and context of the participants' experiences. This research method, according to Maxwell (2005), also identifies unanticipated

phenomena and generates new theories. This study, an exemplar case study, provided the construction and understanding of a specific leadership style, relational leadership, in the framework of the 21st century community college. The significance of the research has been to (a) provide a detailed description of how relational leadership is practiced, (b) provide a description of how leaders in senior positions in the community college construct and make meaning of their relational leadership beliefs and practices, and (c) identify themes that contribute to a theory of relational leadership styles and the implications of this theory relative to the role of the community college in a global society. Five guiding questions framed this qualitative case study:

1. What are the skills sets of successful relational leaders?
2. How are skills sets of successful relational leaders developed?
3. What do relational leaders describe as the differences between traditional leadership styles and those defined as relational leadership?
4. What are the ways in which relational leaders beliefs, and practices align and misalign with the traditional and emerging mission of the community college?
5. What are the benefits of relational leadership within the current context of the community college, especially given leaders' evolving understanding of globalization and its influence in terms of economics, culture, information, and politics?

The following considers the findings discussed in the previous chapter in light of the current literature on community college leadership and leadership theory. In addition to this analysis, documentation on the importance of the

research topic will be presented and implications and recommendations for future research will conclude the study.

Social/Cultural Conceptualization of Relational Leadership

In order to understand relational leadership, as defined by Regan and Brooks (1995), the historical context for the development of leadership theory is important to consider. The review of literature in Chapter 2 presents the milestones of the various leadership models and their theoretical origins. Of special interest in this research is the unique conceptual formation of relational leadership. The metaphor of the double helix, as described by Regan and Brooks, offers insight into a both/and approach to leadership instead of an either/or model. In establishing their concept, Regan and Brooks describe previous leadership models solely originating from a masculine perspective that typically have placed white, male leaders to function above the fault line in a pyramid, a world where competitiveness, status, and power define success. Women, people of color, and blue-collar workers, are found operating below the fault line using different skills from those at the “top of the pyramid,” such as collaboration, connectedness, and nurturance, to achieve their goals. Successful people were thought to be those at the top of the pyramid, eliminating those below the fault line from rewards, recognition, and power.

The evolution and reality of the double helix model by Regan and Brooks (1995) suggests the value of living on both sides of the fault line. The concept of being above or below oversimplified a complex idea, similar to the idea that something is either/or instead of both/and. Equally valuing all concepts suggests

that effective leaders evoke “gendering” and utilize leadership attributes on the other side of the fault line depending on the situation.

Eddy and Cox (2008) have described the ability to move between the strands of attributes associated with solely masculine or feminine ways of being as “gendering.” Differentiating a job, for instance, from the worker is described in gendering terms by Eddy and Cox. These researchers note jobs are often seen in terms of a masculine perspective as part of the hierarchical organizational chart with no human bodies. Closely observing qualities of the individual and individual skill sets would be responding from a more feminine viewpoint. Collaborations may lead to rethinking power and leadership roles in the community college as leaders transition to a more relational leadership framework (Eddy & Cox, 2008).

When leading my study participants in a discussion of their values of leadership, the topic of blending traditional and nontraditional ways of leading was prevalent. “Many years ago, a college president could make a unilateral decision about budget expenditures, shift funds from one account to another, and that would be that!” Dr. Sales quips. However, she continues, “today evidence of transparency and collaboration must coincide with the leader’s decision. Today, the accountability is often state driven, guided by legislative action, and approved by a board of trustees.”

Dr. Davis adamantly confirms that it is the president’s responsibility to make hard decisions and to accept responsibility for them. She also concludes that the blending of traditional and more relational leader skills is crucial to the

successful implementation of college policies and the effective communication of the meaning of actions. Dr. Davis implies that tough decisions must be made at the top; however, the outcomes can be delivered in an inclusive, empathetic manner. This is a blended leadership pattern, incorporating transaction and transformation, the hallmarks of relational leadership, according to Regan and Brooks (1995).

The symbolism of the double helix expresses the power of inclusiveness, neither side of the structure, though very different, is dominant in respect to the other side, a hallmark of relational leadership. Similar to the double helix metaphor, Helgesen (1995) describes the inclusive nature of leading as a web, an intertwining stalwart structure. According to Helgesen, the web is noted for open communication across all levels in a structure. As opposed to top-down hierarchical structures, the web blurs distinctions between conception and execution. In addition, Helgesen suggests that webs create lasting networks that redistribute power in the organization. Like the double helix, the web reflects the blending of multiple facets to create a whole, allowing each construct to have consideration and input into the structure or organization.

Dr. Davis illustrated this web of inclusion when she held a series of President's Forum to discuss the budget crisis facing the college. Employees, from maintenance workers to the vice presidents, were encouraged to attend the meeting and offer solutions to the impending financial woes. Despite the challenging topic, solutions were formulated and the implementation was met

with less resistance than anticipated, a direct result of the number of employees involved with creating the plan and understanding the issues.

