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A collective paradigm of leadership is emerging that represents the kind of leadership needed for the post-industrial society, especially in civic contexts where challenges occur between and among organizations and sectors. This paradigm contrasts with dominant leader-centric perspectives of leadership. Yet most community leadership programs still align with leader-centric perspectives, creating a theory-to-practice gap. This community-engaged study partners with a nonprofit organization that provides leadership development aligned with the collective leadership paradigm. Additionally, collaborators include a community coalition that has participated in the collective leadership development grant program. This three-phase study critiques leader-centric paradigms by aligning conceptual frameworks and methodology with collective paradigms.

The study explores the impacts of collective leadership development on the practice of civic leadership across multiple layers (i.e., individual, group, system) with attention to how position impacts that practice. Findings illuminate ways that leadership educators can impact leadership in community coalitions such as providing a common language and framework and the enhancement and activation of leadership. Key findings also include insight into how civic groups practice leadership that may inform how leadership educators design development opportunities for community coalitions. The study contributes to a gap in literature at the intersection of collective leadership, civic leadership, and leadership development.

THE IMPACT OF COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT ON THE

PRACTICE OF CIVIC LEADERSHIP

by

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Approved by

_____
Committee Chair

In memory of Thomas Stanley (1986–2019).

APPROVAL PAGE

This dissertation written by LORI ELIZABETH KNIFFIN has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of The Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

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by my side through all my writing and motivated me to take walks when I had been writing too long.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Students in the United States who are part of the LGBTQ+ community face complex challenges. Many face exclusion in their private life when their parents or siblings do not accept them. Others must navigate uncertainty in their social world if their relationships do not fit the dominant norm of society. Some are ostracized from religious spaces. Many experience bullying from students and adults in their schools. Laws prevent some of them from using certain bathrooms and fail to protect them from discrimination. Challenges, like those facing the LGBTQ+ community, are multifaceted and span multiple sectors. It is not easy to determine who is responsible for making progress on such challenges. Other issues like poverty, environmental degradation, mass incarceration, and political corruption are similar in their complexity. There is no one person or sector that can solve these challenges; instead, everyone is responsible for these public issues. In this chapter, I describe the nature of challenges in today's society and how these challenges may be addressed. Then, I discuss the current research problem, research significance, and research questions followed by the research paradigms that inform my inquiry.

The Nature of Challenges in the Post-Industrial Society

Gorey and Dobat (1996) predicted that the post-industrial society, also referred to as the Knowledge Era, would rely primarily on intellect rather than land, labor, or capital.

Bell (1973) forecasted that a shift from an industrial to post-industrial society would create growth in the nonprofit sector distinct from business or government, which included areas such as "schools, hospitals, research institutes, voluntary and civic associations" (p. 5). Now well into the 21st century, we can see that Bell and Gorey and Dobat were on track with their predictions, but that perhaps the reliance on knowledge and the need for the service sector is more dramatic than could be anticipated. With the proliferation of technology in the 21st century, information is now available instantaneously and globally. This makes our world's challenge more complex and visible. Uhl-Bien, Marion, and McKelvey (2007) write that we are now "facing a complex competitive landscape driven largely by globalization and the technological revolution" (p. 299). Making progress on the complex challenges of the 21st century will require new ways of thinking and acting (Rost, 1993).

Ronald Heifetz (1994) frames complex challenges of the 21st century as adaptive challenges—contrasted with technical challenges. Technical challenges have clear problems and solutions and can be solved by an expert. For example, if a city's potable water has contaminants due to a power outage, the city can test the water to confirm contaminants. Then, they can inform the residents to boil water and electricians can fix the power. The challenge may impact many people and might take time, but ultimately the problem and solution are clear, and city officials can look to experts to fix the problem.

Adaptive challenges are unclear in their problem and solution. Progress requires engagement from stakeholders and attention to values and behaviors. For example, a

series of mass shootings occur in schools. It is unclear what is leading people to shoot

students and teachers. Finding solutions to protect students in these scenarios and prevent

these situations from happening will require learning that spans issues of personal rights,

school policies, gun laws, access to mental health care, cultural issues that promote

violence and discrimination, communication among school personnel and more.

Understanding the more systemic and individual issues associated with mass school

shootings is an adaptive challenge. Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky (2009) explain that

progress on adaptive challenges requires new ways of thinking and acting such as taking

time to diagnose challenges before jumping to action, making small interventions with an

experimental mindset, and energizing stakeholders as actors in their own challenge.

The 21st century, post-industrial society is experiencing more complex issues due

to a shift to knowledge as an economic commodity, technological advancements, and

globalization. These issues are adaptive in nature, which means that we need new ways of

thinking and acting on them to make progress (Heifetz et al., 2009; Rost, 1993).

Additionally, challenges extend beyond one profession, sector, or geographic area, and

the ability to work collectively across boundaries is needed.

Addressing Challenges in the Post-Industrial Society

Crosby and Bryson (2010) highlight that major public problems can only be

addressed through cross-sector collaboration or *integrative public leadership*, which they

define as "bringing diverse groups and organizations together in semi-permanent ways,

and typically across boundaries, to remedy complex public problems and achieve the

common good" (p. 211). Working across sectors is one example of a paradigm shift from

individual to collective work in contemporary leadership literature. As described more

thoroughly in the literature review (Chapter II), there has been a significant shift in

leadership theory from leader-centric paradigms to collective paradigms of leadership

(Ospina & Foldy, 2016). One explanation for this shift in leadership theory are the broad

changes in post-industrial society where "disruptive change and interdependence" have

increased and "managerial authority" has declined (Ospina & Foldy, 2016, p. 2).

Rost (1993) explains that leadership in the Industrial Era was focused on

managers who were the "quintessential force driving the industrial revolution" (p. 97).

Leadership in the Industrial Era was about selecting individual leaders with preferred

traits to achieve an organizational goal. Seeing a shift to a post-industrial society on the

horizon, Rost says that:

> If we are going to make an impact on the quality, effectiveness, and results of
> leadership development in the 21st century, we have to confront head on these two
> problems: (1) the problem of equating leadership with the leader, and (2) the
> confusion caused by understanding leadership as good management. (p. 99)

He explains that confronting these problems will require new attitudes and assumptions.

To better develop the kind of leadership needed in the 21st century, Rost indicates that we

must shift our attention from *leader* development to *leadership* development.

Leader development reinforces the idea that leadership is "heroic," and

individuals can "save the day" through their individual ideas and actions. A shift to

leadership development aligns with emerging leadership theory that posits the world's

complex challenges can no longer be solved by an individual, heroic leader. Instead,

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leadership scholars are articulating *the collective dimensions of leadership* that represent "emergent processes and practices that help actors interact, coconstruct meaning, and advance a common goal unattainable by themselves" (Ospina & Foldy, 2016, p. 1). Leadership theory on collective leadership is still emerging and shifting, but the contrast to the leader-centric paradigm is clear.

While the shift toward collective leadership paradigms is present in theory, community leadership development has not kept pace. Community leadership programs (CLPs) are "formal programs sponsored by local community agencies or institutions that incorporate leadership education to develop current and future leaders with the goal of improving the local community" (Kniffin & Patterson, 2019). In a recent review of CLPs, Patterson and I found that most programs are still leader-centric, which is reinforced by their sponsorship, content, and structure. Many of these programs seek people in positions of authority to come to trainings that preference networking and individual skill development. Programs like this perpetuate leader-centric views of leadership and suggest that leadership is only attainable by a limited number of people.

Adaptive challenges require people without authority to exercise leadership (Heifetz et al., 2009). Drawing from an asset-based framework (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1996), I recognize that people and communities have been finding ways to address complex challenges for ages. Many people have exercised leadership with and without formal titles or positions to achieve common goals. Yet, leadership development can be an additional asset to communities in making progress on complex challenges.

This study sheds light on how collective leadership development can impact civic leadership practices, which addresses a gap between collective leadership, leadership development, and civic leadership. The findings may enable leadership educators to better understand how leadership development can support communities in addressing complex, adaptive issues that are more prevalent in the post-industrial society.

Research Problem

Emerging theories of leadership demonstrate a shift from leader-centric to collective perspectives of leadership. This shift comes at a time when our civic groups are facing more complex challenges due to globalization and technological advances (e.g., international digital interference in U.S. political elections). Although many theorists are describing how complex systems and collective leadership work theoretically, there is little research about how leadership development using collective paradigms can impact the practice of leadership in the civic arena.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this study is to explore (1) the experiences of a members of a civic group who have (2) participated in leadership development that (3) aligns with a collective leadership paradigm and are (4) trying to make progress on an adaptive challenge. Ultimately, I seek to understand how collective leadership development may contribute to enhancing the practice of civic leadership, which is needed to address complex community challenges.

Research Significance

In the following literature review, I illustrate that there is limited research at the intersection of collective leadership, civic leadership, and leadership development. Many leadership development programs fall within student leadership development in higher education or in the business sector. Community programs that focus on leadership development are still largely leader-centric in structure, content, and sponsorship. There is little known about how civic groups exercise leadership after receiving leadership development training focused on collective dimensions of leadership. This study provides understanding about the impact of collective leadership development on the practice of civic leadership and guidance for leadership educators to more effectively design leadership development experiences for civic groups.

Research Questions

The research questions for this study include:

(1) In what ways does collective leadership development impact the practice of civic leadership?

(2) How do experiences of this impact compare across multiple levels (i.e., individual, group, and system)?

(3) In what ways does an individual's position influence the operationalization of collective leadership development in civic leadership practice?

(4) In what ways does the practice of civic leadership inform the way collective leadership development ought to be taught?

The first three research questions were developed in response to the literature review and were used to guide the research design. The fourth research question emerged during the coding and writing process.

Research Paradigm

Researching collective leadership development is rather new and very complex. While I draw upon many theories and frameworks (described in Chapter IV), my research is ultimately guided by two research paradigms: critical and participatory. This is motivated by my agreement with Denzin (2010) that "as global citizens, we are no longer called to just *interpret* the world…we are called to *change* the world" (p. 103). I think we can change the world through research in both *what* knowledge we generate and *how* we generate knowledge. As such, my research paradigm influenced every stage of research including deciding what to study, how to study it, and what to do with the generated knowledge. Here I describe how these two paradigms are woven together for me and how they relate to this study.

Critical Paradigm

Leadership theory and scholarship have been dominated by masculine forms of leadership with Great Man theories (Carlyle, 1841) as an example of how these forms have lifted men up as leaders. Feminist epistemologies are a component of my critical paradigm, which make me question the norms of masculine-dominated and leader-centric perspectives of leadership and inquire about new perspectives that align with my own experiences as a woman. "A fundamental thesis of feminist epistemology is that our location in the world as women makes it possible for us to perceive and understand

different aspects of both the world and human activities in ways that challenge the male bias of existing perspectives" (Narayan, 2004, p. 214). My feminist lens also brings light to issues of power, which are fundamentally entangled with the practice of leadership. Collinson (2019) explains that both heroic and post-heroic perspectives can romanticize leadership and ignore issues of power, and that a critical leadership studies approach is needed to "address important questions of power, privilege, asymmetries, and inequalities" (p. 261). While I am primarily curious about how collective leadership development impacts the practice of leadership, this cannot be examined without considerations of power.

Lincoln, Lynham, and Guba (2011) write that the aim of critical inquiry is "critique and transformation" (p. 66). At its core, this study is a critique of dominant narratives of leadership that perpetuate leader-centric perspectives in hopes of transforming views of leadership in the civic arena. My critical frame is enacted as an analytical tool, which provides a framework for the structural and institutional analyses of power. The relationship between leadership and power goes far beyond individual leaders and the power they hold. Leadership is entangled with historical, political, social, and economic structures that unequally distribute power in society. Therefore, *what* I am studying is enhanced through a critical lens because I can gaze upon emerging forms of leadership that include a collection of actors within complex systems and not just heroic leaders.

Lincoln et al. (2011) describe critical methodologies as dialogical and dialectical, and there are many dialectical tensions that I explore in this study such as individuals and

collectives, formal and informal authority, and technical and adaptive leadership. By exploring these tensions, we might see new ideas in order to gain a fuller understanding of how leadership is being practiced. Collinson (2019) highlights the benefit of the dialogic study of leadership, which rejects polarized positions and studies both individual and collective levels together as a practice of critical leadership studies.

To support my critical leadership studies approach, I enact sociological mindfulness, which is "the practice of tuning-in-to how the social world works" in ways that provide insight into individuals and society (Schwalbe, 2017, p. 3). Often research occurs at one level, such as looking at a tree (i.e. the individual) or the forest (i.e., the group or system). Johnson (2006) posits that "if we want to understand social life and what happens to people in it" (p. 12) then, we ought to understand both what and how we are participating in it. Furthermore, "the key to understanding social life is neither just the forest nor the trees but the forest *and* the trees and the consequences that result from their dynamic relationship to each other" (p. 12). Using sociological mindfulness, I can better understand how the practice of civic leadership is occurring at individual, group, and system levels in the context of one another.

Participatory Paradigm

Lincoln et al. (2011) describe that the nature of knowledge within the participatory paradigm as "living knowledge" and that knowledge accumulation occurs "in communities of inquiry embedded in communities of practice" (p. 101). Therefore, my participatory paradigm informs *how* I enact this study. I seek knowledge from those living in communities who can provide perspectives of practice and contribute to the

generation of knowledge. To do this, I draw from an Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) framework (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1996), which acknowledges the assets communities possess. I recognize that all people, regardless of formal training, inquire about the world and bring the gift of their lived experiences.

From a participatory inquiry paradigm, Heron and Reason (1997) explain that "it is equally important that action not only consummates the prior forms of knowing but is grounded in them" (p. 282). This perspective supports my belief that knowledge does not have to be created by people in positions of authority or within the academy. Knowledge can and should be created through experience. Denzin (2010) describes that "properly conceptualized, qualitative inquiry becomes a civic, participatory, collective project. It turns researchers and subjects into co-participants in a common moral project" (p. 28). My role as a researcher might be to bring processes and theories to the community of inquiry, but others bring their experiences and practice. Therefore, I approach co-creation through a democratically-engaged process, which engages participants in ways that diffuse power and positions myself as a researcher creating knowledge *with* and not *for* communities (Saltmarsh, Hartley, & Clayton, 2009).

Our scholarship can be participatory not just in the way we produce knowledge but also how we communicate about knowledge. Gandry (2015) writes, "We must divest ourselves of the idea that our primary responsibility is to the academy, or to our own personal success, and instead invest ourselves in our responsibilities to the community" (p. 255), and that "the most obvious way of accomplishing this goal is to embrace multiple forms of research dissemination "(p. 257). Too often research is hidden behind

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pay walls or written in academic jargon—inaccessible to practitioners. Scholarly artifacts ought to be digestible by and useful to a wide range of people and collaborating with participants or practitioners on the product of dissemination can help democratize knowledge so it can be used to change practice. Therefore, in addition to this dissertation, I will develop public products that are relevant to the collaborators of this study. Public products may include an executive summary, a webinar, a facilitated dialogue, or any other type of product the collaborators deem relevant.

Critical Participatory Paradigm

When leveraging critical and participatory paradigms together, I can more actively become an anti-oppressive researcher. Potts and Brown (2015) explain that "a commitment to anti-oppressive research means committing to social justice and taking an active role in that change….It starts with paying attention to, and shifting, how power relations work in and through the process of doing research" (p. 17). *What* I am studying (non-dominant practices of leadership) and *how* I study it (through the participation of multiple actors in a collective) shift power in this research by aligning the gaze of leadership scholarship and the method of leadership scholarship. Leader-centric paradigms of leadership have been studied by inquiring about the actions and characteristics of the "leader." As the drum major of my high school band, I was often photographed standing on the podium directing the band. Those photographs reproduced a dominant image of leadership as an individual standing at the front of the group with power. Researching the "leader" will continue to produce images of individuals who hold authority.

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As an act of resistance to leader-centric paradigms, I am inquiring about collective paradigms. When I was a general member of my college marching band, I exercised leadership often (e.g., helping younger students address challenges), but there are no pictures of me "enacting leadership." Leadership as an activity enacted by all members is more difficult to capture and is often overshadowed by the images or investigation of the heroic leader. In this study, I aim to create space for the liberation of non-positional leadership. To do this, I have invited multiple members of a collective to participate in constructing knowledge about this phenomenon. They piece together their own image of civic and collective leadership. The dialectic between individuals and their collective is considered, as neither are fully understood outside that relationship. This approach to knowledge generation seeks input from those without formal authority or the title of "leader." People without these titles of power are historically women, people of color, low-income, or "othered" in their identity, meaning they have often had their voices silenced, ideas dismissed, and leadership overlooked. My research framework engages all participants in the process of critiquing conceptions and systems of leadership and power and disseminates this knowledge back to those who may use this knowledge.

Definition of Terms

In this section I provide brief definitions of terms used throughout the dissertation. While each definition will become clearer through the literature review and the description of the research, this serves as a starting place for the reader. These definitions are intentionally brief so as to articulate how the concept is being framed for this study particularly.

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- **Individual** - a single person.

- **Group** - a collection of individuals with a semi-permeable boundary, meaning the individuals included in the group may vary depending on personal interpretations, time, or context. The group in this study will be referred to as the Pride Coalition of Kansas.

- **System** - a collection of groups and individuals with a semi-permeable boundary, meaning the people included in the system may vary depending on personal interpretations, time, or context. The system in this study includes people and entities contributing toward the adaptive challenge of LGBTQ+ school safety.

- **Adaptive challenge** - an issue where a gap exists between the current reality and aspirations in which progress will require learning about the problem and solution and progress relies on stakeholder involvement.

- **Progress** - productive movement of any kind related to the issue in focus. Amounts of and indicators of progress may be defined by the individuals, groups, or systems involved.

- **Leadership** - an activity enacted by any individual or group that mobilizes others to make progress toward a shared purpose.

Overview of Dissertation

In this introductory chapter, I have provided the background and rationale for this study. In Chapter II, I will enter a conversation with relevant literature and identify how this dissertation builds upon existing knowledge and fills a knowledge gap. In Chapter III, I share information about the key collaborators involved in this study. Chapter IV

provides an overview of the research methodology and design for a multi-level study. In Chapter V and VI, I provide a thematic analysis of the findings. Finally, in Chapter VII, I conclude with a discussion about why these findings matter and my hope for how they may be used to advance progress on complex challenges. I also include a discussion of strengths, limitations, and future research in this final chapter.

Leader development is not sufficient for supporting communities facing complex challenges. Leadership development, from a collective paradigm, holds promise for enhancing the leadership practice across communities. Collective theories of leadership have been emerging in leadership studies, but little is known about how collective leadership is translated to practice or how to develop collective leadership. This study is designed to explore the practice of civic leadership in a community coalition after they received collective leadership development. Ultimately, this inquiry provides insight into how leadership educators can better support community members in exercising leadership on complex social challenges.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study explores (1) the experiences of members of a civic group who have (2) participated in leadership development that (3) aligns with a collective leadership paradigm and are (4) trying to make progress on an adaptive challenge. In this chapter, I provide a review of literature on the intersections of collective leadership theory, civic leadership, and leadership development to gain understanding about the theoretical, contextual, and practical elements of the research problem (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Intersections of Theory, Context, and Practice

My search for literature built off a foundation of conceptual pieces I had been using in my professional work and scholarly projects over the last two years. I also conducted a fresh search for literature using the UNC Greensboro library search function, Google Scholar, and the ERIC and EBSCO databases. In the EBSCO database I included a wide range of other databases including Academic Search Complete, America: History & Life, Art & Architecture Complete, Business Source Complete, Child Development and Adolescent Studies, Communication and Mass Media Complete, Education Index Retrospective, Education Source, Entrepreneurial Studies Source, Gender Studies, GreenFILE, Health Source - Consumer Edition, Health Source: Nursing/Academic Edition, Military and Government Collection, Philosopher's Index, Political Science Complete, PsychARTICLES, and PsycINFO. Leadership is an interdisciplinary field, and including these databases helped surface literature that was outside the typical leadership studies outlets (e.g., *Leadership, The Leadership Quarterly, Journal of Leadership Education).* I used the key words collective leadership, shared leadership, distributed leadership, adaptive leadership, leadership development, civic leadership, community leadership development with numerous combinations of these terms. I found additional literature by searching reference lists, author names (e.g., Day, Heifetz, Ospina, Uhl-Bien) and the leadership journals mentioned previously.

When reviewing literature for each of the individual topic areas, I noticed there was little research that crossed these boundaries—especially studies that brought all three areas together. For example, the search "collective leadership" + "leadership development" yielded 130 articles, but when adding "community," it reduced the results

to 38 articles. Additionally, replacing "community" with "civic" reduced the results to three articles.

Therefore, in this chapter, I begin by discussing literature on collective leadership theories and empirical research on collective leadership in practice. Then, I focus in on collective leadership that includes intersections of leadership development. Next, I outline key elements of civic leadership and then discuss frameworks at the intersection of civic leadership and collective leadership. I also include a discussion on the intersections of leadership development and civic leadership. The literature in and among these areas contribute to my conceptual framework, therefore I provide an explanation of my conceptual framework within the literature review. I conclude the chapter by discussing the gap in literature among these three areas and demonstrate that research needs to occur at their intersection.

Collective Leadership Theories

I use the term "leadership" frequently in this dissertation. Leadership means many things to many people, therefore, in this section, I outline theoretical perspectives that inform how leadership is characterized in this study. Historically, many leadership theories have been leader-centric and, therefore, were focused on what made a good leader. "Great man" and "trait" theories were prominent in the 19th century, touting that certain people (i.e., wealthy White men) with certain characteristics (e.g., tall, loud voice, charisma) were good leaders (Carlyle, 1841; Mann, 1959; Stogdill, 1948). Eventually leadership theorists started taking behaviors into consideration (e.g., task vs. relationship behaviors) and how they impacted leadership outcomes (Blake & Mouton, 1964). Later

theorists thought that those who could navigate contexts and situations were leaders (Blanchard, 1985). Eventually leadership theories shifted from people-centered approaches to relationship-centered approaches, which illuminated the need for followers in the context of leadership (Rost, 1993). While recognizing that leadership is a process that involves many people, most relational models still reinforce the power of the leader. (See Dugan, 2017; Nelson & Squires, 2017; and Northouse, 2016 for a more detailed description of the evolution of leadership theory.)

Collective models of leadership center systems and how leadership is shared within those systems. The need for collective leadership theory is often explained by the growing complexity of the 21st century rooted in the post-industrial society characterized by globalization and technological advances. Collective models align with the "Leadership-as-Practice" movement, which is based on the understanding that "leadership occurs as a practice rather than from the traits or behaviors of individuals" (Raelin, 2016, p. 3). Therefore, Raelin describes leadership as collective action that emerges through evolving patterns and actions among those engaging in the practice of leadership (p. 3). The theoretical understanding of Leadership-as-Practice and the collective nature of leadership are on the forefront of leadership scholarship and are still emerging. There are varying ways to describe this systems-centered approach to leadership.

Ospina and Foldy (2016) are frequently cited for the overarching language of collective leadership. They explain that the "phrase 'collective dimensions of leadership' signals the importance of shifting attention from the single 'heroic' leader to the

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emergent processes and practices that help actors interact, coconstruct meaning, and advance a common goal unattainable by themselves" (p. 1). These authors illuminate some of the commonalities of collective leadership theories including "decentralized decision-making, networks of relationships, and horizontal authority" (p. 3), and they name collective theories including Distributive Leadership Theory, Network Leadership Theory, and Complexity Leadership Theory. When using the term "collective leadership" in this paper, I am referring to this overarching description produced by Ospina and Foldy (2016), which encompasses elements of other specific theories and frameworks.

Next, I unpack select theories that fall under the collective leadership umbrella that are heavily cited: (a) shared leadership, (b) distributed leadership, and (c) adaptive leadership. Spillane (2005) notes that distributed leadership and shared leadership can be used interchangeably, but I discuss them separately. They have similar characteristics (i.e., multiple people can exercise leadership), but they are defined as separate concepts in the leadership field (Goskoy, 2016). In a study of the relationship between shared and distributed leadership, Goskoy (2016) ultimately recommends using the term collective leadership to bridge the gap between the terms. Adaptive leadership is not used interchangeably with shared, distributed, or collective leadership because it is framework of leadership that provides more specific practices for how to exercise leadership within a system. Adaptive leadership is an example of practice of leadership that can occur from a collective paradigm of leadership.

Shared Leadership Theory

Pearce and Conger (2003) define shared leadership as "a dynamic, interactive influence process among individuals in groups for which the objective is to lead one another to the achievement of group or organizational goals or both" (p. 1). They further explain that leadership scholars have articulated shared leadership as an activity that is shared among the group. Members of groups can exercise leadership when the moment requires it of them without formal appointment. Shared leadership literally shares leadership by having group members exercise leadership and then step back to allow others to lead (Pearce & Conger, 2003). Dugan (2017) explains that almost every publication on shared leadership positions it as a "necessary response to globalization, specialization of workers, and technological advances" (p. 169), which demand decentralized group leadership. From a shared leadership perspective, leadership and power may reside with one person, but the person with the power can rotate.

Distributed Leadership Theory

Spillane (2005) explains that distributed leadership is about a "leadership practice" and a "product of interactions" (p. 144) rather than leader roles. Ospina and Foldy (2016) further explain that from a distributed leadership perspective, the roles of the leader and follower as reciprocal, meaning that a person can move between the two roles as needed. Distributed leadership is described as "a process dispersed across the organization (within systems, activities, practices and relationships)" (Bolden, Petrov, & Gosling, 2009, p. 258) rather than residing within formal positions. Gronn (2002) recommends that distributed leadership should be used as a unit of analysis in leadership

study in contrast to most studies that have embraced focused leadership (i.e., leader-centric perspectives) as the unit of analysis. Gronn further explains that distributed leadership can be viewed as numerical action (i.e., leadership is additive) or concertive action (i.e., leadership is holistic and complex). From a distributed leadership perspective, leadership and power is not just rotated but rather diffused, and people can still rotate between leader and follower roles.

Adaptive Leadership Framework

Adaptive leadership is defined as the "practice of mobilizing others to tackle tough challenges and thrive" (Heifetz et al., 2009, p. 14). Tough challenges, also referred to as adaptive challenges, require learning to understand the problem and involvement of stakeholders to make progress on the challenge. Adaptive challenges contrast with technical challenges, which have clear problems and solutions that can be solved by experts (Heifetz & Linsky, 2004). Adaptive leadership emphasizes the need to distinguish between leadership and authority as well as distinguish between formal authority and informal authority. Authority figures are asked to provide direction, protection, and order (Heifetz et al., p. 28), while leadership is exercised beyond authority. People with formal authority have titles and positions that legitimize and authorize their roles. There are, however, informal processes for granting authority to consider. For example, long-term members of organizations may be authorized to provide guidance without a title or position. In such cases, authority is granted or earned based on other qualifications like the length of time in the organization or amount of experience. Distinguishing roles and

power are part of the process of diagnosing systems, which is a necessary precursor to intervening in systems (Heifetz et al., 2009).

Adaptive leadership does not refer to being "adaptable," but it is based on the idea that adaptation can occur over time with small incremental changes. Heifetz and colleagues posit that change first starts by diagnosing the situation and recognizing what works. Then after identifying components that do not work, they explain that new components to the system should be considered and experimented with to find what works better. In this process, individuals interact with their systems to understand and change the systems.

Across the theories and frameworks I have described, I see some themes: (a) responsibility for leadership is shared across groups and networks; (b) the horizontal group is held together by a common goal; (c) authority figures and hierarchical structures still exist and need be taken into consideration alongside collective dimensions of leadership; and (d) the post-industrial society provides an impetus to problematize leader-centric theories of leadership. The field of leadership studies—including the disciplines that contribute knowledge to leadership studies—do not appear to have a cohesive articulation of collective leadership. Similarly, studies on collective leadership in practice do not appear to have a cohesive line of inquiry or coordinated research agenda. There are both benefits and drawbacks to this current scenario. The benefit is that leadership studies is a multidisciplinary field and is strengthened through the translation across fields. However, the drawback is that educators and scholars are dispersing their efforts

in building theory and best practice and may be duplicating work instead of working synergistically toward new understandings of collective leadership.

Collective Leadership in Practice

Since collective leadership as a paradigm is still emerging, there is more literature that discusses what it looks like in theory and less about how it looks in practice. Yet, the studies that are available on collective leadership—comprised of studies of shared leadership, distributed leadership, adaptive leadership, and collective leadership more broadly—begin to shed light on its application. In this section, I discuss themes from the literature on collective leadership practices including (a) comparing collective and traditional approaches, (b) investigating outcomes of collective leadership, and (c) applying collective leadership to past events.

Comparing Collective and Traditional Approaches

Most studies on collective leadership looked only at the effectiveness of collective leadership practices. However, my search surfaced two studies that compared collective leadership practices and more traditional approaches. The first compares collective leadership practices to leader-centric practices (i.e., vertical) and the other compares adaptive and technical practices of leadership.

Through a study on shared and vertical leadership in multisystem teams of flight crews, Bienefeld and Grote (2014) conclude that shared leadership is more effective than vertical or top-down leadership. Typically in air flight, cockpit and cabin crews have different goals. Yet in times of crisis, failure to work together to resolve the challenge has resulted dire consequences, such as lives lost. Therefore, Bienefeld and Grote studied

flight crews to determine if shared leadership practices were effective in meeting cross-team goals. The researchers observed 84 cockpit and cabin crews in simulations. One set of observers coded leadership, while another set rated team goal attainment. The study revealed that the multiple team systems that used shared rather than vertical leadership styles more effectively met team goals.

Kaminsky (2012) also contrasts elements of traditional and collective paradigms. IT project managers from three businesses were interviewed about leadership actions in past projects and the technical and nontechnical—or adaptive—leadership practices that occurred within those projects. While findings showed that technical approaches to project management are "still viewed as important by practitioners," they also illuminated the need for "a new approach to project management based on critical leadership practices needed to successfully respond to adaptive challenges" (p. 37). Several elements of adaptive leadership practices were identified by participants as IT management success factors.

More studies like these two need to be conducted to identify in what situations collective leadership is a superior approach and when it can be and added benefit alongside traditional approaches.

Investigating Outcomes of Collective Leadership

Few studies directly compared collective and leader-centric practices of leadership, but more demonstrated that collective leadership can lead to certain outcomes. While there are numerous studies designed for this purpose, I have chosen to highlight the following studies because they demonstrate collective leadership has been found

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effective in and outside the United States and in more than one sector. Additionally, their measures of success are varied.

Dampson, Havor, and Laryea's (2012) studied public schools in Ghana where distributed leadership permeated the school including the headmasters, assistant head masters, and teachers. They found the school personnel had more confidence to take risk and opportunity to learn from mistakes than a traditional style of leadership. This mixed-method study included 93 teachers, 4 head masters, and 4 assistant head masters and used a structured questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. One disadvantage found was that teachers were overstressed with the shared-decision making component of distributed leadership because they were cautious of whom to include in the decision-making process. Participants also perceived that distributed leadership practices led to school improvement such as learning outcomes.

Hallinger and Heck (2010) conducted a longitudinal study on the effects of collaborative leadership on school improvement and student learning. It included teacher surveys and achievement data from 192 schools over four years and was analyzed through a panel time-series design. They found that collaborative leadership directly increases a school's academic capacity and indirectly increases student reading achievement.

Denis, Lamothe, and Langley (2001) studied collective leadership in Quebec hospitals, where the formal structures are more representative of constellations than top down structures. Through the examination of five case studies, they found that substantive change (such as successfully merging hospitals and creating new governance

structures) occurred when these constellations enacted collective leadership. Collective leadership was described as engaging in united leadership characterized by "coupling" or "short-term political linkages" with the additional finding that collective leadership is fragile since coupling can be disconnected.

All three of these studies included participants who held formal positions and those who did not. In the two school studies, the collective leadership practice was identified through a questionnaire and represented the participant's views of the collective nature of leadership in their school. The researchers, Denis, Lamothe, and Langley (2001), identified the leadership within the Quebec hospitals as collective, which is what prompted them to study the changes occurring in that setting. While participants may have been aware of the shared or distributed nature of leadership in their organization, none of these three studies—or others that I found—include collective leadership development. Therefore, these studies identified practices that were collective and then determined if the collective practices lead to certain outcomes. They point to collective leadership as an effective form of leadership, but do not provide insight on how to increase collective leadership in organizations.

Applying Collective Frameworks to Past Events

Other studies on collective leadership look at past events with the application of a collective theory (see Adams, Bailey, Anderson, & Thygeson, 2013; Goodrum, Woodward, & Thompson, 2017; Zhuravsky, 2015). The purpose of this application seems to most often be understanding how collective leadership was used to achieve goals and making sense of leadership actions.

Three of the studies found applied collective leadership to contexts of crisis. For example, McNulty et al., 2018 examined the practice of leadership immediately following the Boston Marathon Bombing and found that the practice was characterized by "collective leadership effectiveness," which was defined by the researchers as "lives saved, suspects captured, public confidence maintained, and population resilience fostered" (p. 27). This study found five behavioral themes that were deemed "crucial to the successful emergence of collective leadership": (1) unity of mission; (2) generosity of spirit and action; (3) stay in your lane; (4) no-ego, no-blame; and (5) foundation of trusted relationships (p. 26). This study showed how multiple agencies and sectors came together to exercise leadership without one "leader." Most of the individuals involved in the study were formal authority figures of key agencies involved in the crisis response. The other studies used a collective framework to analyze and understand practices of ICU staff in New Zealand following an earthquake (Zhuravsky, 2015), behaviors of ICU staff interacting with dying patients (Adams et al., 2013), and information sharing between school personnel leading up to a school shooting (Goodrum et al., 2017).

Another study used data from existing case studies and applied a collective framework to find new patterns of leadership. In a study of two schools, a private theater, and a rock festival, Crevani, Lindgren, and Packendorff (2007) surfaced eight empirical themes from the narrative research. Two that seem particularly relevant to the shift between leader-centric and collective work are: (a) "heroes expected" and (b) "individualism vs. collectivism as problem in leadership" (p. 53). These themes highlighted that due to the dominant understanding of leadership, people still expect

heroic forms of leadership. Therefore, when decisions are made collectively, problems

may be experienced by those expecting individuals to make decisions. These findings

point to the disruptive experience people may have as a result of a change in the norms of

leadership. The analysis of the study also demonstrates how new patterns can emerge

when analyzing situations and data through a collective instead of leader-centric

perspective.

Because collective leadership is an emerging leadership theory, there are limited

empirical studies to date. Much of the literature on collective leadership—and its

derivatives—are theoretical (e.g., Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009; Cullen-Lester &

Yammarino, 2016; Ospina & Foldy, 2016). A repeated challenge identified by the

researchers was the difficulty of studying collective leadership due to its inherent size and

multiple levels. The unit of analysis of collective leadership can include individual-level,

group-level, and systems-level elements. Most studies focused on each of these levels

separately. The empirical studies that exist are more heavily quantitative, although there

were a few qualitative studies. The quantitative studies were more likely to reduce the

complexity of collective leadership to specific variables, such as adaptive maturity, task

cohesion, team satisfaction, and collective strategic vision (e.g., Hogan, 2008; Serban &

Roberts, 2016). Quantitative research may, by design, decontextualize the practice of

leadership. Qualitative inquiry provides processes to study groups within their context,

which is an important factor in civic work. It may be helpful to consider not only the

content of these theories through leadership inquiry, but also how to effectively study

them. Therefore, this study intentionally aligns leadership inquiry methods to collective paradigms of leadership.

Developing Collective Leadership

Most studies on collective leadership in practice are unclear about how the actors are made knowledgeable about collective leadership. In several studies, the participants do not even know the term(s) collective, shared, distributed, or adaptive leadership. Instead, their behaviors are observed by researchers or the collective qualities are rated on a scale by participants. However, Daloz Parks (2005) demonstrates that leadership can be taught. From my own experiences learning and teaching collective leadership, I know that education can help develop the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to enact collective leadership more effectively. In this section, I discuss the intersection of leadership development and collective leadership.

One mechanism for leadership education is leadership programs in higher education. In a five-year study of an interdisciplinary undergraduate course, Andenoro, Sowcik, and Balser (2017) demonstrate four educational methodologies (incisive questioning, the F.A.C.E. Method©, authentic audience, and authentic challenge) that led to the development of Social Responsibility Agency, adaptive leadership capacity, and systems thinking. Five sub-themes of adaptive leadership capacity were found through qualitative coding, including self-awareness, intercultural competence, desire for collaboration, effective communication, and high internal locus of control. This points to leadership development in undergraduate courses as one avenue to developing adaptive

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leadership capacity in people—people who hopefully will contribute to addressing challenges in their current or future communities.

In Iowa, a school district implemented a three-year teacher leadership program. Leadership was viewed as "an action that may be undertaken by any effective educator, not predetermined by assigned roles within a school or school system" (Eckert & Daughtrey, 2019, p. 3). Promoting collaboration was among the goals of the program. Using a 166-item survey at the baseline and end of each three years, Eckert and Daughtrey (2019) found an increase in "collaborative culture and shared leadership; principals' support for teacher's role as instructional and professional learning leaders; individual capacity of teacher leaders; and access to resources for collaborative learning and collaboration among staff" (p. 8). From this study it is possible to conclude that teaching collective leadership to teachers can increase their collective practices, which as highlighted previously can lead to positive outcomes.

Educational settings are not the only location for such studies. For example, administrators of a community mental health center were taught adaptive leadership principles and mindfulness practices (Raney, 2014). This led to the increase of innovation and financial stability during a time of financial instability. Participants in the case study felt included in decision-making and participated in innovative thinking to develop new ways to better serve clients in a time of decreased funding. Raney's study demonstrates that if more emphasis is placed on adaptive practices and mindfulness practices, administrators can contribute to making progress on organizational challenges in more innovative ways.

Drawing from these studies, leadership scholars may want to focus more on how to teach people to exercise collective leadership than determining if it is effective. Additionally, more research is needed to understand how people who learn collective leadership enact it in their settings. While the studies discussed in this section identify outcomes of teaching collective leadership, it is unclear how these components were used in action. This leads to the question: How do learners of collective leadership put into practice their knowledge, skills, and attitudes?

From the descriptions of the studies on collective leadership so far, it is evident that collective leadership is needed and practiced in several settings. However, I think there is another setting to explore: the civic setting. This setting may be particularly relevant in this time of adaptive challenges because public issues do not clearly reside within the authority of one person, organization, or sector.

Civic Leadership

Leadership can be practiced in many contexts, including business, government, education, nonprofit, and community settings. Chrislip, Arensdorf, Steffensmeier, and Tolar (2016) explain that "successfully exercising leadership means responding appropriately to the context in which it takes place" (p. 132). While sometimes challenges occur within an organization or a single sector, increasingly, leadership is needed in contexts that fall between or extend across sectors. Leadership that occurs in this grey space that advances public and social good is called civic leadership. Literature on civic leadership is not as prominent as literature on leadership in business or organizational settings. Therefore, I begin the discussion of developing leadership in the

civic arena by discussing themes (definitions, purposes, challenges, responsibilities, and participants of civic leadership) that emerged from my review of literature on civic leadership. These themes illuminate the unique context of civil society as a space for leadership, which is connected to the purpose of advancing social and public good. The themes highlight the importance of understanding who is involved and how power is operating.

Defining Civil Society

Couto (2014) explains that civil society is distinct from both the government and business sectors. The Carnegie UK Trust's Democracy and Civil Society Programme defines civil society as "associational life...[including] formal and informal associations such as voluntary and community organizations, trade unions, faith-based organizations, cooperatives and mutuals, political parties, professional and business associations, philanthropic organizations, informal citizen groups, and social movements" (as cited in Naidoo & Bannerjee, 2010, p. 38). When attempting to distinguish the civil society from the government and business sectors, Salamon, Wojciech Sokolowski, and Associates (2004) name it the third sector, which also may be considered volunteer associations or service providers. Couto (2014) challenges this definition: "This conflation of the civil society with the third sector ignores the political differences within the third sector and thus obscures a more precise meaning of the civic society" (p. 3). He further explains that civil society exists as an overlapping space between government, business, and the third sector—and is also a political space. Leadership that occurs in this civic arena is termed civic leadership.

Purposes of Civic Leadership

In addition to the sector in which leadership occurs, civic leadership can be defined by its purposes. Couto (2014) writes that civic leadership,

> speaks to collective and individual interests and needs; contests the efforts of government or the economy to encroach the space of the other sectors; and brings people together individually and in associations to hidden or taken-for-granted spaces to envision and practise democratic forms of increased equality, representation, and participation in decision-making on public matters. (p. 352)

Other terms that encapsulate these purposes are "leadership for social change" and "leadership in social movements."