Study participants also reflected on the construction of their leadership beliefs in terms of a metaphor. As described in Chapter 3, a jigsaw puzzle, a mosaic, and a dot to dot puzzle depicted the relationship of participants to an organization and the influence of leadership. Interestingly, each metaphor was comprised of important individual pieces, uniquely crafted for a specific purpose.

The relational leader starts building a project with the outcome always in mind. The leader anticipates where the specific piece will fit or have meaning in terms of the overall project, recognizing that the lack of this object will significantly change the outcome. The creator values each addition in relation to the overall structure.

A hierarchical structure does not define or limit the connectedness with the overall structure. Dr. Davis's elicited all employees' thoughts through open President's Forums, and Dr. Sales met with all employees individually to inquire about what was important to them, input that she would not know from reading their employment application. These actions are not mandated of the president of a college; rather they are illustrations of relational leading, which values inclusion and connectedness. Like the double helix and web, these metaphors have no definitive beginnings or endings.

Personal Construction of Leadership

Of specific interest in this study is the exploration of the construction of leadership by community college presidents who describe themselves as relational

leaders. Eddy (2005) comments that, even though presidents are one of the most studied administrative roles, limited research exists on how these leaders construct their own leadership. Participants in this study were specifically asked how their leadership beliefs were acquired and their skill sets developed.

As discussed in detail in Chapter 5, each leader reflected back to his/her family of origin. Dr. Bailey reminisced about his parents who valued the community college and specifically his father's willingness to help others. Playing a significant role in Dr. Davis' life was her grandfather who persevered through a debilitating disease without using excuses to thrive in his work and family life. Weick (1995) concludes, in *Sensemaking in Organizations*, that past knowledge and experiences guide how people make sense of events and situations. Eddy (2005) used Weick's conceptual model of sensemaking to provide a framework for understanding how community college leaders made meaning of their work. Identity construction, which involves a mental map that aids in navigation through life and work, is the first step of sensemaking. Using past experiences to better understand how to relate to an occurrence of which one is trying to make sense is the second. Whether identifying their personal metaphor or reflecting a specific challenging experience, it is evident that sensemaking has been critical to the success of the participants in this study.

Wheatley (2002) offers a similar viewpoint of construction when addressing the essentials of relational leadership. She describes profound understanding or meaning making as a critical part of the process of relational leadership. The progression of asking why one does things a certain way is a

reflective practice and is fundamental to collaborative and caring leadership (Wheatley, 2002). Stoeckel and Davies (2007) conclude that reflection promotes personal growth. The process of internally examining and exploring an issue of concern, triggered by an experience, which creates and clarifies meaning in terms of self and which results in a changed conceptual perspective, is reflective learning (Stoeckel & Davies, 2007). Dr. Davis expressed an earnest desire to understand the impending budget crisis on her faculty. After reflecting in depth she sought meaning from those who would be most at risk by the impact of budget cuts. She invited the employees to a President's Forum, an open discussion for thoughts, facts, and concerns. This process displayed compassion, caring, and respect to those she leads. Following these discussions, Dr. Davis had additional perspective that assisted with the difficult budget directives.

An interesting point that the participants made was how important it was to generally understand the impact of their predecessors. They all entered college settings that were steeped in history and with an established culture. Dr. Davis and Dr. Sales entered their institutions as the first female presidents. Dr. Davis recalls, "not only am I a female, my cultural background is not similar to the majority of college employees, and I have never lived in this part of the country." Stoeckel and Davies (2007) describe in their phenomenological study on reflective leadership by community college presidents, that personal growth through learning involves taking risks and discovering their potential. In this study, Sarah, a college president, left the Midwest and moved to the South to teach Black students. Her new experiences challenged her ingrained, ethnocentric

beliefs; however, she learned empathy for disenfranchised students. Interestingly, by paying close attention to their new campuses and having confidence in their sense making, study participants were able to transform the new college environment into communities that reflected their leadership beliefs.

The study participants have cited mentors as essential in their development as a reflective and relational leader. Dr. Sales recalls pausing before rendering decisions in order to remember the lessons of her mentor: consider all of the people impacted by your decision. Of special note, Dr. Bailey cites that “although I have learned much from various mentors, I do not discount the lessons that have been learned by observing poor examples of leadership. Those examples keep me from repeating those mistakes.”

In addition to reflection and mentoring, education preparation surfaced as important in the construction of the community college leader. Traditionally, community college leaders have acquired their skills primarily through on the job training, professional development, and mentoring (McNair, 2010). When analyzing the curriculum vitae of the study participants, the presidents started the ascension to their current position with classroom teaching followed by midlevel positions, deanships, and chief academic officers. In addition to learning through their positions, all of the participants cited networking with peers and professional development as key to their success. Again, the curriculum vitae of all of the presidents cited formal leadership development programs, such as the National Institute for Leadership Development in Community Colleges attended by Dr. Davis. Dr. Sales, while admitting that her background in child development often

proved helpful in her role, also noted her *lack* of formal education in higher education administration. She noted the importance of reading and attending conferences to gain additional insight into leadership development.