Komives and Associates have created the Social Change Model of Leadership (Higher Education Research Institute [HERI], 1996) to describe the social purposes of leadership, which require interactions from individuals, groups, and communities. Komives, Wagner, and Associates (2009) describe social change in this context as addressing "root causes of problems rather than the surface-level" (p. 11). They also articulate that social change should be sought with community members and through service or volunteerism for communities. Although they recognize the need to attend to cultural differences, the concept of leadership for social change is absent of connections to systemic social systems such as racism, classism, or sexism. This is a highly cited model in student leadership development literature, which shows that leadership educators are connecting leadership to the purpose of social change but may not be making specific connections to social justice.

Kliewer and Priest (2013) write that "civic leadership centers inherently on creating conditions for groups of people to make progress on social, political, economic, and moral issues in ways that help them more fully realize the requirements of justice" (p. 2). They frame social justice as the purpose and orientation of civic leadership and describe a leadership for social justice paradigm as "creating the institutional and systemic conditions needed for the least advantaged to have a fair chance" (p. 3). Therefore, civic leadership not only happens in a particular context, but it includes orientations toward social change.

Chrislip and O'Malley (2013) describe a vision of civic leadership that is "a means of sharing responsibility for acting together in pursuit of the common good" (p. 1). Grace (2012) also calls for leadership for the common good—articulating that the common good is more easily seen looking at the earth from afar than when we are living on it. While I do believe leadership should be working toward a common purpose, I find Grace's conception of a "common good"—especially for a whole planet—to be problematic. Since people hold different principles and moral values, the idea of a singular common good is unrealistic and undesirable; yet his idea of exercising leadership for a common purpose is an important element of civic leadership. While it may be impossible to identify *the* common good, civic leadership advances social purposes by bringing people together through democratic processes to name their chosen common good and determine how to make change toward that goal.

Challenges in the Civic Arena

There are some prevalent ways scholars make the argument for civic leadership in the 21st century. Many scholars also call for a new kind of leadership in communities in response to the shift to the post-industrial society (Gibson & Longo, 2011; Ospina & Foldy, 2016; Rost, 1993). Uhl-Bien et al. (2007) articulate this as a shift to the Knowledge Era, where "knowledge is a core commodity and the rapid production of knowledge and innovation is critical to organizational survival" (p. 299). They explain the Knowledge Era is driven by technological advancements and globalization. DeRue and Myers (2014) also reference the advancements in technology and globalization, as well as economic, environmental, and ethical crises as the elements rapidly changing the post-industrial society. They attribute these advancements to why leadership is needed more than ever (p. 832). Other scholars point to the increasing number of "grand challenges" (e.g., Stedman & Andenoro, 2015, p.145) or name specific challenges facing their communities such as human capital in rural communities (Apaliyah, Martin, Gasteyer, Keating, & Pigg, 2012).

Another way scholars articulate the need for leadership in the civic arena is by referencing wicked problems. Wicked problems were described in Rittel and Webber's (1973) seminal article related to public problems and social policy. They describe wicked problems as those that are intractable and difficult to define. The authors contrast wicked problems with tame problems which are clear such as a mathematician solving an equation. They write "the kinds of problems that planners deal with—societal problems—are inherently different from the problems scientists…deal with" (p. 160).

While they do not specifically name leadership as a remedy to wicked problems, they describe the limitation of having only experts and authority figures solving problems.

Williams (2002) explains that many of the issues that face our public are complex and seemingly intractable. He writes that wicked problems "bridge and permeate jurisdictional, organizational, functional, professional and generational boundaries" (p. 104) as well as become intertwined with other problems and systems. Wicked problems are difficult to define, which makes it more difficult to know where and how to intervene (Rittel & Webber, 1973). These challenges go beyond individuals and groups to include public and social elements, often connected to complex systems. Heifetz's description of adaptive challenges aligns with wicked problems, noting that these types of complex challenges involve a diverse range of stakeholders who hold varying loyalties, values, and potential losses (Heifetz et al., 2009). Overall, challenges in the civic arena are grand, complex, and adaptive, and require participation from diverse individuals within the system being addressed.

Participants of Civic Leadership

Early conceptions of leadership, such as trait theories, stem from a belief that leaders are born with the necessary qualities for leadership. Therefore, community leaders were selected by their traits and were sent to colleges to gain additional knowledge, such as oratory skills, for leading communities. While this perception that leaders are born and not made is still a lingering debate, Daloz Parks (2005) argues that leadership can be taught and developed. During the Industrial Era, the need for good managers led to an increase in leader development with a focus on skills and

competencies (Rost, 1993). Looking forward to the new millennium, Rost made an assertation that leader development is not sufficient for the needs of the post-industrial society. Instead, society will require a shift toward leadership development that focuses on leaders and collaborators working together toward mutual goals. One of the most popular definitions of leadership is Rost's: "Leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and their collaborators who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes" (p. 99). While there have been significant developments since the 1990s, Rost's call for a shift from leader to leadership development is often a jumping off point for many scholars who aim to shift toward leadership development in the 21st century.

The Kansas Leadership Center (KLC), a highly respected nonprofit that provides leadership development to Kansans, developed a framework for its work. It is simple and direct. "Anyone can lead, anytime, anywhere" (Chrislip & O'Malley, 2013, p. 164). This framework aligns with the collective paradigm of leadership because it challenges the need for a position of authority to lead. Due to the inter-organizational nature of civic leadership, participants of the KLC's programs come from varying organizations and sectors.

Crosby and Bryson (2010) posit that most public problems can only be addressed if many organizations collaborate. They call this collaborative work "integrative public leadership," which is defined as "bringing diverse groups and organizations together in semi-permanent ways, and typically across sector boundaries" (p. 211). Miller (2008) in his study of university-school-community partnerships finds that institutional leaders that can successfully exercise leadership in their own organization/sector can easily be

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deemed ineffective when trying to collaborate beyond their typical boundaries. Williams (2002) describes people who work across organizations and sectors as boundary spanners. His study shows that effective boundary spanners build sustainable relationships; manage non-hierarchical relationships; manage complexity; and understand motives, roles, and responsibilities (p. 103). Therefore, studies of civic leadership would benefit from including a diverse set of stakeholders who are exercising leadership across boundaries.

Responsibility in Civic Leadership

Leadership has long been associated with power, position, and authority. However, even in industrial perspectives of leadership where individual authority figures are in charge, it is difficult to determine who is responsible for complex public problems. This may be the reason we have failed to make progress on many pressing issues. Post-industrial perspectives of leadership challenge the notion that leadership requires power, position, and authority, and instead, advances leadership as an activity that anyone within the collective can enact. Heifetz et al. (2009) point out that although we should not conflate leadership with power, position, and authority, these characteristics are present within our systems. Therefore, it can be helpful to distinguish between leadership and authority as well as formal and informal authority.

Crosby and Bryson (2010) articulate a specific need for leadership across sectors. They claim that addressing major public problems such as "global warming, HIV/AIDS, economic development, poverty, and homelessness – can be addressed effectively only if many organizations collaborate" (p. 211). They explain that problems in the 21st century

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require leadership that is shared because no one is wholly in charge of the world. The public often looks to the government for solutions to societal problems—as Rittel and Webber (1973) note—but the government cannot solve these problems alone. To this point Lappe and Dubois (1997) write,

> The biggest problems facing Americans are not those issues that bombard us daily…the crisis is that we as a people don't know how to come together to solve these problems. We lack the capacities to address the issues or remove the obstacles that stand in the way of public deliberation. (p. 7)

The need for critical leadership in the civic context is urgent. Our complex social issues are only becoming more complex with increased technological developments and globalization. Making progress on these challenges will require more than expertise. These challenges will require new ways of thinking and interacting, which can be realized through the practice of leadership.

Collective Leadership in the Civic Arena

Civic leadership is not a widely used term in the literature. Therefore, when looking for literature at the intersection of collective leadership and the civic arena, I found the terms social change, community organizing, and leadership from social movements as closely related to civic leadership. I discuss two frameworks that have been heavily used in both leadership and practice.

The Social Change Model of Leadership (HERI, 1996)—although designed primarily for student leadership development—highlights assumptions needed for social change leadership. Two important assumptions include: (a) "leadership is collaborative,"

and (b) leadership is a process rather than a position" (p. 10). The authors describe collaboration among three levels—individual, group, and community/society—as a musical ensemble. Individual expertise is needed to play an instrument (or exercise leadership) but can be applied toward the common goal of creating music in an ensemble (leading in groups and/or society). Seven core values are included by level: individual values (consciousness of self, congruence, commitment), group values (collaboration, common purpose, controversy with civility, and community/societal values (citizenship).

Marshall Ganz (2010) has developed a framework for leadership, organizing, and action, that was borne out of his experiences working with Cesar Chavez to organize the United Farm Workers. His framework is intended for people exercising leadership in social movements and in local community issues. He defines leadership as "accepting responsibility to create conditions that enable others to achieve shared purpose in the face of uncertainty" (p. 1). He explains that organizers are responsible not just for their individual actions. Instead, they are responsible for the collective, and leading change occurs through (a) building relationships, (b) telling public narratives, (c) developing strategy, and (d) taking action. The purpose of using stories to build relationships is to bring more people into the collective addressing the central issue. Ganz's leadership and organizing framework compels people to connect with others based on passion and personal connection, which then can motivate them to reach out to others and tell their story.

These are two prominent frameworks that are used in different settings to frame collective leadership in civic settings. There are many other ways community members

have exercised leadership in the civic arena that have not resulted in a theory, model, or named practice. That does not mean their leadership should be discounted, but rather, it can be a source of learning for better understanding civic leadership.

Developing Leadership in the Civic Arena

Drawing from an Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) framework (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1996), I want to recognize leadership is occurring in the civic setting. Communities are not devoid of leadership if they have not received leadership development. My call for increased leadership development in communities is meant to come alongside the leadership in communities that is already in practice. However, communities have historically used leadership development programs as a way to build the capacity of leaders in local settings. Next, I discuss formal leadership programs that aim to develop leadership within and for communities.

Community Leadership Programs

Some leadership development opportunities have occurred through formal community leadership programs (CLPs). Azzam and Riggio (2003) define CLPs as "formal leadership development programs sponsored by local community agencies with the aim of training future and current leaders in the skills necessary to serve their communities" (p. 55) and note that Leadership Philadelphia, established in 1959, was the first formally recognized CLP. In this article, they also wrote that the Community Leadership Association, a national organization for civic leadership programs, has had 400 members. Wituk et al. (2003) wrote that 750 communities had CLPs and explain that two-thirds of those CLPs are sponsored by Chambers of Commerce and primarily focus

on providing participants with information about the community, visiting community

entities, and networking within the program and with other community leaders (p. 76). In

other words, CLPs have been a popular mechanism for leadership development in the

United States for over 50 years.

However, Porr (2011) noted that developing leadership skills can often be

secondary to networking and conducted a study on the differences between "meet and

greet" programs and those focused on leadership skills. In this study of 86 CLPs in Ohio,

Porr found that "meet and greet" programs were more prevalent if they were sponsored

by Chambers of Commerce than academic sponsors. Additionally, the prevalence of

CLPs with academic sponsors is likely low because academic structures do not

incentivize faculty engagement in CLPs (Porr, 2011). Community leadership education

would likely fall into a faculty member's service category, rather than their teaching

category, which has less currency in the academy.

There are a variety of leadership practices used in community leadership

development. In-person workshops or trainings is one of the most identified practices.

Most programs span nine or 12 months with in-person workshops once a month. There

are varying uses of this time, such as leadership skill development, simply networking,

and visiting community agencies. Azzam and Riggio (2003) write that over 85 percent of

civic leadership development programs use formal classroom instruction. This might also

be combined with other delivery methods such as "meet and greet" sessions. Sometimes

the classroom instruction includes action learning where the cohorts work to address a

common issue. Typically, the common issue is selected by the cohort, rather than the

cohort being selected around the central issue. Many communities also use leadership

coaching, where individuals are partnered with trained leadership coaches throughout the

program. Allen and Lachapelle (2012) illuminate that the value of coaching can be both

the formal expertise in leadership coaching as well as personal and professional

connections to the community.

Studies on leadership development in the civic arena are primarily focused on

evaluation of the programmatic elements (e.g., Black, Metzler, & Waldrum, 2006;

Lamm, Carter, & Lamm, 2016) or on the development outcomes of an individual from a

leader-centric paradigm (e.g., Raferty, 1993). Studies on the individual look at particular

skills or competencies. However, emerging studies are beginning to look at multi-level

leadership (i.e., individuals, groups, systems) and the relationships that exist between and

among those levels (e.g., Cullen-Lester, Maupin, & Carter, 2017; Day & Harrison, 2007).

The studies focusing primarily on programmatic elements look at the sponsorship (i.e.,

funding), content (i.e., orientation vs. instruction), and structure (i.e., participants, time)

(e.g., Azzam & Riggio, 2003; Kaufman, Rateau, Carter, & Rochelle Strickland, 2012).

Studies on leadership in the rural and agricultural communities stand out as a specific

context (e.g., Kaufman et al., 2012).

There are a few studies that evaluate the outcomes of community leadership

programs several years after the intervention. For example, Emery, Fernandez, Gutierrez-

Montes, and Flora (2007) studied the impacts of the Iowa Cooperative Extension

program, Tomorrow's Leaders Today, by interviewing individuals who participated in

the program 20 years prior. Thirteen of the 18 program participants were involved in the

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study. They found that individual leadership development has a positive community

impact, which was understood to be an increase in community capitals (e.g., financial,

cultural) using a Community Capitals Framework (Fey, Flora, & Flora, 2004; Flora &

Flora, 2008). CLPs are widespread in the United States, but many are perpetuating

leader-centric practices of leadership. This is incongruent with the needs of leadership in

the 21st century.

Higher Education Programs

One particular area of higher education that involves leadership development is

agricultural extension and outreach; such units connect higher education and community

leadership development. Kaufman, Rateau, Carter, and Rochelle Strickland (2012)

explain that agricultural leadership programs have over a 75-year history starting with the

Kellogg Farmers Study Program, which started at Michigan State University in 1965. The

limited connection between CLPs and higher education institutions may be a key

contributor to the theory (i.e., collective) to practice (i.e., leader-centric) gap.

Etuk, Rahe, Crandall, Sektnan, and Bowman (2013) write that rural leadership is

"regarded by practitioners, social scientists, and community members as an important

factor influencing the development and trajectory of rural communities" (p. 411) and

point out that little is known about how leadership development programs have impacted

community outcomes. Their mixed-methods study of two rural leadership development

programs reveal positive impacts on individual leadership ability, community capacity,

and community outcomes. Allen and Lachapelle (2012) studied a community leadership

program aimed at reducing rural poverty and identified the most important finding to be

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that minor investments in leadership development can go a long way in increasing the knowledge of a community around a particular issue, increasing the community's capacity to identify and address such problems.

Secondly, higher education also focuses on student leadership development to prepare students to become civic leaders. Many studies focus on civic leadership and socially responsible leadership in undergraduate students including pedagogical practices for increasing characteristics such as civic mindedness and civic identity (e.g., Andenoro, Sowcik, & Balser, 2017). One study (Buschlen & Dvorak, 2011) even features a socially responsible leadership scale, which showed that post-industrial leadership skills associated with the Social Change Model can be learned. Higher education programs for enrolled students do not constitute community leadership programs, but they have an opportunity to help produce students who can lead in communities.

Overall, few studies on community leadership programs included participants in the government sector, nonprofit sector, or cross-sector collectives. Civic leadership is a context with blurred boundaries. Research is needed to understand how leadership operates without boundaries. Challenges that occur in the third sector or across sectors with public and social purposes are incredibly messy. It is not clear who is responsible for addressing such issues. Yet this is where leadership is urgently needed because it is where complex social issues like affordable housing, food insecurity, and poverty reside. We would greatly benefit from more understanding of civic leadership both in theory and practice because leadership in the civic arena looks different than leadership in other settings.

Conceptual Framework

I draw upon these three areas of literature within a critical leadership studies framework to inform my conceptual framework for this study (summarized in Figure 2).

- Leadership is an activity and a practice, not a position (Chrislip, & O'Malley, 2013; Heifetz et al., 2009; Raelin, 2016), and, therefore, leadership is a collective practice (Ospina & Foldy, 2016). I will study the practice of civic leadership rather that the characteristics that "leaders" possess.

- Leadership occurs within a complex adaptive system (Uhl-Bien et al., 2007). I will study leadership through three interacting levels of the system including individual, group, and the overall system.

- Leadership necessitates stakeholder involvement (Chrislip & O'Malley, 2013; Heifetz, et al., 2009; Ospina & Foldy, 2016). Various stakeholders are included in this study to provide diverse perspectives in contrast to only those with formal authority.

- Leadership is distinct from authority (Heifetz et al., 2009). This study focuses on the practice of leadership from all stakeholders and distinguishes the practice of leadership from the exercise of authority.

- Leadership requires distinguishing between technical and adaptive elements (Chrislip & O'Malley, 2013; Heifetz et al., 2009). The participants of this study are brought together by an interest in exercising leadership on a common adaptive challenge. Leadership activity will focus on adaptive elements of the challenge.

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- Leadership is needed among and between sector boundaries (Crosby & Bryson, 2010). The community organization is addressing complex adaptive challenges that require involvement beyond one organization or sector. External perspectives to understand systems-level interventions are included in the study.

- Leadership can be learned and developed (Daloz Parks, 2005; Rost, 1993). From the stance that leadership can be taught, I inquire in this study about how leadership development impacts practice.

It is from this conceptual framework that I inquire about the ways that collective leadership development impacts the practice of civic leadership and how that impact compares across multiple levels.

Figure 2. Conceptual Framework
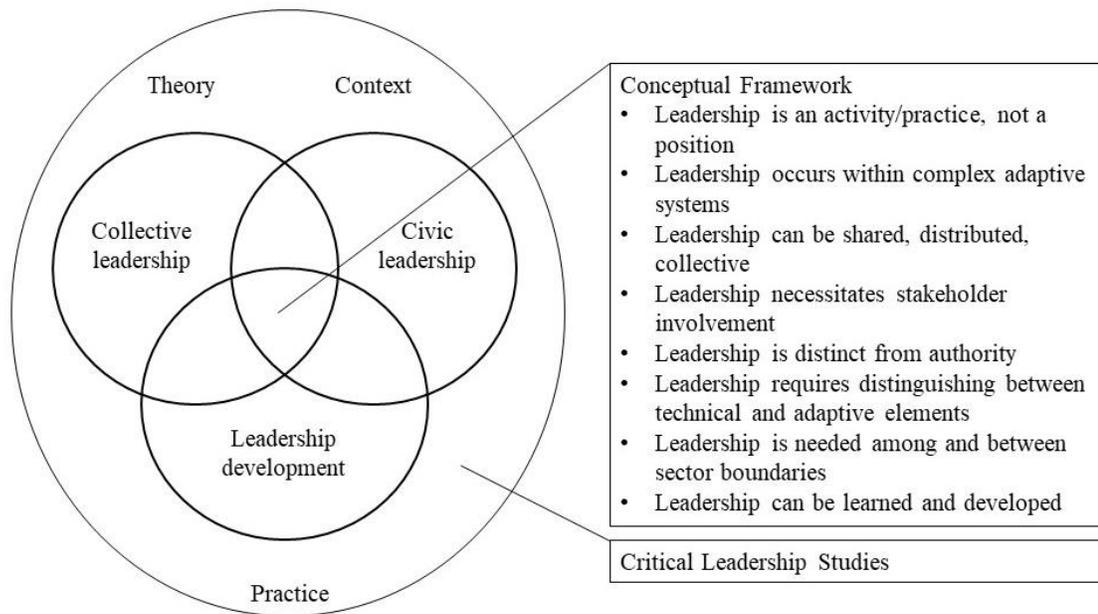
Intersections of the Literature

This literature review has affirmed my previous findings that there is a gap in the literature at the intersection of collective leadership, civic leadership, and leadership development. Therefore, my study will contribute to the field by addressing this knowledge gap. It is at the intersection of these three areas that I inquire about how collective leadership development impacts the practice of civic leadership.

Figure 3. Focus of Study

Focus: Understanding how collective leadership is practiced in civic settings

Limitation: Disregards the developmental process of integrating theory and practice

Dissertation Focus: Understanding how collective leadership development can contribute to enhancing the practice of civic leadership

Collective leadership

Civic leadership

Focus: Developing effective teams and systems

Limitation: Disconnected from complex social issues in the civic arena

Leadership development

Focus: Developing civic leaders, enhancing community leadership programs

Limitation: Reproduces a leader-centric paradigm

I have described theories of collective leadership, the context of civic leadership, and the practice of leadership development in the civic arena. While studies and scholarship exist around each of those areas, studying each area individually or even two areas together leave out an important component to understanding how leadership development can support diverse stakeholders in the civic arena to address complex social issues. I describe the need for studies at this intersection in Figure 3.

While reviewing literature for each of the individual topic areas, I noticed there was little research that crossed these boundaries—especially studies that brought all three areas together. One study that was situated at this intersection evaluated the outcomes of the Kellogg Leadership for Community Change program, which brings 25 individuals from a community to learn together about collective leadership. Mititello and Benham (2010) studied six sites that received training between 2002-2007, with data collection occurring in 2006 to 2007. Using Q-sort methodology and photovoice, they found that participants (a) understood the change process; (b) built trusting relationships across organizations, and (c) sought diverse perspectives (p. 629). This study pointed to the enrichment of a civic leadership through collective leadership development, but ultimately, more studies are needed to understand how collective leadership development may impact the practice of civic leadership.

In this literature review, I explored the areas between collective leadership, civic leadership, and leadership development. I discussed relevant literature regarding the theory and practice of collective leadership, including three prominently cited theories and frameworks under the collective leadership umbrella. Since civic leadership is

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understudied, I discussed several elements of civic leadership to help define the context of this study. Furthermore, I shared studies where leadership development was included from a collective leadership perspective, and then discussed the history of leadership development in the civic arena. Ultimately, this literature review helped to refine the conceptual framework used in this study, and therefore it was discussed in this chapter. I discussed all these areas of literature at their various intersections because little evidence was found of intersecting elements of all three areas. This study is situated within the knowledge gap and explores this gap in partnership with a nonprofit focused on leadership development and a civic organization focused on LGBTQ+ school safety, both of which are introduced in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III

THE COLLABORATORS

The process of inquiry in this dissertation aligns with the collective dimensions of leadership. Numerous collaborators (e.g., leadership educators, leadership practitioners, leadership scholars) worked together to make progress on uncovering knowledge about the research questions. This approach also aligns with my critical participatory research paradigm, which seeks to co-create knowledge with numerous people regardless of formal position or title. Various collaborators have participated at different stages of the study, which is described in detail in the research design and data collection section (Chapter IV). In this chapter, I introduce the three central collaborating units: (1) the primary researcher, (2) the Kansas Leadership Center (KLC), and (3) the Pride Coalition of Kansas.

The Primary Researcher: Subjectivity Statement

While I approach this study through a collaborative nature, I would also like to acknowledge and contextualize my role as the primary researcher. By design, dissertations are meant to demonstrate the research skills of a student to the academic community. It is a rite of passage in the academy, a sector I hope to work within for a long time. There are other research projects I collaborate on where my particular role is not explicitly evident, but in the case of a dissertation, it is my role, as the author, to demonstrate my knowledge of and ability engage in the research process. Noting my role

as primary researcher opens up a space to dialogue with this tension between my individual needs and my participatory commitment throughout the inquiry process.

My interest in this topic, the focus of the research questions, the theoretical framework, and the methodology are all informed in some way by the collaborators; this does not mean that I sat side-by-side with other people at every stage drafting questions, reading articles, analysis, and so on. Rather, it means that I engaged in conversation with them, read their books, practiced their framework, and sought their feedback at key moments throughout the study. There is no doubt that the collaborators described in this chapter have made significant contributions to this dissertation. I recognize a push and pull between wanting their influence while also wanting to maintain control because of the immense stakes of this project on my academic life. While my graduate program has taught me to question dominant narratives, the norms of dissertation research and writing speak loudly. I have had to challenge the loud voices of the traditional dissertation to stay true to the collaborative process and push boundaries with this inquiry. I also have had to quiet the loud voices of what it means to be "community-engaged" in order to hear how the participants truly want to be involved. So here, as the primary researcher, I provide a subjectivity statement to inform the reader about how my social identity, position, history, and background may inform my interaction with this study.

A "subjectivity statement is a summary of who researchers are in relation to what and whom they are studying" (Preissle, 2012, p. 845). In this statement, I describe the components of my identity and background that relate to this study. I include descriptions

of my social identity, educational training, and professional experiences to shed light on my relationship to leadership and collaborative processes.

Exposure to Non-Dominant Narratives of Leadership

I was born and raised in a dominantly White suburb of Kansas City, Kansas, where I had access to many opportunities through school, church, and community organizations. Many of these opportunities provided me avenues to formal leadership positions such as captain of my cheerleading squad, drum major of my marching band, and my school representative on a superintendent's advisory board. After high school, I moved to Manhattan, Kansas to attend Kansas State University (K-State)—a place I would call home for ten years. The summer before college, I received an invitation by what is now called the Staley School of Leadership Studies to take an introduction to leadership course. I felt confident enrolling in this course because of my leadership experience. In this course, I began learning about a new way to view leadership—as a process and not a position. It was a concept that intrigued me, and I was able to start applying it in the K-State Marching Band. As an underclass clarinet player in a 350-piece band, I practiced leadership without being a section leader or drum major. By the end of my sophomore year, I received the Rod Funk Silent Leader Award. I thought, "Wow, the process of leadership can actually be seen and noticed without a position." I wanted to learn more.

Unveiling My Privilege

I took the second course in the leadership studies minor called *Culture and Context in Leadership*. My instructor was the first openly gay person I had ever met. She

introduced me to the idea of privilege. I started unpacking my invisible knapsack of privilege (McIntosh, 1998), including my identities as White, straight, cis-gender, able-bodied, middle-class, U.S. born, and English speaking. At that time, I understood that I had privilege, but I did not quite understand the complexity of that concept or how I might move in and out of privileged and oppressed spaces throughout time.

After graduation, I started working for the Staley School in an administrative role. In my first year there, I went on an Alternative Break trip with students to Fort Worth, Texas, where we volunteered at a daytime homeless shelter. Moreover, we engaged in conversations with people experiencing homelessness, learned about the vast network of agencies working together to reduce homelessness, and grappled with policies that created systemic issues of unaffordable housing/homelessness, food insecurity, and poverty. Since the Alternative Break program was situated within the Staley School, many of the critical reflections focused on leadership. These reflections helped me to see the need for people to come together to think in new and creative ways across boundaries and sectors to make progress on issues of poverty. This experience helped me to see how I could exercise leadership within communities and not just within student organizations or sports teams.

Training in Adaptive Leadership

After attaining a new role in the Staley School, I began teaching a junior-level practicum course in the leadership studies minor—a course I taught for six years consecutively. The semester I joined this teaching team, they were shifting from an individualized practicum experience (i.e., each student had a separate placement) to a

collective practicum experience (i.e., the whole class worked on a common issue). The course content was rooted in adaptive leadership, which as explained previously, is a framework for mobilizing others to address challenges that require learning and involve diverse stakeholders. I participated in an adaptive leadership boot camp facilitated by a KLC faculty member and continued my learning by attending two formal programs at the KLC as well as other smaller events focused on adaptive leadership. Then, I used this framework in my practice of leadership to bring more healthier and more accessible food to K-State students. This adaptive leadership framework, which intellectually intrigued me, also worked for me in practice. I share this deep connection with adaptive leadership because it is a guiding framework for this study. I was steeped in this framework, and it informs many of my views as a leadership student, leadership educator, and leadership scholar.

As much as I believe it is a powerful framework for leadership, I have also seen many students and co-workers struggle to enact its concepts. There were a critical number of us at the Staley School who were attempting to practice leadership in this way, and we made changes to our organization and had meaningful impacts on several community issues. Yet, it is difficult to understand if our training in adaptive leadership was what translated to meaningful action considering our disposition toward the discipline. I have great hope that people who learn about adaptive leadership can put it to use to transform themselves, their organizations, and their communities; I am also unsure how training impacts that practice.

My background with adaptive leadership and the KLC impacted my approach to this study. I have a positive perspective of this framework of leadership and I brought an assumption to this study that the KLC provides quality leadership development experiences. While I was open to dissenting perspectives, my role was not to evaluate the KLC program or the adaptive leadership framework. My interest was in how this leadership development experience was operationalized by the Pride Coalition. I have no formal roles with the KLC, but I do have relationship with some of their faculty. I tried to remain conscious of my closeness to the KLC and the adaptive leadership framework throughout the study by engaging in critical reflexivity through journaling and discourse with a critical friend.

Collective Dispositions

As a millennial, I think I am oriented toward collective and complex forms of leadership due to my identity as a digital native. My generation and those coming after me have known a world of technology and globalization. Things seem more connected to us, due to our constant use of technology. Although I was born in the late 1980s, my college years and professional life are situated in the 21st century. As someone who is female and lives in the world as a woman, I also believe my gender identity has perpetuated a collective mindset. I have operated within many women-dominated groups from my early years as a clarinetist and softball player to my professional life in work environments in leadership studies and my current community engagement office. My own experience has led me to believe that women are more socialized to be collective and non-hierarchical than men. I often view my identity as a woman as a dominant

identity because it has allowed me to find mentors, colleagues, teachers, and bosses who are like me. I have strengths that lead me to engage in collective practices liked shared decision-making and dialogue that I attribute to my gender identity. Yet, when I take a more critical look at leadership literature over time and "leaders" over time, they have primarily self-identified as men. My feminist lens also allows me to see issues of power both in leadership and in the larger world. Due to this lens, I question leader-centric paradigms and why my band directors, coaches, university presidents, and other positions of formal authority governing my organizations were mostly people who identified as men.

My participation in a horizontal structure of the Staley School formed my collective disposition as well. As a staff member and graduate student (seeking my master's while working there), I felt like an equal member of the team. For example, I facilitated and contributed to discussions with an interdisciplinary group of faculty to create a Ph.D. program. I did not feel dismissed because of my formal title within the Staley School or my role as a graduate student. At the same time, I was always aware of my place within the organization (reinforced through pay gaps between tenured faculty and staff), which influenced the way I practiced leadership. This experience is what led me to include a variety of people in this study and not only the few key spokespeople. I did not want to perpetuate a leader-centric view of leadership through my methods. I wanted to recognize how all the voices across the structure (horizontal or vertical) can contribute to the understanding of leadership.

Growing into New Identities

While my time at the Staley School helped me more clearly see systems of power in action, I also learned that leadership is an avenue to address power, privilege, and oppression. Leadership is an activity that people from many backgrounds have used to make social change. Although mainstream leadership often lifts the White, wealthy, masculine "leader," the philosophy of leadership I was taught was accessible to anyone, regardless of title, position, or social identity. I started to learn more about community organizing in relation to leadership, which has been used to address many injustices throughout U.S. history. This is the kind of leadership I want to develop in others and continue to develop in myself because I want everyone to feel empowered to exercise leadership—not just a privileged few.

I knew that if I cared about understanding issues of power, privilege, and oppression, I had to learn somewhere outside my comfort zone of Kansas. I had lived and studied in a White majority, politically conservative, "Kansas nice" environment. Moving to Greensboro, North Carolina for my doctorate has shaken me in many ways while also serving as a fertile place to grow. My classmates and teachers, as well as the authors we study, are more racially and ethnically diverse than those I have learned with previously. Additionally, the complexities of a diverse, minority majority, urban area amplify many of the social injustices I had been exercising leadership on before moving, particularly racial injustice and food insecurity. My time in the Cultural Foundations doctoral program has helped me better understand the individual and societal elements of these issues. I now live identities as a social justice educator and a critical leadership studies

scholar-practitioner. To me, these means that I am committed to engaging in critical and justice-oriented work with communities through my role as a leadership educator and scholar.

This commitment to engaging in critical and justice-oriented work was lived throughout this study. Prior to this study, I did not have much direct interaction with the LGBTQ+ community and I do not identify as LGBTQ+. While I was not studying LGBTQ+ issues specifically, I was interacting with this community and learning from them. I will elaborate on my learning in the conclusion chapter, but ultimately, I learned more about the LGBTQ+ community in addition to my stated research goals. I have become a more educated ally within this community due to this study. I anticipate that if I continue to study leadership in civic settings, that I will be exposed to several other adaptive issues while studying the leadership process that surrounds it.

Conclusion

Watt (2007) writes that "since the researcher is the primary 'instrument' of data collection and analysis, reflexivity is deemed essential" (p. 82) and encourages journal writing as a way to continue dialogue with the self. I have kept a journal throughout this entire dissertation process and found it to be a helpful tool in unraveling complex thoughts related to this study and myself. My interactions with the participants and my analysis of the data made me think more deeply about my background and social positioning. Additionally, enacting community-engaged scholarship while also working as a community engagement professional raised numerous questions about the theory-to-

practice gap in this approach to research and teaching. I will draw more connections between my subjectivity and this research in the final chapter.

The Kansas Leadership Center

The KLC is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to foster leadership for stronger, healthier and more prosperous Kansas communities. The Kansas Health Foundation created the KLC in 2007, through a 30-million-dollar investment over ten years. The Kansas Health Foundation, "after years of experience investing in improving the health of Kansans…concluded that civic leadership—broadly defined—was also critical to making progress" (Chrislip & O'Malley, 2013, p. 11). While the impetus for the KLC began through this focused gift, the creation of the KLC was collaborative. The early collaborators included a small group of five people who traveled across Kansas for 11 months "listening to its citizens" and assessing how to "best implement the Center's purpose" (p. 7). While discussing data from this listening tour, the group realized that to "transform the state's civic culture" they would have to leverage the resources to "mobilize other leadership development organizations to share the work" (p. 16). The KLC offered leadership development programs in 2008 to key influencers across the state such as city managers, nonprofit and business executives, and superintendents, and programs were also open to anyone in Kansas wanting to enhance their civic leadership capacities (p. 16).

KLC Framework

The KLC worked to develop a framework for civic leadership. They drew upon the adaptive leadership framework, pioneered by Ronald Heifetz and Marty Linsky, to

distinguish between technical and adaptive challenges in civic life. Linsky was one of the five original collaborators for the KLC. Additionally, the founding CEO of the KLC, Ed O'Malley, also among the original five, attended a well-known leadership program at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government in 2007, which teaches the art and practice of adaptive leadership as well. O'Malley writes that "he began to realize that Heifetz and Linsky's approach to describing challenges would be helpful for our work in civic life" (Chrislip & O'Malley, 2013, p. 41). The KLC framework includes five guiding principles:

(1) leadership is an activity, not a position;

(2) anyone can lead, anytime, anywhere;

(3) it starts with you and must engage others;

(4) your purpose must be clear; and

(5) it's risky (O'Malley & Cebula, 2015).

In addition, these principles were translated into four competencies:

(1) diagnose situation,

(2) manage self,

(3) intervene skillfully, and

(4) energize others (O'Malley & Cebula, 2015).

The KLC has focused on developing and teaching civic leadership over the last decade, offering leadership trainings that attract national and international participants. They have developed teaching handbooks, written books on the leadership competencies, and created an online platform for on-going engagement with former participants of their

programs. Now they have a desire to research their framework and training, and in late 2018, they launched a research program called Third Floor Leadership. This initiative asks scholarly questions about the KLC's framework, practices, and participant experiences. Third Floor Research is a container for applied research on leadership development with a focus on adaptive leadership. It encourages research at three levels: individual development, organizational impact, and community capacity. This dissertation is part of the Third Floor Leadership research initiative.

Next, I describe the grant and its programs as they were during the time the grant team participated in the programs. I do not disclose the year of the grant to provide more anonymity to the grant team. Since the participants of this study participated in the grant program, it has evolved. Therefore, current webpages are not an accurate source of information. This description was written in collaboration with the KLC Leadership Transformation Grant administrator—Ashley Longstaff—who provided me handouts, emails with descriptive language, and other details through a phone conversation. Those sources have been compiled into the following description.

Leadership Transformation Grant

To attract groups of Kansans working on common adaptive challenges, the KLC developed the Leadership Transformation Grant program. The grant is for civically-engaged organizations and entities across Kansas interested in increasing the capacity of individuals, developing a shared language to deal with difficult challenges, and making more progress on tough problems. Groups apply to the grant naming a specific challenge they are facing and identify a group of 20-40 people who will participate in leadership

development at the KLC. Over the year, the teams use 20-40 spots in leadership

development trainings. The participants have a choice of three leadership programs: (1)

Your Leadership Edge, (2) Lead for Change, (3) and Equip to Lead. There are several

trainings offered throughout the year, and they are not dedicated to a specific grant team.

Therefore, a participant in one grant team may attend alongside members from their

team, members from other teams, and people who are taking the training separate from

the grant program. Some participants attend more than one training as part of the grant.

The outcomes of the grant include:

> (1) Participants will learn KLC's leadership framework and share a common
>
> language with their fellow participants.
>
> (2) Participants will grow their leadership capacity for greater collaboration with
>
> others in their organization or community.
>
> (3) Participants will develop the skills needed to approach challenges associated with
>
> their job successfully, or within their organization or community, that hinder them
>
> from making progress.

Your Leadership Edge is a two-day introductory training that focuses on developing a

new mindset for addressing adaptive challenges. Participants are introduced to the KLC

principles and competencies and focus on identifying their own "leadership edge." They

listen to presentations, interact in small groups, and participate in labs. An example of a

lab is a process called peer consultation where peers work in groups to provide

challenging interpretations about each other's adaptive challenges in a way that supports

individuals in developing smart leadership interventions aimed at addressing their

challenge. The program aims for participants to examine what is outside of their comfort zone, identify default behaviors, and lead more confidently. Participants of this program receive access to the online platform, Your Leadership Edge, for one year. It includes videos on the concepts, access to webinars with KLC faculty and other participants, and other resources.

Lead for Change is a seven-day program, divided into two on-site experiences. This program is focused on skill-building, including:

- leading with powerful questions,

- active and deep listening,

- creating coach-like conversations,

- building a trustworthy process: tactics of trust,

- taking care of yourself, and

- drawing forth personal vision.

Participants take a deep dive into the KLC leadership principles and competencies and focus on large-scale change within self and systems. Each participant partners with a leadership coach for five sessions. Facilitators use a process called Immunity to Change that helps participants identify competing values in the change process. Participants of this program also receive access to the online platform for a year.

Equip to Lead is a two-day training for people who have participated in Your Leadership Edge or Lead for Change. The goal of this program is to expand the reach of KLC ideas by improving the ability of participants to use the KLC framework and to mobilize others to use the framework. This program is particularly relevant for people

teaching and facilitating leadership formally in classrooms or leadership programs and informally within teams, organizations, or communities. Some objectives include developing confidence in sharing about KLC ideas and practicing facilitation, crafting questions, and getting on the balcony. Another goal includes completely familiarizing the participants with the Your Leadership Edge website and book.

The KLC has developed a unique leadership development framework relevant for civic work in Kansans and beyond. Over the last ten years, many individuals have attended KLC trainings to learn their framework. The Leadership Transformation Grant program provides an opportunity for several members of a group (i.e., school, nonprofit, coalition) to receive leadership development training in the same year. Next, I describe one community coalition that participated in the Leadership Transformation Grant program.

The Pride Coalition of Kansas

The Pride Coalition of Kansas (pseudonym) is a grassroots LGBTQ+ advocacy organization that brings awareness and change in Kansas for and with the LGBTQ+ community. As one participant stated, Pride's goal is to "eliminate homophobia and transphobia in Kansas." To accomplish this goal, coalition members advocate for non-discrimination policies that help protect LGBTQ+ individuals. They also provide general education about gender identity and sexual orientation. Sometimes this education occurs through formal professional development trainings and other times through community dialogues.

The volunteers who participated in this study had a deep passion for protecting LGBTQ+ youth. While their goal is eliminating homophobia and transphobia, the participants also stated that other work must be done while discrimination is still occurring. One participant specified, "The ultimate goal is to make it so we don't need to be here. But until then, it's ferociously protecting every child that we possibly can." The participants explained this necessity to protect kids by noting the "rash of suicides" occurring in Kansas and the fact that "kids are dying." Therefore, Pride has worked to establish partnerships with educators to bring their advocacy work into school settings. One participant explained, "School districts tend to reflect the values of their community, and the community tends to reflect the values of the school district." Thus, focusing on changes within schools is one way they accomplish their larger goal of eliminating homophobia and transphobia more broadly.