The participants in this study have a variety of educational backgrounds as presented in Chapter 3. Two participants have backgrounds in special education; the third holds a degree in higher education. Each president cited the importance of their ongoing preparation in leadership, whether formal or informal, as critical to their success as leaders. With the mass exodus of community college leadership expected with the next few years, there is a consensus of concern, specifically by AACC, about the preparation of future leaders (2005). Fulton-Calkins and Milling (2005) concluded that the number of students in graduate programs preparing students for community college leadership will fill only a fraction of the expected openings. Formal doctoral programs in higher education administration and leadership are plentiful (Hammons & Miller, 2006). However, McNair's (2010) study on preparing community college leaders suggests there are serious concerns as to whether current programs meet the demands of the contemporary community college. The outcome of McNair's work supports the AACC (2005) framework of the six core competencies for effective leaders in the community college and suggests that skills in organizational strategy, resource management, and community be acquired through doctoral studies.

Gender issues. Although, not a specific targeted area of research for my study, gender issues proved to be specific undercurrent in the construction of leadership traits. The origin of relational leadership as defined by Regan and

Brooks (1995) has already been discussed in detail (see pages 18-25 of this document). However, the impact of gender on the role of president was not specifically addressed.

As discussed in Chapter 5, in the early to mid 20th century, men were taught to relate to the industry in which they worked in a hierarchical manner, taking their place in the organizational plan designated by their superior. Work was segmented and each employee had his own set of tasks. Doing those tasks well allowed one to be considered for the next hierarchical rung on the ladder of achievement. Women, however, have seen their tasks as a whole, needing to build human potential and value successful group goals of success and harmony (Evans, 2001).

Without a specific prompt or direct question, each of my study participants have addressed the role of gender as significant to their perceptions of the 21st century community college leader. Dr. Sales notes, “There is absolutely no question that there is a difference in how people respond both personally to you and around you based on gender.” The president of West River Community College notes:

As one of only two female presidents of a western state with ten institutions of higher education and the first female president of WRCC, I often find myself as the only woman in the boardroom. The best solution is to simply take gender out of the equation. My success comes from focusing on the issues and ideas.

Dr. Bailey comments from a male perspective, “I look around at our president’s meeting and the environment has definitely changed.” He was referring to the younger age of the new presidents and the increased ratio of female to male community college presidents. There is an expectation, Dr. Bailey remarks, “times have changed and the expectations are not the same as during the era of the good old boys.”

Stout-Stewart (2005) concurred that the evolution of more females in top leadership positions is a national trend. In fact, Stout-Stewart remarks, female community-college presidents are positioned to serve as change agents for leadership and become transformational leaders. Kouzes and Posner (2003) stated that the outcome of transformational leadership to be when people raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality, in their interactions. As presented in Chapter 2, relational leadership evolved from transformational leadership theory. Gender and gender issues are a contributing factor in the evolution of a relational leadership style. The tenets of caring and collaboration have been credited as more of a feminine style of leading. More research is needed to substantiate the role of gender relative to the community college leader as the ratios of male to female become narrower and the leadership styles become more homogeneous between the genders. As Regan and Brooks (1995) point out:

The body of knowledge that we learned in our graduate school educations about administration derives essentially and exclusively from male-based experience, because the overall experience and knowledge of women as a gender is devalued and hidden in our

culture, and because, in particular, women have been excluded from positions of leadership; their experience, therefore, is not available as a source of knowledge. (pp. 17-18)

In addition to more research on women as leaders from the female perspective, literature is needed from a male perspective on relational leadership. In my research, I included a male president, not based on gender, but on his commitment to the tenets of relational leadership. I am confident that the inclusion of his participation strengthened the study due to the fact that his responses and quotes were more similar than different when compared to his female counterparts. The similarities could not be attributed to gender, but rather to the beliefs associated with the type of leadership. Much more longitudinal research is needed in this area of leadership.

Skill sets required for 21st century community college leaders. In this study, special consideration is given to the less researched perspective of relational leading, the feminist attributes. As Regan and Brooks (1995) conclude, relational leaders collaborate and intuitively know when to make the shift from one leadership attribute to another..

Regan and Brooks (1995) define the feminist attributes of leadership as collaboration, caring, courage, intuition, and vision. In this study, the responses of the participants evidenced the concepts. Each participant reflected in detail the importance of each of these attributes in their view of leadership. The following discussion interprets the participant's responses in light of current literature in community college leadership in the 21st century.