Pride is composed of a variety of volunteers, including mental health workers, students, professors, personal development speakers and consultants, full-time parents, full-time volunteers, teachers, Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) advisers, school counselors, and more. There are currently no paid staff and only one full-time volunteer who serves as the director. They rely on volunteerism to sustain and grow their work. The Pride Coalition is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization governed by a board. The board meets regularly in the city of Golden (pseudonym), where the nonprofit was established. The full-time director and student interns also work in Golden. In many ways, Pride and its work is "messy." When talking to its director, Isabella, during the initial stages of this study, I explained that what makes the Pride Coalition of Kansas an ideal coalition to

study is that it is messy. To which she replied that she was about to tell me I should steer clear of it because it is messy. Its messiness stems from their members (a) working across sectors (e.g., nonprofit, education, government); (b) its limited formal staff and budget; and (c) its ever-evolving composition of volunteers who are geographically dispersed.

The Pride Coalition of Kansas received a KLC Leadership Transformation Grant and filled 29 spots with a total of 25 people. Twenty people attended Your Leadership Edge, four people attended Lead for Change, and five people attended Equip to Lead. Some participants previously attended KLC trainings, which is a requirement of the grant.

Conclusion

The KLC is focused on the practice of leadership development, which has led to some scholarly work around their framework and teaching practices. However, they only recently began the Third Floor Research program to engage in systematic investigation of their leadership development work. In the creation of this study, I was invited to collaborate with the KLC through the Third Floor Research program. This study may contribute to the KLC's understanding of how their Leadership Transformation Grant program impacts the practice of civic leadership. The Pride Coalition of Kansas, a participant of the KLC Leadership Transformation Grant, collaborated on this project in hopes of continuing to advance their own leadership development. The Pride members see leadership development as a way to enhance their work on LGBTQ+ school safety issues. As the primary researcher, I worked with and guided the collaborators to investigate the research questions with the goal of better understanding the impact of

collective leadership development in a civic setting. In the next chapter, I describe the

methodology I used to engage with these collaborators throughout this research study.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

Although many theories are describing how complex systems and collective leadership work theoretically, there is minimal evidence about leadership development that can support civic groups in their leadership practice to make progress on their complex, adaptive challenges. The KLC Leadership Transformation Grants provide an opportunity for 20-40 members of a community coalition or organization to participate in leadership development informed by collective paradigms. This study aims to understand how that collective leadership development experience impacts the practice of civic leadership across multi-levels (i.e., individual, group, and system), while also inquiring about how position impacts the operationalization of collective leadership developing into the practice of civic leadership. Studying collective leadership development and how these civic groups leverage their leadership development after the year-long training is a unique opportunity to begin closing the gap between collective theory, collective leadership development, and practice. Additionally, this study gains knowledge from the practice of civic leadership, which can provide insight to leadership educators about how collective leadership out to be taught. In this chapter, I describe the research methodology and research design used to guide inquiry into these research questions

    (1) In what ways does collective leadership development impact the practice of civic leadership?

(2) How do experiences of this impact compare across multiple levels (i.e.,

individual, group, and system)?

(3) In what ways does an individual's position influence the operationalization of

collective leadership development in civic leadership practice?

(4) In what ways does the practice of civic leadership inform the way collective

leadership development ought to be taught?

Community-Engaged Research

Perhaps the key methodological question is not what method have you adopted
for this research? But what paths have been disavowed, left behind, covered over
and remain unseen? (Gordon, 2008, p. 41)

Prior to moving to North Carolina to pursue my doctoral degree, I taught

leadership studies courses at Kansas State University. In my junior-level leadership

practicum course, I was teaching students to practice adaptive leadership in their

personal, professional, and civic lives. In 2012, I was introduced to service-learning and

community-engaged (SLCE) pedagogy, which anchored my teaching in community-

based experiences. This pedagogy brought me excitement and deep learning moments

with my students, and it also brought me challenges in negotiating university

expectations and the realities of community work. Time was especially telling of the

difference in our two worlds.

Reynolds and Webber (2004) write:

Control is not the only ghost in the clock of curriculum—to use the predominant
modernist, mechanistic, metaphor—it is the ghost, which actually runs the clock.

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It is time to put this ghost to rest, let it retire peacefully to the land of no return and to liberate curriculum to live a life of its own. (pp. 9-10)

I think this ghost also resides in research, and it becomes especially apparent in community-engaged research. I currently work full-time as a community engagement professional. I participate in *scholarship of engagement*, asking questions about the practice of engaged teaching and research. I also support faculty who do community-engaged research, and I witness their challenges in conforming to university time structures (e.g., semesters or timelines for promotion and tenure) while doing research with communities who have completely different time guidelines.

As I have begun my practice as a *community-engaged researcher* I have been cautious about this approach and what paths it may disavow, uncover, or leave behind as Gordon (2008) questions. She writes that when her book:

Ghostly Matters was conceived and written, there was an optimism in the humanities and social studies that the older institutional edifices were crumbling, that new knowledge and modes of knowledge production were possible, and that these would be led and crafted by the people who had long been excluded from the citadels of the university. (p. xviii)

There is still cause to be optimistic that new modes of knowledge can include those historically excluded from its production, but there are still ghosts that need to be put to rest.

In this study, I use a community-engaged methodology to guide my approach. As a scholar of engagement, I help advance knowledge on community engagement. As a

community-engaged scholar, I am aware the ghosts are present that cause conflict with the ideal enactment of this approach.

Van de Ven (2007) identifies varying types of engagement and describes four forms of engaged scholarship. My research is consistent with "informed basic research," which is "undertaken to describe, explain, or predict as social phenomenon" and "solicits advice and feedback from key stakeholders" (p. 27). In the early stages of research, my key stakeholder was the KLC. I solicited advice and feedback from KLC staff members, and they helped to provide input on the appropriateness of the study, the lines of inquiry, and participant selection. After my research design and participants were identified, I did not engage with the KLC until later in the analysis process.

My focus on engagement shifted to the Pride Coalition of Kansas. I hoped to conduct "collaborative basic research" with them, which "entails greater sharing of power and activities among researchers and stakeholders" (p. 27). There were moments in our partnership where I felt some collaboration on the research process itself, but ultimately, the members of the Pride Coalition of Kansas provided advice and feedback on the research question and research design. In hindsight, this type of partnership makes sense given the ghost of time. This study is serving as a final requirement of my doctoral degree, and therefore, both programmatic deadlines and personal pressure kept me moving quickly through the research process. It has also been my top priority, which has led me to spend an extensive amount of time on it.

The Pride Coalition of Kansas has urgent priorities—like trying to keep kids from dying of suicide. They also do not have funds to support any full-time staff to attend to

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the coalition's issues daily. Therefore, engaging in collaborative research could keep them from meeting their other priorities. My commitment as a participatory researcher was then to use methods that were collaborative and flexible.

Often conflated with mutual benefit, reciprocity goes beyond a two-way exchange. Reciprocity is a process of co-creation, where collaborators share power and are generative together (Dostilio et al., 2012). Reciprocity was integrated into the methods of the study, while also providing participants opportunities to provide advice and feedback along the way. For example, Ruby provided feedback on the Phase II research protocol that changed some of my questions. Additionally, Isabella and I had a few phone calls throughout the study, which informed my approach—especially to Phase I including the time, location, and protocol.

My community-engaged methodology is consistent with principles of community-based research (CBR). Strand, Marullo, Cutforth, Stoecker, and Donohue (2003) describe three central features:

(1) CBR is a collaborative enterprise between academic researchers (professors and students) and community members.

(2) CBR seeks to democratize knowledge by validating multiple sources of knowledge and promoting the use of multiple methods of discovery and dissemination.

(3) CBR has at its goal social action for the purpose of achieving social change and social justice. (p. 6)

These features represent best principles and practices of CBR, which, as a scholar of engagement, I fully embrace. As a community-engaged scholar these principles and practices must be negotiated with various ghosts and living tensions. While the study was designed from a participatory paradigm, ultimately the participation level was driven by the interest and availability of the participants.

Research Design and Data Collection

I took an exploratory approach to this study because this intersection of collective leadership, civic leadership, and leadership development is still emerging and understudied. I explored this terrain using sociological mindfulness, exploring the individual, group, and systems levels as three components of a complex adaptive system (Uhl-Bien et al., 2007). To better understand the dynamic relationship between individual, group, and system in this grant team, I employed a three-phase study (summarized in Table 1).

Richardson (2000) explains that triangulation, a common approach used in qualitative research to validate findings, includes the assumption that "there is a fixed point or object that can be triangulated" (p. 13). She proposes that validity in postmodern research is more representative of a crystal that has "an infinite variety of shapes, substances,…and angles of approaches" (p. 13), which grow and change. In this study, I use the three phases to crystallize my findings, rejecting the idea of a single truth and seeking a "deepened, complex, thoroughly partial understanding of the topic" (p. 14). Crystallization encourages researchers to "gather multiple types of data and employ various methods, multiple researchers, and numerous theoretical frameworks" (Tracy,

2010, p. 844). While each phase focused on gathering data from one level, it is done to look through the crystal from differing perspectives to understand the complexity of the phenomenon.

Phase I

In the first phase of the study, I brought eight participants together for a two-hour meaning-making experience using a deliberative civic engagement framework for civic leadership development (Kliewer & Priest, 2016). This framework is both a method for leadership development and leadership inquiry, which meets the goal of mutual benefit for participants and researcher. The primary reason Isabella said she wanted the group to participate in the study was that it might allow them to continue their leadership development. Additionally, participants who went through the Leadership Transformation Grant had never been brought together as a group. Therefore, to extend their opportunity for leadership development, Phase I invited all members of the grant team to reflect on their leadership practice and make action plans for future leadership practice. I audio recorded and transcribed this session.

Brandon Kliewer and Kerry Priest's (2016) deliberative civic engagement framework for civic leadership development draws from Ganz's (2010) public narrative for individuals, which consists of the Story of Self, the Story of Us, and the Story of Now. Kliewer and Priest extend this individual storytelling practice into a group setting consisting of four stages. Ultimately, this storytelling method helps connect individuals to group purposes and motivate action toward a collective purpose. I employed stages one, two, and four in this study. Kerry Priest is a leadership educator in Kansas who is familiar

with the KLC and has experience facilitating deliberative civic engagement forums, so she agreed to come and co-facilitate stages one and two of the in-person portion of this study.

Before introducing the framework, I asked the group to set community commitments since it is a common practice within their coalition. These were recorded on a flip chart and were left visible throughout the dialogue. In stage one, the Story of Self, participants focus on "personal position taking" (p. 54) by telling individual stories. To guide the storytelling, I drew heavily from the practice of Story Circles (Roadside Theater, 1999) to provide guidelines. Prior to Kerry reading the participants the story prompt, I named these guidelines:

- The purpose of the story circle is to create a democratic process for sharing. It helps facilitate the community commitment "make space, take space."

- A story typically has a beginning, middle, end, and characters. It is not a lecture, argument, or debate.

- The story does not have to be the "best" story.

- Share a narrative from your personal experience. You do not have to be an expert on anything else except your experience.

- Each person is asked to contribute a story, although you can pass if you are not ready when the circle comes to you.

- Actively listen and be present with each person. If you need to pause when it is your turn to share, that's okay. Silence is alright in this process.

Kerry then read the prompt, which was also written on a flip chart: *Think about a time when you saw a need for leadership and what happened afterwards.* Each participant shared a two-minute story.

Stage two, the Story of Us, focused on "discovering shared values and processes" (Kliewer & Priest, 2016, p. 54). After everyone had finished sharing their stories, Kerry invited the participants to name any themes, patterns, or similarities they noticed across the stories. Kerry recorded the themes on a flip chart. Kerry and I both generated follow-up questions and led a discussion around these themes.

In stage three, participants are invited to "'embody' the values and processes of leadership and change by arranging their bodies into 'story statues'" (Kliewer & Priest, 2016, p. 56). I have facilitated and participated in this stage in other settings, and I believe it has value in providing an alternative way to express and understand the leadership learning. For this study, I decided to eliminate this element because I did not have trust or rapport with the group of participants. It was also my understanding that the participants did not know one another. Some trust must be present in a group before asking people to negotiate their personal physical space. Additionally, considering that the focus of the work these participants do is around LGBTQ+ issues, I wanted to be sensitive to the possibility that some participants may have heightened attention to privacy or protection of their physical body.

Stage four, the Story of Now, invites participants to focus on "individual actions based on shared values" (Kliewer & Priest, 2016, p. 54). I provided the participants a worksheet that had a place for them to record (a) an adaptive challenge they care about,

(b) their role or sphere of influences, and (c) one action step they would like to take in the next six months. Prior to having the participants work individually on the worksheet, I asked them to dialogue about the most urgent adaptive challenges facing the Pride Coalition. They were able to draw from this group discussion to then identify the adaptive challenge they wanted to address. After writing individually for about five minutes, the participants went around the circle again to share their commitments to future action. The worksheets, notes from the flip charts, and my personal notes were used during analysis to supplement the audio recording.

Phase II

The previous phase allowed for an in-depth discussion with participants in person. Since it occurred at a scheduled time in Golden, KS, the date and geographic location meant that not all members of the group could participate. Additionally, the information I could gain from any one person was limited because of the desire to create shared space for everyone who was present. Therefore, I designed the second phase to engage all participants electronically and over a longer amount of time. This phase began a few days after Phase I and spanned seven weeks.

To match the method to lens (Schall, Ospina, Godsoe, & Dodge, 2019), I drew from Chang, Ngunjiri, and Hernandez's (2016) work on collaborative autoethnography. Collaborative autoethnography allows each participant to write a narrative about their own experiences while doing so in a collaborative nature. The process includes (a) co-creating prompts, (b) writing individually, (c) reading and commenting on each other's drafts, (d) writing individually to expand based on comments, and I analyzing

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collaboratively. They identify that this "combination of individual and group work adds rich contexture to the collective work" (p. 24). Given the multi-level nature of this study and the participatory research paradigm, the collaborative elements of this method fit the research goals.

A 12-question, open-ended questionnaire was designed with advice and feedback from two participants. The questionnaire focused on three main areas: (a) their position within Pride and their social identity, (b) their experience attending and applying the KLC training, and (c) their perspectives on the impact of the training on the Pride Coalition of Kansas. While these foci include elements of autoethnography, such as a focus on self and culture, a deeper dive into these experiences would be needed to be aligned with the autoethnographic methodology. Additionally, my intent and design of Phase II drew from collaborative autoethnography, but the participants did not fully engage with this design, which limited the collaborative nature of the method.

Twenty-five participants were invited to respond to the questionnaire. In round one, participants had three weeks to draft an initial response. The goal of this phase was to increase access, so I emphasized flexibility in how the participants responded to the questions. I offered to visit with people over the phone if they preferred not to write. I encouraged participants to reach out with any technical questions. I used Word in round one, but I encouraged any format to be submitted. I also used the term "target date" instead of "deadline" or "due date" to encourage participation on a timeline while not letting the timeline limit responses. This was helpful because about half of the questionnaires were returned after I sent individual emails the day after the target date. In

round one, 12 electronic questionnaires were returned, and one participant spoke with me over the phone. I transcribed the answers and formatted them similarly as the questionnaires to include in the commenting period. Then I uploaded the questionnaires to a Google folder.

The 13 participants who participated in round one were provided access to the Google folder with all 13 documents. They were invited to read through the questionnaires and add comments or questions. In the email explaining this step, I also offered to send the documents in another format if needed. No participants added comments or questions to the documents. This limited the collaborative nature of Phase II. I do not know if anyone read any of the responses from other participants. Even if the participants did not engage in commenting, making these available to the group is congruent with a participatory practice. During these two weeks, I added comments and questions to 12 of the documents. The other document that was created through the phone dialogue already included my follow-up questions and comments in real-time.

After the commenting period closed, I saved these files back into a Word format and sent them individually to the 12 participants. They were invited to elaborate on their narrative by responding to the comments and questions within two weeks. For example, one of the questions was: What were some of your initial take-a-ways or thoughts about the KLC training? In response, a participant wrote, "I gained confidence to accomplish some lofty goals I had for my professional life around LGBTQ+ work." Then, I responded, "Several people have mentioned gaining confidence. What about the KLC training led to increased confidence?" When elaborating, she specifically described one-

on-one coaching as an individualized support mechanism that led to greater confidence. Five participants returned questionnaires with responses to the comments and questions. The limited responses to my comments was a limitation of the study. I was not able to get as much follow-up information as I may have in individual interviews.

Chang et al. (2016) state that collaborative autoethnography is recommended for groups of four or less. I am currently involved in a research project with seven people using this method. The limitations named by Chang et al. include the ability to manage and keep engaged a group of people throughout the research process. I have experienced this as well in my project with seven participant-researchers. Therefore, I decided to draw from this method but also adjust it to the needs of this study and the availability of the participants. I reduced the number of people involved in the co-creation of the prompts and the analysis process. I broke down my initial three questions into sub-questions to help guide participants through writing. I made the writing and commenting parts available to anyone who wanted to participate, but I remained flexible at each stage knowing that participants may only be able to engage in certain rounds.

Phase III

The purpose of the third phase was to gain additional perspectives of the larger system in which the Pride Coalition of Kansas operates. This system includes stakeholders related to LGBTQ+ school safety work. This phase included interviews with three individuals who interact with the Pride Coalition of Kansas grant team, but who are not part of that team. One 40-50 minute, semi-structured interview with each participant was conducted over the phone and was audio recorded. The interviews took on a dialogic

style (Roulston, 2010), meaning that I also shared some of my thoughts with the participants. This style was helpful because the participants were not part of the grant team and seemed to be unsure if they were sharing the right type of information with me. By making the interview feel more conversational, I think it helped the participants share more fully. Initially this phase was expected to be the only phase illuminating the system elements of the Pride Coalition of Kansas. However, the participants in Phase I and II provided a significant amount of information about the system level including key stakeholders, urgent challenges, and Pride Coalition's role in the system. The three interviews provided similar information, crystallizing the findings, but also indicating information on the system was saturated already. Therefore, I did not pursue additional interviews.

Table 1

A Multi-Level Exploratory Study

Phase	Method	Informed By	Participants
I – Group	Deliberative Civic Engagement	Story circles and Public narrative	8 grant team members
II – Individual	Open-ended survey	Collaborative autoethnography	13 grant team members
III – System	Interview	Semi-structured interview	3 people who interact with the grant team

Participant Selection

The participant selection demonstrates the iterative nature and the ghostly matters of this study. About a year before I read deeply in the literature, I had a general sense of

what I was curious about. A shift from the individual to the collective was a theme that kept coming up in many parts of my scholarly life. In Fall 2017, I conducted a pilot study with a small coalition in Greensboro who were trying to exercise leadership without any collective or shared frameworks. This multi-sector group was working together to reduce food insecurity in K-12 schools. While my findings showed that they were exercising leadership, it was clear that they had little shared language around leadership or any framework to understand the adaptive elements of their challenge. Many of the participants had received leader-centric leadership development, which helped them exercise leadership individually but not in a way that permeated the group practice. This led me to wonder what it would be like if a civic group participated in a common leadership development experience focused on a common adaptive challenge.

While visiting my former department, the Staley School of Leadership Studies, in early Summer 2018, I shared my curiosity with several colleagues. It was during this visit that Tim Steffensmeier, director of KLC's Third Floor Research initiative and Staley School faculty member, told me about the KLC Leadership Transformation Grants and how these grant teams were experiencing what I had articulated. I visited with the grant coordinator, Ashley Longstaff, to learn more about the purpose and process of the grant.

In Fall 2018, I conducted a systematic literature review, which provides the foundation for much of Chapter II. Through that process, I determined that little is known about how civic groups operationalize leadership development. We know some about the leadership development process and pedagogy, so I decided not to study teams currently experiencing the leadership development training but rather, to study alongside teams

practicing leadership after the leadership development program. There were over 60

teams who had previously participated in the Leadership Transformation Grant program.

Through additional visits with Ashley during and after the literature review, I developed

three criteria for narrowing down the list of teams. Those included civic groups that:

- were coalition-based (i.e., ideally the 20-40 participants felt like a group or team

  rather than just disconnected members in a large entity such as school district),

- clearly worked on a complex social issue (i.e., an adaptive challenge that connects

  to a public purpose and not just an internal organizational goal), and

- fully-participated in the grant program (i.e., they adequately used the leadership

  training opportunities).