All of the study participants agreed that the five tenets, as described by Regan and Brooks (1995), were essential to the 21st century community college leader. Using the metaphor of the double helix, the researchers examine how these qualities combine with the more traditional models of leaders, those from the transactional period, to form a nonlinear expression of leadership that is effective in our modern, global society. For example, all of the participants concurred that the leadership tenet, collaboration, is crucial to the sustainability of a college system. The financial viability of a community college is dependent on partnerships. For example, Dr. Bailey made the commitment during his first year of service to listen to the community and build consensus within his service area. As a result, financial support in terms of donation, grants and resources have been realized.

Historically, the early community colleges were steeped in bureaucratic rule and caring was not listed as the hallmark of a successful college president. Perhaps the connotation of caring was seen as a weakness or tentative character trait. Regan and Brooks (1995) have defined caring as the development of an affinity for the world and people in it, translating moral commitment to action on behalf of others. As noted in Chapter 5, each of the research participants discussed caring extensively, not necessarily in the simple statements of “*I care*,” but through descriptions of their actions. Fulton-Calkins and Milling (2005) work in *Community College Leadership: An art to be practiced: 2010 and beyond*, discussed that caring community college leaders have impacted the people within their organizations who, in turn, have made positive differences in the field of

leadership. As Dr. Sales remarked about caring, “This is my strong point, it is important for me to show how much I care and I do.”

Noddings (2003) states that caring involves stepping out of one’s own personal frame of reference into others. Dr. Bailey sits with new hires and inquires about something of interest that he would not find on their application. The bonds of knowing that new colleagues are expecting a baby or buying their first house or returning to graduate school have created a connection of caring.

Another of Regan and Brook’s tenets (1995) of relational leadership is courage. To move ahead into the unknown, testing new ideas in the world of practice, defines courage. Dr. Davis, a first-time president, the first woman president and the first president that was not of the predominant faith of the community; exemplifies courage. Dr. Bailey displayed courage when reorganizing the college structure and distributing the power of decision making throughout the ranks. Again, AACC (2005) proclaims that courage is an illustration of professionalism, one of the six competencies for the community college president. A leader must demonstrate the courage to take risks, make difficult decisions, and accept responsibility (AACC, 2005). Courageous leaders are able to confront reality even if it is painful and have a positive self-esteem to withstand peer pressure, resulting in leading with a moral purpose (Komives, Lucas, & McMahon, 2007). What is evident with all of these presidents is that risk taking is inherent in this realm of work.

Intuition, the ability to give equal weight to experience and abstraction, mind, and heart (Regan & Brooks, 1995), is central to the conceptual framework

of relational leadership. Like intuition, self-reflection is the process of internally examining and exploring an issue of concern, triggered by an experience, which creates and clarifies meaning in terms of self and which results in a changed conceptual perspective (Stoeckel & Davies, 2007).

Stoeckel and Davies conducted a phenomenological study asking how community college presidents experience self-reflection in their leadership roles. The major themes from their data analysis were mindfulness, discovery, and authenticity. The presidents in Stoeckel and Davies's study described the need to stop during the course of life to listen, center, and connect with their inner thoughts, despite a hectic life. Enriching the inward journey has been cited as a crucial leadership trait (Fulton-Calkins & Milling, 2005) for the 2010 and beyond community college leader. Similarly, Parker Palmer's (2000) work cited the truism to lead from within:

A true leader must be willing to constantly delve deep within the self—not afraid to look at the doubt while not afraid to analyze the mistakes made, not afraid to admit that the answers are not always there. In fact, the true leader accepts that mistakes are inevitable, is willing to pull mistakes into the open light to analyze the why, while not demeaning the self in the process, but growing from it (Palmer, p. 237).

Intuition, like self-reflection is a mental ability strongly associated with experience (Regan & Brooks 1995). Dr. Davis recalls the lesson she has learned from Gladwell (2008) about the 10,000 hour rule. Practice is important. People at

the very top don't work just harder or even harder or even much harder than everyone else, they work much, much harder (Gladwell, 2008). Dr. Davis is confident in her intuitive process. "I know that if something just does not sound right, then something is wrong," she states. "Intuition is really what wisdom is, it is listening to my inner voice and my intuition." Wisdom and intuition come from experience. For future leaders, mentoring experiences could assist with the development of this critical tenet, intuition.

The ability to formulate and express original ideas, enabling others to consider options in new and different ways, or "vision" according to Regan and Brooks (1995) is essential for the 21st century community college leader. As discussed in Chapter 5, Dr. Bailey claims the challenge of creating a new way of thinking is daunting, and he refers to the movement toward a new vision as "controlled chaos." When citing the six competencies required for community college leaders, AACC (2005) defines vision within the concept of organizational strategy:

An effective community college leader strategically improves the quality of the institution, protects the long-term health of the organization, promotes the success of the students, and sustains the community college mission, based on knowledge of the organization, its environment, and future trends. (p. 4)

Analysis of each of the participant's community college websites revealed vision statements who promote innovation and responsiveness to the changing demographics they serve. From West River's vision statement, which seeks to be

the premier community college in the nation, to Central Lake's vision to be the standard of excellence for programs, services, and facilities for community colleges in the nation (to protect the anonymity, the text has been paraphrased from college website), innovation is essential. College presidents require 21st century leadership skills as described by McNair (2010). To meet the AACC core competencies for effective leadership, community college leaders in the 21st century leaders must be open to new ideas (McNair, 2010).

All three of these leaders confirm their belief that collaboration, caring, courage, intuition, and vision are critical to the success of the 21st century community college leader. How these beliefs are realized varies among the leaders; however, each has presented evidence that their values are essential to their practice. Of most interest to my study is how the presidents described the positive outcome to their institution as a result of these tenets of relational leadership. Also, special interest is the alignment of these skill sets with the AACC core competencies as described by McNair (2010) for the effective community college leader in the 21st century.

Communication and trust: Essential to relational leadership. Although I concur with Regan and Brooks (1995) on the conceptual framework of relational leadership, my research findings indicate the need for expansion on their work. Again, using the analogy of the double helix, representing a blending of transactional and transformative leadership beliefs of the five tenets - collaboration, caring, courage, intuition and vision- I suggest additional tenets are essential in order to sustain an organizational environment based on relational

leadership. Sustainability of a community college is not limited solely to the qualities of the leader. The mission of the institution must be communicated throughout the organization, and an atmosphere of trust is required like oxygen is to living cells.

Communication is one of the six competencies required of the community college leader. AACC (2005) proclaims,

An effective community college leader uses clear listening, speaking, and writing skills to engage in honest, open dialogue at all levels of the college and its surrounding community, to promote the success of all students, and to sustain the community college mission. (p. 5)

The ability to articulate and champion shared mission, vision, and values to internal and external audiences while actively listening to understand, comprehend, analyze, engage and act are illustrations of effective communication required of the 21st century community college leader (AACC, 2005). McNair (2010) concludes that leaders must find ways to involve people in their decisions. People have the right to be heard and the responsibility to listen (Komives, Lucas, & McMahon, 2007). An effective leader believes that people have the right to make a request or ask a question, and the recipient has the right to make his or her own decision without apology.

A critical factor to effective leadership is the ability to communicate and foster the communication process (Wergin, 2007). In a bureaucratic setting,

office politics and power games tend to use information and communication as weapons. The outcome is toxic to the optimal functioning of the organization.

The college environment is comprised of powerful, intellectual people, often with competing interests. Fostering an environment that values open sharing of authentic communication and accurate information is powerful. For instance, Dr. Davis invited the entire college to participate in President's Forums to discuss the state's budget crisis. The topic was dismal and controversial; however, her willingness to invite discussion conveyed caring, listening, and wanting correct information.

Trust is essential to the life of a successful leader and an organization. Trust has been identified as a key ingredient to healthy work environments (Wong & Cummings, 2009). In their study of authentic leadership behavior on trust and work outcomes of health care staff, Wong and Cummings conclude that supportive leader behavior and trust in management are necessary for staff to be willing to voice concerns and offer suggestions to improve the workplace and patient care.

The AACCC (2005) illustrates professionalism of a leader as one who promotes integrity, honesty, and respect for people. "An effective community college leader works ethically to set high standards for self and others, continuously improve self and surroundings, demonstrate accountability to and for the institution, and ensure the long-term viability of the college and community" (p. 5). Trustworthy leaders instill in staff a sense of commitment and pride in work that is manifested in increased engagement in the exploration of

new ideas, willingness to speak up about problems and make suggestions for workplace changes, and greater sensitivity to others' words and ideas (Edmondson, 1999; Spreitzer, Sutcliffe, Dutton, Sonenshin, & Grant, 2005).

The importance of trust in leadership transcends all types of organizational situations. As the president of West River Community college noted, "My circle of influence was substantially widened due to the trust that I had developed with this community leader." Changes in organizations are inevitable as visionary leaders seek to promote the mission of the college. Integrity and a trusting relationship are central to a system that is working together through change (Komives, Lucas, & McMahon, 2007).

In a descriptive study on leadership skills, Carroll (2005) identifies personal integrity as a priority for 21st century leaders. The personal integrity factor, which includes ethical standards, trustworthiness and credibility are what followers desire in their leaders. "If people are going to follow someone willingly, they first want to assure themselves that the person is worthy of their trust" (p. 149). Dr. Bailey states that building trust was the most important task of his first two years of his presidency:

I had to put actions behind my words in order for everyone to begin to trust that we were creating a new environment, not that the old was bad, but we are now focused on the future...where are we going to be 20 years from now.