After applying those criteria, Ashley provided me with a list of six groups from a

narrowed timeframe as well as their grant applications. After reviewing the applications

and some of their websites, I eliminated three. I was aware that one of these groups was

already involved in a research study with my Staley School colleagues and because of

this had received additional leadership development interventions. I decided I did not

want to ask more of this civic organization in fear of research fatigue and confusion

between leadership interventions. Another group consisted of representatives from many

organizations, which made it fit the coalition-based criterion, but most of the

representatives named were all people of formal authority. I felt working with that group

may shed more light on leader-centric perspectives than collective, which is counter to

the framework used in this study. The last team I eliminated identified an adaptive

challenge, but it was broad and vague. Although the members of the group represented individuals connected to that issue, they were not a cohesive group or team.

With three groups remaining, I visited with Tim Steffensmeier in January 2019 to seek his perspective as a leadership educator of this grant program. He agreed that all three groups seemed to be a fit for my study given my research aims. One group stood out to both of us as particularly exciting. This group's adaptive challenge was focused on food security, an issue I have exercised leadership on myself. Tim noted their ongoing relationship with the KLC and ambitious goals for systems-level change. Additionally, the group members were all in one location that was easily accessible. Unfortunately, I was not able to make contact with this group after a month of effort. In another conversation with Tim after this month of attempting contact, he was able to confirm that their executive director and half their staff were fired suddenly within this month. Therefore, they would likely be difficult, if not impossible, to convene as a collective for this study.

Then I began to consider working with the Pride Coalition of Kansas. While I believed engaging the participants may be more difficult due to their dispersed geographic location, I realized that this dispersed nature was part of the messiness I wanted to explore. I reached out to the director, Isabella, to describe the study and ask for her assistance in sharing the opportunity with the group. In April 2019, I traveled to Kansas to meet Isabella to begin building a relationship and to answer questions about the study. She was in Center City for a professional development training, so I met her and

participants—Ruby and Frank—for dinner. We all discussed the research and their work in Pride. These were the most active participants throughout the study.

After this dinner, Isabella took my research proposal to the board, and they voted to participate and asked that everyone and the organization use pseudonyms. After completing the Institutional Review Board (IRB) process at my institution, I worked with the Pride Coalition's national office to obtain IRB approval from them. I received approval two-weeks before the data collection began. A date for Phase I had been selected back in April because the Pride Coalition was already planning to convene a large group of volunteers for a professional development training. Once my approvals were in place, Isabella emailed the grant team members to let them know I would be reaching out about participating in the study. I followed-up by email explaining both Phase I and II, along with a basic research summary. After the completion of Phase I, I emailed all the grant team members again to invite them to Phase II.

There was a total of 25 people who were part of the grant team in the selected year. Sixteen of them participated in this study. Eleven had attended Your Leadership Edge, and three attended Lead for Change. Only five members of the grant team participated in Equip to Lead, which is the advanced KLC course. All five of these individuals participated in this study. Four of those five attended both Your Leadership Edge and Equip to Lead as part of the grant.

Five participants, Isabella, Frank, Melissa, Claire, and Ruby participated in both Phase I and II. Three participants only participated in Phase I, and nine only participated in Phase II. Therefore, 16 of the possible 25 participants were involved in some way

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throughout the study. Some of the 25 responded that they had time conflicts, while others never replied to any emails. Isabella also noted that some of the grant team members had moved out of the state and others she had not heard from in a long time.

Overall, the 16 participants were diverse in many ways including their geographic location (e.g., rural, urban), their time with Pride Coalition (e.g., new, experienced), their professions (e.g., educator, consultant, parent, social worker), their sexual identities (e.g., gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, queer, +), and their gender identity (transgender, non-binary, man, woman). More diversity may have been represented as I did not ask for demographic information, but the examples above were shared throughout the study. Racial and ethnic diversity was limited as most participants appeared to be White or shared their White identity through the questionnaire.

Participants in Phase II were provided the context and purpose of Phase III and were asked to provide recommendations and contact information for potential interviewees. The purpose of Phase III was to learn more about the Pride Coalition's role in the larger community (LGBTQ+ school safety work) from people who collaborated with the Pride Coalition but who were not members of the grant team. Five names were recommended, and only four included contact information. The four participants were contacted by email and three responded with their willingness to participate. The participants included one former practicum student who volunteered with the Pride Coalition for one year, one new member of the Pride Coalition, and one teacher who has partnered with the Pride Coalition in his professional work. Therefore, a total of 19 people participated in the study across all three phases. The participants were provided an

option to select their own pseudonyms so they could choose names they wanted to represent themselves and their gender identity. Here is a summary of the participants by phase:

- Phase I
    - Claire, Frank, Isabella, Melissa, Ruby, Paige, Stacey, Teagan
- Phase II
    - Claire, Frank, Isabella, Melissa, Ruby, Alex, Allison, Heather, Jason, Jordan, Lauren, Piper, Ruth
- Phase III
    - Karen, Noah, Peter

Data Analysis

The analysis process began for me during data collection. In all three phases, I engaged in active listening and note-taking to document trends in conversation. In Phase I, the participants also engaged in initial analysis by listing patterns, similarities, and themes they heard in their stories. Secondly, I transcribed all the audio recordings personally. Transcription is a highly-valued part of my analysis process because it allows me to listen to each word slowly while kinetically engaging with the language. After transcribing a rough draft of each transcript, I listened to each full recording another time to hear the narrative in real-time while also double-checking the accuracy of my transcription. Several of the themes I present in the findings chapters started ruminating by this point in my analysis.

While some preliminary themes were dancing in my head and were noted in my research journal, I still approached each transcript with an open mind. My commitment to community-engaged practices encouraged me to let the participants speak to me through the transcripts. To listen through my coding process, I employed an open-coding procedure using line-by-line In Vivo coding. In Vivo coding uses "word[s] or short phrase[s] from the actual language found in the qualitative data" (Saldaña, 2009, p. 105). This allowed me to stay close to what the participants were saying instead of jumping into my academic interpretation.

What this looked like in practice was printing each transcript with a large column on the left for codes. I read each line of each transcript and pulled out words or phrases from the text and wrote them in the column. Occasionally I applied analytic codes that were words or phrases from my research perspective, but those were rare and were underlined to distinguish them from the In Vivo codes. While I was not attempting to apply any particular framework to coding, my lens as a leadership scholar and educator was always in front of me. Therefore, I more actively picked out phrases that connected back to collective leadership. Because of this, my coding was abductive—an in-between of inductive and deductive coding—meaning that the codes both emerged from the data and were applied to the data (Deterding & Waters, 2018).

I coded each phase separately and then did a thematic analysis for each phase. The result was three separate documents with themes, categories, and codes. A list of initial themes and categories by phase can be referenced in Appendix A. Initially each phase of this study was designed to focus on a different level (i.e., individual, group, and

system). Even throughout the data collection, I realized that all the levels were being explored in all phases and that I would likely need to analyze them together. I still analyzed them first separately, partly because I wanted the initial analysis of each phase to help inform my data collection in the next phase. Additionally, each phase did include different participants and methods, so analyzing separately helped me determine if the phases were more convergent or divergent. Ultimately, I found the themes across all phases to be connected and representative of multiple levels. While some themes appeared more prominently in one phase over another, there were no glaring divergent themes.

Therefore, as a second cycle of coding, I used axial coding (Saldaña, 2009) to clarify my categories and to bring all three phases together. Axial coding can be used to "strategically reassemble data that were 'split' or 'fractured'" (Saldaña, 2009, p. 244). I used this approach to analysis because coding each phase individually seemed to fragment the data in ways that were not appropriate for the interconnectedness of the levels in each phase. In this cycle of coding, I looked across the phases to find related categories and merged and renamed them. Appendix B illustrates the initial list of combined meta-themes (e.g., leadership educators teaching pride), themes (e.g., using a common language and framework), categories (e.g., leadership is needed, KLC training helps), and sub-categories which came from the first cycle of coding (e.g., KLC language or content).

After the second cycle of coding, I determined the meta-themes and themes to be representative of the data, and that the categories and codes contributing to those themes

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contained the evidence to support the themes. I continued to refine the categories by looking at all the evidence contributing to a particular theme and determined category names that were more descriptive for the full set of codes organized within themes. For example, each phase included descriptions of the local culture. Codes related to this concept were put into categories with different names in each phase: (a) where the work is needed (Phase I), (b) doing this work in Kansas (Phase II), and (c) nice but hostile (Phase III). When combining the themes and categories from all three phases, these categories were positioned as sub-categories under a theme called *culture and identity matter in leadership work.* When looking across all the categories, sub-categories, and codes under this theme, two categories emerged as descriptive of the content in this theme: (1) *Kansas culture* and (2) *intersectional identities.* Ultimately, I combined the three initial categories related to culture that appeared in each phase into a category called *Kansas culture* after axial coding. (See Appendix C for a final list of combined themes and categories.)

At times I had to break apart or merge categories, which ultimately helped me refine my categories and themes. For example, in each phase, I included codes related to both KLC language and content in the same category. After combining these three categories across the phases, it became evident that there was a distinction between using the KLC language and the framework and that there was enough evidence to speak about these separately. Therefore, they became distinct categories. When looking at the codes in the new category *common framework*, the three sub-categories of (1) *leadership is an activity, not a position*, (2) *adaptive vs. technical,* and (3) *balcony view* emerged. The

codes primarily pointed to these three concepts as important pieces of the common framework.

After working with the data to clarify categories and reorganize codes, I searched through the transcripts using keywords to seek additional codes. For example, when the KLC common framework became a category by itself, I searched for terms related to concepts such as balcony, diagnose, raising the heat to find any evidence related to the KLC common framework category that needed to be included. I also re-read responses to specific questions, such as the one about social identity, to ensure the codes did not leave out any related evidence for the category.

Since there are limited studies at the intersection of collective leadership, civic leadership, and leadership development, this study was like an archeological dig on a new site. Drawing from the literature, I had an idea of what I was looking for in this study. I particularly wanted to know how the civic practice of Pride was impacted through the collective leadership development intervention of the Leadership Transformation Grant. With my research tools in hand, I set out to explore this new area. I found things on my dig that I was looking for, and I also discovered more about the area, the place, the context, and other artifacts under the surface that I did not know to look for. This distinction between what I was and was not looking for led to the two meta-themes. Therefore, I present my findings in two chapters. The first discusses the findings related to the Leadership Transformation Grant and its impact on the civic practice of the Pride Coalition of Kansas (meta-theme one). It provides insight into how leadership educators can help advance the leadership practice of civic groups. The second chapter deviates

from the traditional "findings" discussion to provide a rich description of the civic

context in which this exploration occurred. This chapter sheds light on how the practice

of leadership in civic groups can advance the field of leadership education (meta-theme

two).

CHAPTER V

LEADERSHIP EDUCATORS TEACHING PRIDE

Two meta-themes were generated through the analysis process: (1) leadership educators teaching Pride, and (2) Pride teaching leadership educators and scholars. In this chapter, I present findings related to the first meta-theme. This meta-theme is derived from inquiry around the primary research question: In what ways does leadership development (from a collective paradigm) impact the civic practice of leadership? This question stemmed from my role as a leadership educator and is also embedded in the Third Floor Research initiative at the KLC because more investigation of leadership development in civic contexts may lead to better equipping communities to address adaptive challenges. Particularly for this study, I was curious about how the Pride Coalition of Kansas operationalized their learning from the KLC Leadership Transformation Grant experience to make progress on the issue of LGBTQ+ school safety.

The findings of the first meta-theme are presented through four themes: (1) varying perspectives of KLC training, (2) using a common language and framework, (3) leveraging leadership development, and (4) engaging others: building an army of people. These themes were supported by initial categories found in all three phases, and they are discussed using the final categories that were developed in the second round of coding. Table 2 provides an outline of the findings presented in this chapter

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Table 2

Leadership Educators Teaching Pride

Theme	Initial Categories/Phases	Final Categories
Varying perspectives of KLC training	- Perspectives of leadership development (II) - Leadership is needed, KLC training helps (III) - Leadership development can be applied (II)	- Evaluative comments - Perspectives and outcomes
Using a common language and framework	- This work isn't easy (I) - Leadership development can be applied (II) - Leadership is needed, KLC training helps (III) - Perspectives of leadership development (II)	- Common language - Common framework - Leadership is an activity, not a position - Adaptive vs. technical - Balcony view
Leveraging leadership development	- Stepping up and putting leadership to work (I) - Leadership development can be applied (II)	- Leadership interventions - Seeing others lead
Engaging others: building an army of people	- Engaging others: building an army of people (I) - Leadership is needed, KLC training helps (III) - Making progress involves lots of people (III)	- Building more leaders in Pride - Growing the movement - Leveraging diverse stakeholders

Varying Perspectives of KLC Training

Across all three phases of the study, participants articulated their perspectives on

the Leadership Transformation Grant and its value in application. Their perspectives do

not directly speak to the research question, but I include a summary of these perspectives

to provide context of the participants and their views of the KLC training. This summary

may be particularly relevant to the KLC and to other entities or individuals considering

attending a KLC training. The participants include evaluative comments about whether they valued the KLC training or not that mainly stemmed from a question in Phase II about their initial takeaways from the KLC training. Participants in Phase II and III also spoke about outcomes and overall perspectives of the KLC, the KLC training, and the KLC Leadership Transformation Grant.

Evaluative Comments

Most participants spoke very highly of their KLC training, describing the trainings as "super helpful" and "amazing." Jason thought the "KLC had captured the journey of leadership in a unique and helpful way." Heather said, "[the training] left me feeling inspired and motivated." Jordan found it to be "incredibly transformational" and noted he had a "very positive experience." Hearing these sweeping positive claims about the training itself is not surprising. The KLC has been providing leadership training for over ten years, and they have an excellent reputation in Kansas.

There were some neutral and negative views of the training as well, but they were outliers. While Frank thought sending people from the Pride Coalition to KLC was worthwhile and positive, they thought the training was surface. They said,

> I think it's a really good start for somebody who, especially, if somebody has never really done any leadership training. And I think also that their model for leadership is a good one. I don't, I wouldn't say it's 'transformative.'

This comment makes sense given Frank's professional work. They are a consultant and coach around personal development. They have had a lot of experience thinking about personal behavior and overcoming challenges. The trainings that most of the Pride

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members attended, including Frank, were the introductory trainings over two or three days. I think they are putting into perspective that participants have varying backgrounds, including past leadership and personal development experience. Piper also spoke to this point, "I was actually disappointed in the trainings and thought that they repeated much of the leadership information I had already been exposed to." She further explained that it had not influenced much leadership activity for her afterward. The negative or neutral comments were more of an exception to the majority of remarks, but these participants help point out that not everyone enters or experiences the leadership trainings in the same way. However, in this study, the inquiry was more focused on how the KLC trainings were used by the Pride Coalition members and not their evaluation of the programs.

Perspectives and Outcomes

In addition to their evaluative comments, the participants described their perspectives on the training and what they took away. Several participants spoke about how the KLC training provided them motivation or confidence for leadership work. Lauren explained that she "walked away with some goals that [she] wanted to accomplish and the drive to accomplish those goals." Others echoed this sentiment that they had more clarity on how they might move forward on tough challenges. Ruby talked about attending the Equip to Lead training, which is the most extensive of the three programs. It has a coaching component in between the two on-site trainings. She explained that

> direct one-on-one coaching provided individualized support for addressing challenges I was facing. I was able to ask questions about how I can use the KLC tools to better approach my challenge. I felt more organized in my approach which gave me confidence that I would be successful in addressing it.

Jason also shared that he felt more "equipped to solve problems," and Ruth said the training has helped her to encourage others even if they are from different backgrounds or knowledge bases. There was a sense of growth and confidence among the participants.

Confidence was a term that many participants used throughout the study. Sometimes it was in reference to the type of confidence needed to do LGBTQ+ advocacy work, other times it was about the confidence they gained through the Pride Coalition of Kansas or as a result of the KLC training. Frank explained, "So [in the Midwest] to volunteer for an LGBTQ+ organization, you've got to have some spine anyway. And then they gave them the foundation of…now we're going to arm you with even more leadership so you feel confident." There were several positive perspectives like this describing how the KLC training could be used in civic work.

The study focused primarily on how participants experienced the training and how they applied their training in their work. However, they also surfaced an additional positive outcome of the training that was surprising. The KLC allows people from outside Kansas to participate in trainings, but their commitment is to increase the capacity of Kansans. The Leadership Transformation Grants are specifically for people who serve Kansans. Therefore, people know the KLC, and they are held in high regard in the state. Alison mentioned this reputation and its impact on the Pride Coalition:

> I think the KLC training is good exposure for the work that Pride Coalition of Kansas does, and that simply being present and involved with the KLC leads to the recognition by a large, diverse group that Pride Coalition of Kansas is getting work done in the community. KLC's reputation for excellence rubs off on the organizations that it touches.

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Additionally, a few of the participants know others outside their grant team who participated in trainings. Frank's sister and the city leadership program in Frank's town had been through a KLC program. Two of the participants from Phase III, who were not part of this grant team, had connections to the KLC; Karen had attended a training herself just this summer and Peter's wife had gone to a training.

Overall, there were multiple positive perspectives about the KLC training both from directly participating and from being connected to its reputation. However, varying and contradicting perspectives were also present. For example, Jordan found the training transformational while Frank said it was not transformational. This points to the differing experiences and backgrounds of the participants. Not all participants or students experience curricula in the same way, and the KLC trainings are no exception. Next, I shift the focus from overarching views of the training to how participants applied their learning. I first highlight their thoughts regarding the benefit of having a common leadership language and framework.

Using a Common Language and Framework

I taught adaptive leadership for six years, and I can attest that it has its own language or set of terms. Each term is tied to a concept or skill that helps practice adaptive leadership, but at times it can feel like learning a new language and not a new practice. Yet when my students finally started using that language in class and to make sense of everyday experiences, it provided them a vernacular to speak the new way of thinking that is required in adaptive work. The participants surfaced the value of having a common language and framework that they gained through the KLC.

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Common Language

Frank, the participant with a background in personal and leadership development, noted that the language at the KLC is distinct. They were familiar with many of the concepts but just had different language for those concepts. They particularly liked the language of adaptive vs. technical challenges because those terms helped put words to a newer idea. And although they had their own language for most concepts, they still articulated that "the cool thing about [the common language] for me is that leaders in my own town have the same language…They understand when I'm saying—hey, I think that this is not a technical issue, this is an adaptive problem." Similarly, Jason recalled using this language to draw attention to adaptive work. He explained,

> I have also used the language of technical vs. adaptive challenge as a mental note for our team to understand when we are wasting valuable meeting time on a technical challenge or when we are not spending enough time on an adaptive challenge.

In this example, the common language is used as a quick way to redirect the team back to the difficult adaptive work. This is an intervention I have frequently used in teams who share this common language because groups often default to technical work as it is easier and less uncomfortable.

Ruby also found the common language to be particularly relevant within the Pride Coalition. She said,

> One of the great things about the KLC training is the common language that comes with it. I'm able to speak with other Pride Coalition of Kansas volunteers who've gone through the KLC training, and 'diagnose the situation' or take a

'balcony view' and it gets all of us on the same page, and we're able to thoughtfully assess a challenge that might have come up.

Ruby gave an example of how Isabella and she were working through a challenge and were able to use the same language to talk through elements of the challenge and determine a way forward. Karen echoed the value of a common language within the Pride Coalition. She mentioned that 30 Pride Coalition members attended a training in June that focused on LGBTQ+ information and almost all of them were KLC trained. I asked her if it impacted the way they exercised leadership in the group, and she reflected that it did— partially because "the vocabulary was similar, and we didn't have to explain things." Most participants that noted the value of the KLC language attributed it to the ease of being able to jump into adaptive work without having to spend time defining concepts.

Noah did not attend a KLC training, but he spent a year in the Pride Coalition and was taught the language by Isabella and Stacey. He suggested, "If we could get our entire board to go through that and then start like practicing that language with each other, that would definitely make it more valuable if that makes sense." When talking to Frank, they had described the value of having people on the same page regarding some of the concepts. So I asked if it is fair to say that the benefit of a common leadership training is not the language, but rather the capacity to work toward a common purpose. While the leadership capacity building was important, they said that "sometimes it is specifically about the language." They explained that in any profession there is a shared language that brings people together. For example, they elaborated, "If you worked in a medical profession or an attorney's office, there's a certain language." In their own experience

serving on the board of a health center, there were several acronyms that the group used as "shortcuts." Ultimately, Frank explained that this language made talking through challenges easier and quicker and that the language also built buy-in and comradery.