In regard to Regan and Brook's (1995) tenets of relational leadership, trust is an essential component to collaboration. As previously discussed, collaboration

and partnerships are the hallmarks of the 21st century community college. Fulton-Calkins and Milling (2005) concur and describe making connections as a crucial leadership trait for future leaders. AACC (2005) states that effective 21st century community college leaders must develop ethical internal and external relationships in order to lead collaboratively. Francis (2006), in a study on collaboration interactions of community colleges and the community, concludes that the community college as an organization is viewed as leaders in the collaborative process. Board members, business leaders, and accreditation organizations, require effective and diplomatic college leaders who are trustworthy in all relationships, fostering collaborative ventures.

Relational Leadership and the 21st Century Community college mission:

Implications for Practice

The leadership gap caused by current and impending retirements of senior leaders in the community colleges is evident. In addition, the leadership skills required have morphed and widened as a result of increased accountability, globalization, student diversity, and advanced technology (AACC, 2005). The American Association of Community Colleges has made leadership development a central focus of its mission because well-prepared leaders are vital to the success of community colleges (AACC, 2005). As discussed throughout this study, the impending crisis in turnover facing community colleges led to AACC developing the competency framework to guide in the preparation of current and future leaders. The six core competencies were noted to be very or extremely essential to the effective performance of a community college leader by 100% of

a 2004 AACC survey. The skill sets required to evidence these competencies require attributes from both sides of the “fault line” (Regan & Brooks, 1995). For instance, AACC identifies resource management as one of the six core competencies for a community college president, requiring the ability to manage time, delegation, and ultimate financial accountability. Of equal value to AACC’s framework for the president is collaboration, which necessitates building partnership, sharing problem solving, and embracing diversity. These competencies demand skill sets originating from both masculine and feminine attributes. The effective 21st century community college president requires the intuition to employ “gendering” or blending the key attributes of relational leadership in light of the situation. The participants in this study evidenced the ability to blend leadership skills, identifying themselves as relational leaders.

The analysis of the data in this study reveals that effective 21st century community college leaders require different skills compared to their counterparts of the previous century. As a result of the synthesis of related literature, data collection, and data analysis, it becomes apparent that the senior leadership of community colleges across the United States is experiencing tremendous turnover. The pioneers of the 1960s are retiring in record numbers at a time when the mission of the community college has expanded to meet the demands of the community it serves. AACC, along with other researchers, has studied the phenomenon and has clearly implied that the 21st century community college senior leader requires new skills sets to implement the competencies needed to lead an effective college.

This study examined the perception of relational leadership of effective 21st century community college presidents. Their insights, as relational leaders, provided guidance and important perspectives for current and future college leaders. As a result, not only were specific skills presented, but the construction and theory of relational leadership were discussed.

The major implications of this study impact the current and future preparation of community college senior leaders. First, relational leaders must reflect on their construction of leadership. The impact of family, friends, mentors and education significantly influence the values of the leader. As demonstrated in this study, the use of a metaphor is helpful in advancing this reflexive process and can aid in communicating the more complex, interconnected personal, social, and political dimensions of the leadership development phenomenon. Second, the key attributes of relational leadership presented in this study align with the purpose and mission of the 21st century community college and need to be continually examined as well as expanded to accommodate the current dynamic global community. Third, the conceptual framework of relational leadership is not an either/or but a both/and process. Relational leaders understand the value of fluctuating between the strands of the double helix or “gendering” in order to effectively respond to a situation.

Logically, a changing world demands new actions, behaviors, and coping mechanisms. It demands new leadership skills. “We can no longer trust the methods and styles of behavior we learned in our educational course work and in our early years of employment to be sufficient to move us into the 21st century”

(Evans, 2001, p. 182). Preparation of current and future community college leaders is essential. Curricula review of formal educational programs, such as the Doctorate in Educational Leadership, is imperative to the development of effective community college leaders. In addition, university faculty with expertise in relational leading may offer regional programs to community college leaders. Leadership programs, such as the Executive Leadership Institute (League for Innovation), Future Leaders Institute (AACCC), and National Institute for Leadership Development (Women in Higher Education), should include the tenets and skill development of relational leadership as essential to an effective community college leader.

Future Research and Final Considerations

Although research is becoming more prevalent on emerging leadership styles, there is a dearth of research on the skill sets required for the 21st century leader, along with how these skill sets are acquired. Future research should examine how leaders describe the ways in which relational leadership is at odds with or antithetical to the working missions of their individual community college domains. Also, research that determines what aspects of globalization make relational leadership in the community college untenable would be of value. In addition, studies that delve into the male perspective on relational leadership would add to this body of knowledge

With respect to research methodology, the use of the exemplar case study is an important contribution to current research. Case studies have been in educational research within the qualitative domain, but exemplar studies are not

as prevalent. The research participants have provided insight into the meaning of their leadership style through the recounting of stories that illustrated their point. Witherell and Noddings (1991) conclude that stories can often assist in understanding by making the abstract concrete and accessible. Future research using exemplar case study would contribute to a deeper, more contextualized understanding of the phenomenon of relational leadership.