The descriptions of the KLC language made me think about times I have been in groups where I do not know the language. When people are using acronyms or phrases relevant to their work, I can feel left out or ill-equipped to contribute to the conversation. For the participants in this study, the language was described as distinct from other terms and useful in groups who knew the language. However, the language was not a necessary element to practicing adaptive leadership. It was a bonus if people spoke the language, but the skills and concepts could be applied regardless. In the next section, I discuss how the participants used the common framework that KLC teaches.

Common Framework

Beyond having a common language, the participants noted that they valued having a common framework. Isabella explained,

> I think by sending folks through KLC we're getting that common language that then we can approach adaptive challenges together. So then I can help talk to a GSA sponsor and we can look at some of those issues using KLC principles.

The framework is mainly referring to the KLC principles and competencies. The concepts that came up most frequently through direct reference were: (a) leadership is an activity, not a position; (b) adaptive vs. technical, and (c) balcony view.

Leadership is an activity, not a position. *Leadership is an activity, not a position* (O'Malley & Cebula, 2015) is one of the KLC principles that helps create a new

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way of thinking about leadership. It directly contrasts a leader-centric paradigm. Frank

thought it was brilliant that the Pride Coalition grounded its members in this philosophy:

> You know the other thing is like leadership is an activity right, it's not a position…Grounding your volunteers in that is a real solid basis for (a) them all having the same language, and (b) giving them permission to lead from where they are. And that they can lead. And they can make a difference.

This philosophy is particularly crucial for the Pride Coalition because there are few

formal roles in the organization, and everyone is a volunteer. As Frank further detailed,

people who have gone through KLC training have started "to look at themselves from a

different perspective." Jason affirmed that this kind of perspective was necessary for the

work of the Pride Coalition because "leadership and advocacy are actions not titles,

nouns, or adjectives." This KLC principle, and core element of leadership-as-practice and

collective leadership, is very fitting for an organization like the Pride Coalition.

Even Noah, who did not attend a KLC training but who learned the KLC

principles working alongside Isabella and Stacey, recognized the value of this perspective

shift. He shared,

> I think they make leadership so accessible and so like leadership isn't just management. Like everyone can and should be a leader, kind of thing that we all kind of decided it was important. I think especially if you're having conversations with people about topics that do sort of raise the heat.

This is a particularly valuable statement because Noah was a practicum student placed at

the Pride Coalition. He had some formal authority to schedule professional development

events but typically people in practicum or internship placements would not see

themselves as leaders in an organization. Yet when thinking of leadership as an activity, it becomes accessible—even for a short-term intern.

Noah also mentioned that having this shared agreement that leadership is an activity is important, especially when raising the heat. Jason pointed out, "Leaders are often thought of as specific people, but this program and philosophy not only highlights that everyone can be a leader but provides specific tools to help you lead." *Raising the heat* is a tool or concept in adaptive leadership that encourages individuals and groups to engage in uncomfortable work. This type of work can be risky because conflict can arise, making the work uncertain. Claire provided an example of raising the heat in a board meeting when the group was discussing "how to avoid privileging some types of contributions over others." As she described it, "We definitely 'raised the heat' in a meeting in a discussion about this, in a way that was more open and courageous than how we typically operate." She said that it led to continued conversation that helped them address the concerns. So, while believing leadership is an activity and not a position can be just a way of thinking, several members of the Pride Coalition their ability to enact this concept.

Contrastingly, there were still participants that directly tied leadership to roles or positions. Most directly, Piper said, "I don't perform a leadership role" and had very limited responses to the other questions in Phase II. Melissa also wrote, "I do not see myself as taking leadership within or without Pride Coalition of Kansas; I prefer to observe and learn from others at this point." This was a bit surprising to me because in Phase I, she shared examples about how she was exercising leadership in ways that

contributed to eliminating homophobia and transphobia. However, her examples are within her own school, and she also shared that she didn't feel like she "belonged" at the KLC training.

There were other participants that also did not see themselves as exercising leadership within the Pride Coalition because they did not have a place or role. For example, Ruth identified that she had "not had a chance to participate in a leadership role in Pride Coalition of Kansas at this time." Additionally, Jordan said, "As a new member that isn't involved, I don't really know my place, which hinders my ability to be an effective leader." A lot of these similar sentiments came from participants who did not feel part of the Pride Coalition. This may be because the coalition is young, and many of the volunteers are new. There is no formal "membership" to the Pride Coalition. While Isabella considers them part of the coalition as volunteers, they may not feel part of the coalition without formal tasks or roles. For example, Lauren shared, "I have been unable to apply my learning with my work with Pride Coalition of Kansas as I've not worked with them, yet." These comments illuminate that some participants do not feel part of the Pride Coalition, but also that some of them do not feel they can apply leadership with the Pride Coalition until they have a role.

The Leadership Transformation Grant was used as a strategy by Isabella to engage more people in the Pride Coalition. Isabella saw them as being part of the Pride Coalition and invited them to attend the training in hopes of them becoming more engaged with the organization. The Pride Coalition might benefit from some process for helping name people as part of their organization, so that they feel they belong and are

able to exercise leadership as part of this group. Additionally, the participants who yearned for a role in order to lead highlight their belief that leadership does involve a position. Their participation in one training at the KLC was not enough to help them shift to thinking about leadership as an activity. However, people like Melissa who demonstrate leadership activity, but still believe they do not belong in leadership training present a particularly interesting subset of civic leaders. Community leadership developers and scholars may want to pay attention to individuals like this who enact leadership but do not carry a leader identity or leadership efficacy.

Adaptive vs. technical challenges. Adaptive leadership's most foundational element is that there is a difference between technical (i.e., clear problems and solutions, relies on authority) and adaptive (i.e., require learning, engages stakeholders) challenges. This concept also contrasts leader-centric perspectives of leadership where a single person has the power and knowledge to solve complex challenges. Instead, KLC participants are taught that adaptive challenges are complex and require leadership activity from multiple stakeholders.

Karen, who attended a KLC training a couple of months before our interview, described that the

> KLC encourages you to see this process, the adaptive challenge work and how very unorganized that can be, and how challenging that can be. And you go embracing in that. Because that's where the key change happens is with adaptive challenges.

She demonstrated that she understood the concept of adaptive challenges even shortly

after her training and then shared a point of application in her work as an educator:

> Because it's looking at education as an adaptive process. It's an adaptive
> challenge not a technical one. And I think for years, it has been labeled pretty
> much as, we've got the textbooks, check. We have desks, we have teachers,
> check. I mean I think it's been that type of mindset, and we're really beginning to
> key into the limitations of that. And so how do we, with intention, bring those
> adaptive challenges to the fore?

This example gave me hope as someone who cares deeply about education because

Karen is a rank-in-file teacher. She has no formal "leadership" role in the school, and yet

now she is starting to think about how adaptive issues in education can be surfaced and

addressed.

Noah also shared an example of how he applied adaptive thinking to his work at

the Pride Coalition. He prefaced by saying, "I think because adaptive challenges are like

people challenges because people are messy." Then Noah described trying to schedule a

professional development event, which should have just been scheduling a date and

location. However, the school continued to postpone their event, which could have had

underlying adaptive challenges around the LGBTQ+ focus. He said he was able to

recognize that this challenge began as technical, but it became adaptive. He noted at the

end of the story that Isabella served as an example to him as to "how we handle these

adaptive challenges…[that] gave me that foundation to be like, okay this what I do in this

situation." For Noah, the technical vs. adaptive framework helped him to better

understand why he was experiencing continued challenges with scheduling the professional development event.

Frank also shared that the adaptive vs. technical framework has value for the Pride Coalition. They said, "I think having your Pride Coalition of Kansas volunteers really grounded in the difference between technical vs. adaptive challenges and understanding that shifting adaptive challenges is an ongoing you know…this is the long game." The challenges the Pride Coalition of Kansas is working to address—eliminating homophobia and transphobia—is an adaptive challenge that will require a long game. Often our society treats adaptive challenges as technical challenges and, therefore, seeks easy and quick solutions. I think Frank is saying that the framework matches the work that needs to be done and gives the Pride Coalition an understanding and foundation for engaging in long-term work.

In Phase I, I also asked participants to try to name the most urgent adaptive challenge that the Pride Coalition of Kansas was facing. Then later, I asked them each to write down an adaptive challenge that they cared about making progress on. I will discuss the content of their responses in later sections, but my observation during Phase I was that they were able to dive right into discussion with multiple interpretations of the most urgent adaptive challenge facing their coalition. This demonstrated to me that each participant fully grasped the concept of technical vs. adaptive.

Balcony view. Taking a balcony view is a skill associated with the KLC competency *diagnose the situation.* Diagnosing the situation is about taking time to more deeply understand an issue before moving to action. This includes distinguishing between

adaptive and technical elements, identifying stakeholders, taking the temperature, making multiple interpretations, and more. Taking a balcony view means stepping back from the challenge to look at it from a distance. It is a skill that encourages diagnosing the situation because too often we are directly involved in challenges and just continue to act on them without taking the time to really understand them. This skill resonated with many participants.

Lauren identified her biggest take away as getting on the balcony. She said, "It was so powerful to stop to take a broader look at the situation." Heather agreed and said the KLC training, "helped me take a deeper look at how to approach problems and even put myself in others' shoes by taking a step back to view from the balcony." While these statements demonstrate that participants find this skill to be valuable, I wanted to know how it has been valuable specifically in their work with the Pride Coalition. Heather elaborated by sharing an example from their board work:

> By taking a step back to acknowledge that we each come from a diverse background with different strengths. We may not always agree, but we move forward together as a board with respect and solidarity in striving to stand up for LGBTQ Kansans.

In this example, Heather described a collective practice of the board, which was to identify that they were facing adaptive challenges as a group and take a step onto the balcony together to appreciate the differing backgrounds they bring to the board. Jason also provided an example of how the board used the balcony view to work through

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challenges. He explained that they invited guests who were unfamiliar with the group to provide a balcony view and help them grow as an organization.

Noah also spoke about the balcony view but in the terms of a cycle called *observe, interpret, intervene*. It is a process where people first make observations and interpretations from the balcony before intervening and then make more observations and interpretations about that intervention. A key component of this process is distinguishing between what can be observed (i.e., by sight, smell, touch, etc.) and what is interpreted (i.e., making inferences from observations). Noah described how the concept *observe, interpret, intervene* helped him refrain from being impulsive and realizing the need to take time to make observations. He said,

> I think I wouldn't have been able to make that differentiation of like oh people really don't understand it if I hadn't had that lesson because I can observe that now. You know, versus the interpretation like all these people hate LGBTQ people, they hate me, you know, they hate my family. That's an interpretation.

His example applies to his own work within the larger system of LGBTQ+ work and demonstrates that the balcony view has provided him a way to work through experiences where he feels hate to better understand what he is observing that is leading to his interpretation. This then guides how he decides to intervene.

The participants both valued and applied the balcony view concept to their work. It is a simple, yet powerful practice that allows people to take time to learn about the challenge before taking action, which is an important part of practicing adaptive leadership. It is also a skill that can be practiced by anyone, regardless of title or position,

and can involve several members of a group. Participants shared examples of applying this concept on the board and with other Pride Coalition volunteers.

The participants valued having a common language and framework. Using these with others who knew the language helped them make progress on challenges more efficiently. They also found the language and framework to be transferrable to other settings. Even if they did not use the language, such as *balcony view* with people who did not go through the KLC, they were able to think about this concept, put a name to it, and implement it with others. The concepts of *leadership is an activity, not a position, adaptive vs. technical,* and *balcony view* were concepts that highly resonated with participants in both thought and practice. The KLC language and framework helps provide comradery among those who know it including the Pride Coalition of Kansas and others across the state.

Leveraging Leadership Development

Beyond just using the language and concepts, the participants described numerous ways they exercised leadership or observed others leading since the KLC training. These leadership activities were not always referred to by the KLC language but represented the application of the KLC principles, adaptive leadership, and collective leadership more broadly. The stories in the first round of Phase I really brought out the ways they made leadership interventions. These were supported through further discussion in Phase II as the participants spoke about their other roles. In Phase II, the participants were also asked if they have seen others on the grant team exercise leadership. Phase III was primarily designed to understand how Pride exercised leadership in the system, but the participants

also spoke about individuals who exercised leadership and how they exercised leadership after their own exposure to the KLC framework. In this section, I begin by discussing how participants described their own leadership interventions and then share how they described others leading.

Leadership Interventions

Many of these examples represent a connection to the participants' backgrounds and roles but illustrate a leadership activity that is beyond the scope of their formal roles. For example, Ruby is a regional coordinator for Pride in which she is positioned as a central resource for people in her area. She worked with Pride this summer to coordinate a professional development training for educators in local schools. However, she also sought out other opportunities. She told a story of a time when she learned there was a large event happening at a local university. She decided to reach out to see if the Pride Coalition could have a table at the event. With only a few days to prepare, she got approval to have a table and worked quickly with other local members to gather materials and get volunteers to staff the table. Tabling local events are not listed in her role description as regional coordinator, but she saw an opportunity that would meet the goals of the organization and worked to make it happen. Overall, they received a positive response from event attendees, with people even coming up to them crying, thanking them for what they were doing.

Claire was a member of the Pride Coalition board and realized that there was no position around research in Kansas. Pride's national office has research positions and the organization uses research as a foundation in their professional development trainings.

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Recognizing this gap, Claire helped to create a research position on the Pride Coalition of Kansas board. She said,

> So I had to figure out what that would look like. And how to—my like leadership piece, I was waiting for somebody to tell me what that would look like, and then that didn't happen…because nobody knew. And so I had to kind of figure out what that would look like on my own.

Claire now fills that role, and Isabella has a resource for research-related work in Pride, which was even evidenced in the way Isabella went to Claire for guidance around this study.

Melissa exercised leadership within her own district. She explained that her district has a "pretty high number of kids who identify as trans, but given our current political climate, they don't feel it's a safe place for them." She recognized that many people in her district were misinformed or had apathy for LGBTQ+ issues. So, she decided to offer a workshop about LGBTQ+ topics in her district. Melissa shared this story in Phase I, which is why I was surprised when she said she did not feel like she belonged at the leadership training and did not see herself as a leader. This is an example of how her actions demonstrate a leadership intervention, but she did not explicitly tie this back to the KLC framework or to seeing how she takes on leadership as an action or process not a position.

Teagan, however, on the other hand specifically referred to an activity she did at the KLC called Immunity to Change, which helped her identify her lack of confidence and lack of speaking up. Now, as result of that realization, she is tries to speak up more:

"really exercising my voice, exercising my position, and not really relying on that position but utilizing that position to engage people who aren't always invited to the table for discussion." Her leadership intervention, while at times can be tangible, is also about a new way of thinking and being. She is trying to use her voice more to exercise leadership.

Stacey recognized the value of youth volunteers within the Pride Coalition of Kansas and that the volunteer program had been struggling to get off the ground. She has worked with Isabella to build structure, engage youth, and address challenges with volunteers. She identified this as a "big process of learning" that is still in progress. Paige, who brought her two-month-old to Phase I, noted that she has not been able to exercise leadership much since having a newborn. So, her leadership has not manifest in action or intervention yet, but she has been practicing the *diagnosing* component of the KLC framework. She has been trying to understand how to make progress adding non-discrimination policies at the district-level and has engaged in stakeholder mapping and analysis of current school board members to better inform her future leadership interventions.

Both Isabella and Frank have significant backgrounds in leadership development and discussed their leadership interventions as ongoing work. Isabella did note that attending to self-care was heightened after the KLC training. The concept of *manage self* in the KLC framework describes leadership work that needs to occur within oneself to better enact leadership within the system. For Isabella, practicing better self-care was a leadership intervention focused internally that built her capacity to lead others and

motivated her to build the leadership capacity of others. Frank's story in Phase I was also

about building the capacity of others to do the work, and they described inviting a new

person from a small town to a Pride Coalition training. These were examples of how

participants had identified ways they exercised leadership since they attended a KLC

training as part of the grant program. Next, I focus on how the participants described the

leadership of others.

Seeing Others Lead

Participants were asked if they have seen other grant team members exercise

leadership in Phase II. Given that the grant team members are dispersed across the state

of Kansas, and do not formally interact, it was not surprising that several participants said

they could not answer the question. However, many of the members of the board and two

volunteers who live in the same town, shared examples of seeing one another lead.

Ruby and Frank both work in Center City. They attended their KLC training

together, and they have worked on Pride Coalition projects together. They shared

examples of one another. Frank said,

> I've been present to Ruby's leadership for several years. But especially since she
> went to the KLC training, and really got involved in Pride Coalition of Kansas.
> She's so articulate and so clear about the distinctions between technical and
> adaptive issues. And able to um, you know look from the balcony, and I mean
> she's just really—I think Ruby's a great example of somebody who uses it.

Their examples about Ruby were more about seeing her apply the concepts more

generally. Ruby, however, shared an example of how Frank donated all their proceeds

from their one-human show to the Pride Coalition. Additionally, Ruby shared that she

saw other people "take actions to ensure that our school boards are LGBTQ+ friendly and inclusive." This comment is particularly broad, but others were more specific.

Jason shared the most specific examples of Pride board members exercising leadership. He explicitly named Isabella, Teagan, and Claire as having "all exercised leadership because of the KLC Transformation Grant." He elaborated that Isabella has been instrumental in getting the board to have tough conversations that are needed to make progress. Teagan has served as a mediator for the group and helps take the conversation beyond surface level. Claire has also helped push the board to not accept the status quo, to ask difficult questions, and to consider options before taking action. Jason, who attended two KLC trainings, was able to identify the leadership practices of others within the Pride Coalition of Kansas.

These few examples illuminate two important findings. Firstly, the leadership activities described are adaptive in nature such as engaging in disequilibrium and having courageous conversations. This contrasts with dominant narratives of leadership such as decision-making or delegating. Secondly, the people named in the examples span various roles—far beyond the director or formal authority of the group. Therefore, these examples demonstrate that the participants recognize that leadership can be practiced by more than just people with formal authority. Even though many of the people named were connected to the board, the examples of their leadership did not fall within a typical scope of authority for a board member. Leadership was not tied to their role specifically.

The participants identified numerous examples of exercising leadership after the KLC grant program. This shows that they took away more than just a way of thinking;

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they were compelled to action in ways that align with the KLC framework. Sometimes such leadership interventions took place in their tributaries away from other grant team members, and at other times, they exercised leadership with each other. Next, I explain one other way the participants leveraged their leadership development that permeated their civic practice.

Engaging Others: Building an Army of People

The theme of engaging others was primarily present in Phase I. Participants were asked to share stories of a time they saw a need for leadership and what happened afterward. Each participant chose to tell a story that highlighted them practicing leadership personally after seeing a need for leadership. Additionally, each of their stories shared an example of how they engaged other stakeholders as opposed to how they came up with a solution, solved the problem, or did something on their own. One of the KLC principles is *leadership starts with you and must engage others* (O'Malley & Cebula, 2015). Additionally, one of the KLC four competencies is *energizing others*, which highlights the need to engage others and connect to a purpose—such as eliminating homophobia and transphobia. The participants did not directly reference these KLC concepts, but they illustrated them through their stories and discussion. In this section, I highlight the ways members of Pride engaged others to (a) build more leaders in Pride, (b) grow the movement, and (c) leverage diverse stakeholders.

Build More Leaders in Pride

Isabella is a full-time volunteer director, who helped start the Pride Coalition of Golden. The organization is now spanning into a statewide network. Making this

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expansion from a city to a state, was one of the goals Isabella wrote in the Pride

Coalition's KLC Transformation Grant application. She remembered, "I helped write the

grant for the KLC training because I saw a need for leadership." She saw this grant as an

opportunity to identify people across the state who could help make progress on the

adaptive challenge of LGBTQ+ school safety and to build their capacity through

leadership training. She reflected with tears in her eyes:

> I remember thinking it was going to be impossible, cause I remember you know
> thinking, what can one person possibly do? Like one person can't possibly
> do…anything about that. Um and like one person can't, but like a whole army of
> people can.