Finally, research is needed to study organizational structure as it relates to the rise of relational leadership. What does an infusion of collaboration, caring, courage, intuition, and vision, entwined with communication and trust, mean for the traditional higher education organizational chart? Will bureaucratic charts be revised as Dr. Bailey's "controlled chaos" emerges? Will 21st century presidents evoke "gendering" while complying with AACCC's competencies for community college leaders and determine leadership is not an either/or but a both/and phenomenon? While definitive answers have not been stated to these important questions, with confidence we know that effective 21st century community college leaders will practice on both sides of the fault line.

Reflection

“My bags are packed I’m ready to go, I ‘m standing here outside your door”

(Denver, 1966). But where am I going? Perhaps the contents of my luggage will help this decision. In my large suitcase I see file folders filled with various experiences, career and personal, that have shaped my preparation for my journey. In the medium size travel bag, I have packed information about people who have provided wisdom and guidance along the way. These folders contain the names of family, friends, professors, writers, and colleagues, along with a synopsis of the pearls of wisdom I have gained from meeting them on previous journeys. My smaller, carry-on bag, (the piece of luggage that I personally transport and do not subject to the unpredictable baggage system) contains four folders, my beliefs and values, my constructed knowledge, my lessons learned, and a blank folder for reflections on my next stop. These files of paper are often reread, referenced, reviewed, revised, and reflected upon; therefore, they must be ever present on my journey. Yes, I have packed many things for my journey...but where am I going?

As I stand near the door, bags neatly stacked nearby, I smile as I recall entering this place. I had already accumulated many of the items I leave with today; however, they had lain dormant and unopened for so long that I had to remove the dust from their folders. How valuable it has been to unload the large suitcase and reflect how each experience of my life, whether personnel, educational, or professional, has impacted my development as a person and leader. The names and meanings of the people in the second suitcase are so instrumental to my formation. During this leg of my journey, I have opened these folders, some with hesitation, and reflected on the intersection of my experience with specific individuals. Yes, some encounters left me with the conclusion

that I would seal this folder and not add more, while others will forever remain open, and future dialog will be cherished. Each folder is valued. And then, while I was here, I unpacked my valuable carry-on bag. This took a while. I have carefully analyzed these significant folders, and they contributed much new information and meaning. My beliefs and values have been articulated and documented, my knowledge base has been expanded, my lessons learned have been reflected upon and critiqued to increase their value, and my unnamed folder is ready for the next part of my journey. This has been a busy stop! I have reorganized all of my belongings and carefully and thoughtfully repacked in preparation for my next journey.

What do I know about my next destination? I am confident that I will continue on my leadership journey with new skills and more refined old competencies. For instance, in my current college leadership position as Dean of Health Technologies, I have a renewed interest in identifying the potential and specific value of each individual in the division. DePree (2004) states that to be a leader is to enjoy the special privileges of complexity, of ambiguity, and of diversity, but to be a leader means, especially, having the opportunity to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those who permit you to lead. As I move out of the division and into the college as a whole, I desire to become more involved with key processes that impact how the college carries out its mission. I am more confident that I have skill sets to continue in a leadership role within the emerging professional development initiative at our college. The plan transcends all sectors and is an essential element of becoming a Learning Centered College. Next, I will continue to collaborate with partners outside of the college. I have developed a strong network of business and community partners who desire to work together in a

collaborative, not competitive, manner to seek resolutions to the healthcare workforce needs of the surrounding community and region. This community success has been the direct result of relational leadership. Lipman-Blumen (1996), in *the Connective Edge, Leading in an Interdependent World*, suggests that relational leaders are vicarious, contributory and collaborative, resulting in actions that are beyond competition and leads to interdependence and diversity. Moving beyond my immediate community, I am equipped to work on state initiatives. On the national level, my journey will lead to further discovery of the global world. As Friedman (2006) concludes, “*The World is Flat.*” As a leader, I am convinced that the community college of tomorrow cannot survive if it continues to operate under the initiated in the 1960s and 1970s. So, whether involved in divisional, college, community, state, or national initiatives, I feel confident that my leadership development will provide the essential basis to guide the transition to a new model.

As I load my luggage into the car, I ponder the exact destination of my next stop. As previously discussed, the scope of my current leadership role allows me to be involved at many different levels. I find this stimulating and meaningful; however, I desire to move into a more broad leadership position. At this time, I would like to search for a chief academic officer position in a community college that values innovation, collaboration, and relational leadership. What I do know is that my stop must be much more than just a title; it will need to be in an environment that embraces similar values and beliefs of being a relational leader.

Well, the song continues..... “My bags are packed, I’m ready to go” (Denver, 1966).

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Appendix A
Informed Consent

You are invited to participate in a discussion focused on your perception of the role and impact of relational leadership for the 21st century senior community college leader. Relational leadership has been described as having 5 tenets: collaboration, caring, courage, intuition and vision. This study is being conducted in part for the development of a dissertation which will contribute to generalized knowledge on leadership. The research is part of my program requirements in the doctoral program at Appalachian State University for Educational Leadership.

I will be asking you to volunteer to participate in an interview about your perception of relational leadership in order to better understand the benefits and barriers to 21st century senior community college leaders. I believe that your feelings and understanding of leadership are important. Your participation in this study may help me to understand the role and impact of relational leadership for community college leaders.

I will be the only one that knows you are participating in this study and no personal or identifying information about you will be used. If I refer to you in my documentation, I will use a pseudonym to discuss your comments. Prior to our interview, I will ask you to sign a permission form to talk with you and for the interview to be recorded by tape and/or notation. I will keep these tapes and/or notes in a secure location. I will compile the questions and responses which may be reviewed by ASU professors, again using a pseudonym.

An interview site, agreeable to you, will be designated and the discussion will be conducted within a 60 -90 minute period. You will have the opportunity to review the transcript and revise any comments for clarity.

Most importantly, you should remember that there is no right or wrong answers to the questions that are posed to you. Your opinions, feelings and thoughts are important and you serve as the expert as you discuss your perception of leadership.

CONSENT FORM

I, _____ agree to be recorded by audiotape
and/or notation by Jan Overman, doctoral student at Appalachian State University for the
purpose of research.

Name

Date

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Appendix B
Interview Guide

Research Question:

What is the role and impact of relational leadership of 21st century senior community college leaders?

QUESTIONS	COMMENTS
<p>As you know, an AACC study indicates that within the next 5 years, over 3,000 presidents and vice presidents will be required to fill positions in the community colleges. In addition, AACC has concluded that skills of new and existing leaders must be revolutionized to meet the role of the community colleges in our age of globalization.. My questions for you surround your perception of this topic as it relates to your belief system and practice. (Review the lay summary)</p>	
<p>1. How would you describe the major principles that guide your leadership practice?</p> <p>(Grand Tour)</p>	
<p>2. Now I would like to talk to you about your perception of these principles in contrast to the community college leader of the early 1970's.</p> <p>What are the catalysts for this evolution in leadership?</p>	
<p>3. Relational leadership has been described by Regan and Brooks as having 5 attributes, collaboration, caring, courage, intuition and vision...</p> <p>What significance do you place on these attributes for the 21st community college leader?</p>	
<p>4. How did you acquire the belief that relational leadership attributes were essential</p>	

<p>to effective leadership?</p> <p>How were your skills sets developed?</p> <p>Do you feel that 21st century community college leaders should have specific educational and skills set development on the tenets of relational leadership?</p>	
<p>5.. Can you describe a situation in which these attributes guided you to an action/decision and how the outcome may have been different using the more traditional/bureaucratic decision making process?</p>	
<p>6. The concept of relational leadership has its' origin as an outcome of transformative leadership.... Described by Klenke as cooperation, collaboration, lower control for the leader and problem solving based on intuition and rationality.....</p> <p>Although relational leadership is described as a blending of feminist and masculine leadership traits....do you have any thoughts on the impact of gender on the effectiveness or ease of relational leadership for the senior community college leader/</p>	
<p>7. What is the impact of a relational style leadership on the culture of the college? Will change be required?</p>	
<p>8. Is the trend towards globalization impacting community college leadership? If</p>	

<p>so, what impact does a relational leadership have on the efforts toward globalization?</p>	
<p>7. Metaphors often help to paint a picture of our leadership beliefs and practices. Some relational leaders have describe their styles as “webs of inclusions” or a quilt...Could you describe your leadership style as a metaphor?</p> <p>8. On a scale of 1 – 10. With 10 reflective an essential skill... What rating would you assign to relational leadership traits as a skill set for the 21st community college senior leader?</p> <p>9. Is there anything else you would like to share with me?</p>	

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Jan Gardner Overman is the youngest daughter of Jack and Jean Overman. She was born and raised in Kinston, an eastern North Carolina town. After graduating from East Carolina University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing, she practiced as a cardiovascular intensive care registered nurse. In 1981, Jan entered the world of nursing education at Robeson Community College. Teaching nursing students became a passion and led to the completion of a Master's in Nursing Education from East Carolina University.

During the eighteen years of teaching in various collegiate nursing programs as a full time faculty member, leadership opportunities became available. She served as president of the NC Council for Associate Degree Nursing Faculty and board member for National Organization for Associate Degree Nursing, in addition to accepting college positions as Director of Nursing and Assistant Dean of Health. Currently, she is serving as the Dean of Health Technologies for Forsyth Technical Community College which has the largest health science division among the North Carolina Community College system. Being named as one of NC's Great 100 nurses and receiving the East Carolina University School of Nursing research award are two career highlights.

Jan resides in Winston Salem, North Carolina and actively serves on several community boards, including the YMCA, Boy Scouts of America's Learning for Life, and the Piedmont Alliance for Triad Healthcare. She received her Doctor of Education from Appalachian State University in 2010.