She discussed using the KLC grant as a strategy to engage others in Pride's work. She

had a small core group of people leading, and she said she was trying to have the

foresight to grow more leaders in Pride. She said, "We need to continue to grow…other

leaders as well…and lead this movement that's happening in Kansas." And Alison

affirmed this growth by explaining that she had witnessed the growth in the size of

Pride's board and engagement in the time since the KLC grant.

Ruby also spoke to the value of having more Pride Coalition members trained and

ready to support the schools with great emotion in her voice. She said,

> Part of the adaptive challenge I think is like empowering them to continue to
> grow, but also I guess this isn't GSA related, it's more Pride Coalition of Kansas
> related, but like training our staff so like that the youth don't have to do it all
> (laughter, then a sigh of exhale).

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She was sharing that this work is overwhelming, and that when there are not more people to help, the work falls to the students in the schools. She had a desire for there to be more Pride members trained across the state, and also specifically in her city, to help educate people in schools.

Grow the Movement

Isabella spoke a lot about growing the Pride Coalition, which is appropriate for her role as full-time director. The other volunteers have other full-time roles and volunteer only part-time with the Pride Coalition. Their stories went beyond just growing the Pride Coalition and illuminated their passion for growing the LGBTQ+ movement.

Melissa particularly wanted to build more support for the movement in her own school. She acknowledged that students see her as a safe person in the school but that she really wanted that to spread to her colleagues as well. She articulated two action steps that are needed, "One is to gain visible support from administrators, which will help grow allyship. If the administrators can grow allyship, then maybe other teachers and other staff will be more willing to be allies as well." The main adaptive challenge she identified was facing was the apathy of her colleagues, and in addition to providing professional development and education to them, she really wanted to increase the number of allies for her students.

Teagan also shared examples of wanting to build more support within her school to "alleviate some of the misunderstandings that maybe students or educators or administrators are having around inclusivity [and] creating safe spaces." Her energy was mostly focused on using her role as a GSA adviser to engage students. She said she is

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"trying to build the trust of a group of students…and identifying student leaders within the school." So, while many participants articulated the desire to protect students and take the work off their plates, Teagan also sees the students as a key part of the movement.

Karen also discussed the role of the students when describing the initiative to try to get the school board to change the policy that requires students to wear a different color graduation robe assigned by gender. She said, "I've managed to blunt some of that—protect them so far with some things," but that "the students have the voice and the power to present their point-of-view to the people who make the policy." She also paired her GSA students with an LGBTQ+ community organization to provide them adult mentors and adult support for things like speaking at the school board meetings. So, there was a balance that Teagan and Karen articulated that protects the students, while also engaging them in the LGBTQ+ school safety movement. Members of the Pride Coalition not only wanted to grow their volunteer capacity, but to also engage others in the work of creating LGBTQ+ safety in schools.

Leverage Diverse Stakeholders

The participants also engaged many stakeholders to advance their work. These interactions were not necessarily about growing participation in the Pride Coalition or the LGBTQ+ movement but, rather, engaging people who had relevant roles to better address their adaptive challenge. In Phase III, I asked the participants to name the stakeholders that are involved in the work of LGBTQ+ school safety. This phase was intended to map out the larger system. The participants in Phases I and II had already described numerous stakeholders, and therefore, Phase III served as a way to crystallize the stakeholders.

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Noah focused mostly on stakeholders that influenced policies such as city officials and school districts. He also identified that "LGBTQ students are stakeholders and parents and loved ones of those kids." When I asked them what the roles of the students, parents, and loved ones were in this work, he also related their roles back to changing policies. He explained that the students and parents have a role in speaking about their support to the school board because the school board often just hears opposition. He illustrates: "So they're not hearing you know students talking about the things that they experience because of who they are. They're not hearing parents saying, 'You need to protect my child.' They're just hearing the opposition." The school board was mentioned several times in the data as a key stakeholder, including Karen's description of stakeholders. This makes sense given the board helps set policies for the schools. Paige ran for the school board, and although she was not elected, she now knows all the members of the school board. Even without a formal position on the board, she has influence because as she explained she's "got a lot of great relationships there." Therefore, she has decided to focus her attention on being "a liaison with the board and with the Pride Coalition of Kansas because I have trust with them," which she's leveraging to develop more inclusive policies. Frank and Melissa also surfaced the students as key stakeholders who are articulating a need for help and who are identifying the challenges they face. The students and those who love them are important stakeholders in the LGBTQ+ school safety challenge, but the school board has formal authority to create or change policies.

Peter named school personnel and families as important stakeholders, but he also made connections to service providers who work with the schools. Peter works in a "self-contained day school for students with emotional disturbance." He often must work with government agencies, treatment facilities, and consultants to address the full needs of his students. He believes finding LGBTQ+ allies in these stakeholders is particularly relevant because he says it "feels like there's a disproportionate number of adolescents in that are struggling and end up being placed in our school that may be working through gender identity or sexual orientation issues." He is careful to say that this still remains a "hunch," but that students who are trying to understand their gender identities and sexual orientations in communities that are not "open to the idea of the LGBTQ community" may lead them to "struggle emotionally" and "[act] out." Therefore, he has been intentional about connecting with the Pride Coalition of Kansas to educate himself and his staff about the LGBTQ+ community, posting visuals that show support to the LGBTQ+ community, and finding LGBTQ+ friendly treatment facilities and consultants when possible.

School personnel is another major faction in Pride's work. Claire is a faculty researcher and has used research to help bring awareness to school personnel. She spoke about leveraging her work within Pride to "help schools, teachers, administrators, and school boards see they have a problem in their school." Teagan is trying to build up her own GSA program, but also identified GSA sponsors in other schools as people who support her; they are a network of allies. Ruby identified her superintendent as a key stakeholder because he is fairly new. She has not yet engaged with him but wants to work

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with him in "creating this culture and climate that these [policies] aren't just things on paper." There is a mixture of identifying people in authority roles and rank-and-file roles across the school system.

The participants in Phase I and II also represented multiple stakeholders that were named throughout the study. Those included teachers, GSA advisers, mental health workers, parents of LGBTQ+ children, straight allies, consultants, and general community members. The three participants who operate outside of the grant team are all examples of people Pride has engaged. Through the practicum partnership, Noah not only became deeply connected to the coalition but was invested in by Pride members to develop his own leadership skills. Karen became a member of the Pride Coalition and received both the KLC training and the Pride summer training. Peter, who reached out for a few resources, has become a key partner in his school who now educates others on LGBTQ+ issues. He has attended some networking events with the Pride Coalition and helps families connect to resources even outside the school setting. All three of these people seemed to be engaged and energized by members of the Pride Coalition.

Through participant stories and examples, they demonstrated that they use the practice of engaging others to strengthen their work. They do this by recruiting and training volunteers for the Pride Coalition, they bring others into the LGBTQ+ school safety movement, and they connected with stakeholders whose roles and resources can be leveraged to meet their goals. This practice is imperative for community-based adaptive work, which requires engagement from diverse stakeholders to address challenges.

Conclusion

While inquiring about how the KLC Leadership Transformation Grant impacted the practice of the Pride Coalition of Kansas, four themes emerged. The first demonstrated the varying perspectives that participants had about the KLC and its trainings. The second showcased the value of the KLC language and framework—especially the concepts of *leadership is an activity, not a position, adaptive vs. technical,* and *balcony view.* The third theme demonstrated how participants enacted leadership either through personal stories or stories of others. They leveraged their leadership learning to specifically advance their work in the civic space. The final theme showed the adoption and implementation of one leadership practice, *engaging others,* within the Pride Coalition of Kansas. Their practice of engaging others was heavily used by participants to grow leaders within their coalition, to grow the LGBTQ+ safety movement in schools, and to connect with factions within the LGBTQ+ system. Ultimately, these themes provide evidence that leadership educators can enhance the practice of leadership in civic settings through collective leadership development.

CHAPTER VI

PRIDE TEACHING LEADERSHIP EDUCATORS AND SCHOLARS

Throughout the study—and particularly through analysis and writing—I have felt

a tension between what I thought I should be learning and what I was actually learning.

The more traditional research question is: How did participants apply their learning from

their leadership development experience to their civic work? As highlighted in the

previous chapter, there are some trends in the data that demonstrate that leadership

educators can provide enrichment for civic leadership. However, if I only looked at

participant responses that specifically referred to the KLC grant, I would be leaving out

some of the most important findings of the study. In working through this tension, I used

my community-based methodological framework to guide my analysis, which led me to a

new research question: In what ways does the practice of civic leadership inform the way

collective leadership development ought to be designed and delivered? More specifically:

In what ways do the leadership practices of the Pride Coalition teach leadership educators

and scholars about collective leadership and leadership development? While this study

was designed to understand a KLC Leadership Transformation Grant team, the findings

in this chapter do not necessarily speak to the KLC's impact on the grant team. It is very

possible that the findings in this chapter would have been found without the KLC

intervention. This is a description of the leadership practices of the Pride Coalition of

Kansas. The study provided an opportunity to gaze upon a civic practice of leadership

that incorporates collective dimensions of leadership, which has great value for the field for leadership studies.

The findings of the second meta-theme (Pride teaching leadership educators and scholars) are presented through three themes: (a) the river and its tributaries, (b) both leadership and authority are needed, and (c) culture and identity matter in leadership work. These findings provide new imagery for thinking about leadership development for loosely affiliated coalitions and raise awareness about the importance of identifying; understanding; and leveraging authority, culture, and identity throughout leadership development experiences. Table 3 provides an outline of the findings presented in this chapter.

Table 3

Pride Teaching Leadership Educators and Scholars

Theme	Initial Categories/Phases	Final Categories
The river and its tributaries	- What calls me to the river (I) - My little piece: intervening in my tributary (I) - Pride and its context (II) - Pride has a specific scope of work (III) - The challenge is complicated and messy (III)	- The river - The tributaries
Both leadership and authority are needed	- Our agenda and structure (the organization) (I) - Looking to others to lead and provide authority (III) - Pride has a specific scope of work (III)	- Legislation and policies - Looking to others for direction and protection - Structure and sustainability

Culture and identity matter in leadership work	• How one's positioned matters (II) • The challenge is complicated and messy (III) • Pride and its context (II) • What calls me to the river (I)	• Kansas culture • Intersectional identities

The River and its Tributaries

When selecting the grant team for this study, I was particularly drawn to the Pride Coalition of Kansas because they were a "loose coalition." That was a term I used to refer to a group of people who wear other professional hats, but who come together as part of a formal coalition. My pilot study was with a loose coalition, even though they were much smaller, and how they interacted as a group was distinct from what you might find in a bounded organization like a workplace or club. The coalition in the pilot study only had five people, who met in person weekly, and who all had service to the coalition as a part of their job titles. Therefore, they resembled a "group."

I knew the Pride Coalition would be different in some ways because their membership was larger and dispersed across the state. I still expected that I would find a "group" in the grant team. The grant participants attended KLC trainings at different times, but I thought they still had a connection to one another. It was not until two weeks before the Phase I event that I realized they were more "loosely affiliated" than I thought. Isabella was going to invite all the members to attend, and I provided her a list of the participants that the KLC had provided me. Isabella had not seen the list before. She even remarked that she was surprised that some people on the list attended the training. My

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first thought was, "Oh no! They're not a group." Throughout the study I had to clarify what I meant by "the grant team." This was not a grouping of people they recognized. One participant even stated in her questionnaire that until viewing the list I provided alongside the questionnaire, she had no idea who attended the trainings.

In my study of collective leadership, I assumed that this type of leadership happened in "groups" and that it required people to know one another and interact with each other. I have an image I use when presenting about collective leadership that depicts it as a group of people huddled together without a visible "leader." Going into Phase I, I wondered if they would see themselves this way—as part of a huddle or group? If they did not, then how could they be a collective?

At the beginning of Phase I, participants told stories about exercising leadership. The stories reflected their own leadership but within their own scope of work. When the participants were asked to name patterns, similarities, or themes across the stories, Teagan named the theme of connection. She said, "Connections, like we're all connected. In more ways than one and bring those connections into positions of leadership." Ruby built off that idea reflecting that everyone was doing "niche kind of things…but we're all connected in that way, and we're using our strengths in whatever area we're doing it." Although they were not literally doing things together, they felt a sense of common work. Isabella, who does work with each person because of her role as director, added:

> And like how we're all functioning at like this bigger scale than really anybody probably stops to think about in any one moment. You know, we're all focused so much on our little pieces of it that we don't always have to see the whole big picture of what everything is—that this leadership is changing the face of Kansas.

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Then Paige immediately jumped in, "It's like a river and tributary. Yeah, like when

you're in your tributary, you think you're in the river…" This metaphor became a central

part of the discussion in Phase I, for describing their work together. Next, I illustrate "the

river" as described by the participants and then discuss the "the tributaries" they identify

as contributing to the flow of the river.

The River

The river depicted the common work they were all contributing toward. They

discussed the river when I asked participants in Phase I if they could name a pressing

adaptive challenge facing the Pride Coalition of Kansas. I was expecting to hear

examples of specific challenges they were facing as a group, and instead, they

collectively described the common adaptive challenge that the Pride Coalition works to

address. Ruby demonstrated vulnerability and answered from a personal perspective:

> When I think about the river for me, it's like, um, and I'm probably going to cry.
> But like the work we're doing I wish I had when I was growing up. Any of us
> who are LGBTQ…if you are from a small town, where gay was a bad word, and
> you were told you'd go to hell if you were gay, that's traumatic you know and it's
> not good. [crying]….So I think my passion for always working with and for
> LGBTQ youth is that I wish somebody would have done that for me.

For Ruby, the river was about helping kids like her younger self to not experience what

she experienced. Isabella looked at Ruby, said she may cry too, and then shared: "The

adaptive challenge of Pride Coalition of Kansas in general, like when I helped start the

chapter was to undo homophobia and transphobia in Kansas, which is a really big effing

adaptive challenge." While this description encapsulates what Ruby was describing, it also widened the river to everyone in Kansas.

Then Frank connected the river to the ocean. They said, "It's hard for me to stay out of the ocean. I've been in it for 27 years, so my commitment is to make transphobia disappear and homophobia disappear." The metaphor quickly grew to not only having tributaries flowing into rivers, but that eventually their work would flow into the ocean. Paige explained, "Undoing homophobia is more like the ocean." Isabella added, "It's more like impossible. We're like big drops in the ocean." Paige continued, "We're pouring entire rivers into the ocean and still…" While at times the participants used the river and ocean interchangeably, the ocean was primarily referred to as undoing homophobia and transphobia in the world. The river was undoing homophobia and transphobia in Kansas, particularly for youth in schools. The tributaries were their niche areas in which each individual worked.

It became apparent to me that they were working on a common, complex adaptive challenge. Even when discussing the ocean, the work did not sound romantic; it sounded urgent and overwhelming. Paige helped to bring folks from discussing the ocean to the realities of their river. She explained that undoing homophobia and transphobia is the main goal, but "until then, it's ferociously protecting every child that we possibly can." The participants painted a picture of a crisis in schools. Teagan said, "It's impossible because we are in crisis mode often," when trying to describe sponsoring a GSA on her own. Melissa explained the crisis or sense of urgency as well, "We've had a rash of suicides in our district and in Washington City, recently two in the last six months….kids

are dying and things need to be different." Frank shared their own experience of being suicidal as a younger person, and Ruby shared that she experienced mental health issues as a result of growing up gay in a small town.

Karen, a participant from Phase III, also said that students are struggling with self-worth and are considering suicide on a regular basis in her school. She also used the term *segregation* to describe the way students are advised to use restrooms at schools. Transgender students, or any student who is not comfortable using the bathroom according to district bathroom policies, are advised to use the bathroom in the nurse's office. Peter, another Phase III, participant also used the word segregated to describe the facilities for in-home placements for students. He questioned, "Are they going to a male facility or a female facility because those are segregated." The term segregation in these discussions elicited for me thoughts about civil rights and intentional separation for purposes of oppression. The term felt appropriate given the description of the river and the larger social, political, and cultural systems that the Pride Coalition operates within. I felt the term appropriately situated this adaptive challenge as a civil rights issue.

All these descriptions of the river made me think: Who has time for a huddle? How could all the people contributing to the river possibly fit into one huddle? That is not the appropriate image for collective leadership in this coalition. Instead, the tributaries, the river, and even the ocean demonstrated an interconnected complex system that is constantly moving in one direction. The work of the river is not just about making kids feel better because it is a nice thing to do, the work of the river is saving kids' lives and improving their health.

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The Tributaries

There are myriad tributaries contributing to the river of the Pride Coalition's work. Here I provide a few examples described by the participants. Isabella identified four major foci for the Pride Coalition nationally that attend to issues of education and policy. She explained, "I feel like if our big river is to undo homophobia and transphobia, then like these four branches off that river are those four dimensions, and then that like feeds into smaller tributaries, smaller themes." She also noted that because there are so many adaptive challenges within the river, it is great that the "KLC spots [allow] each person to kind of take the piece that they're working on, and so everybody kind of gets their own focus on an adaptive challenge." Other than convenience, I had not considered an upside to allowing participants to attend trainings individually, but participants did name adaptive challenges they were working on more independently from the Pride Coalition "grant team."

Teagan, Ruby, and Melissa named specific challenges they were attending to in their schools around their GSAs. Claire's challenge was about better connecting research to the schools and to highlight the urgency of the work. Frank's challenge was about bringing more training to small towns and growing allies in those places. Paige described policy issues and wanted to see progress within the school board. Stacey's challenge was enhancing the experience of the student interns and leveraging their time to better serve Pride. This challenge was also connected to the issues of sustainability and funding in the Pride Coalition of Kansas. Isabella's adaptive challenge was identifying more volunteers, enhancing their leadership capacity and managing the growth from a city to a statewide

chapter. Each of these was an adaptive challenge on its own, but they contributed to the river.

The three participants of Phase III, who are connected to the river by doing work in the tributaries also articulated their roles. Noah's work centered on professional development events. Karen is focused on the students in her own school and policies in her district. And Peter is focused on supporting students in his own school. However, they all can use Pride resources to advance their own work, which addresses LGBTQ+ school safety and homophobia and transphobia more broadly.

One of the major ideas the Pride Coalition of Kansas has illustrated is the way their organization is connected. They may be dispersed across the state. They may not know who was on their "grant team." However, they have a very clear vision of their common adaptive challenge—the river. They also work within their own tributaries to make progress within their own sphere of influence. They are also doing civic work that spans geography and sector and is incredibly urgent. The metaphor of the tributaries, river, and ocean is a unique way to think about collective leadership in contrast to a group huddled together, and it seems particularly representative of civic work that spans boundaries but contributes to the same adaptive challenge.

Both Leadership and Authority are Needed

The KLC teaches people how to exercise leadership without authority. I highlighted components of exercising leadership in Chapter V. Yet part of adaptive work is also recognizing where authority exists and how it operates. Heifetz et al. (2009) explain that people look to authority for direction, protection, and order. In Phase III, I

asked participants to describe the larger system of LGBTQ+ school safety work and to describe the Pride Coalition's role in that work. What surfaced was a need for authority in that system, and that the Pride Coalition helped to generate authority for schools on LGBTQ+ issues. I highlight that by discussing the role of legislation and policies as well as how everyone is looking to the district, state, or nation for direction. Secondly, I discuss the need for authority and structure within the Pride Coalition of Kansas to ensure sustainability.

Legislation and Policies

One of the main four branches of the tributaries Isabella named was policy work. She provided context by explaining that only seven of the 280ish districts in Kansas have sexual orientation and gender included in their non-discrimination policy. Isabella explained that sometimes policies are needed "before some of the teacher training can come because the teachers are afraid to get the training" without the signals of support such as these policies being in place. Melissa and Noah both shared examples of how they faced resistance at their own school from adults when placing visual indicators in their classroom regarding sexual orientation and gender identity. They illuminated it can be risky for teachers to participate in LGBTQ+ allyship, especially without support from their administrators or School Board. Therefore, Paige focused her leadership efforts toward working on policies at the district-level.

Policies and legislation are a form of authority that provide direction on how people can act and protection for people acting in accordance to policies. Without policies, it is hard to make progress. Noah explained,

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We consistently got reports throughout the year of teachers either not intervening in instances of bullying and harassment or were like saying these comments to students. And there's really nothing they can hold the teachers accountable to because it's not explicit in the policy.

Ruby works in a school district that does include gender identity and sexual orientation in the non-discrimination policy. She shared that when teachers misgender students or deadname students—using birth names rather than chosen names—are required to speak with the principal. Working through authority and leadership can be a balance because while this school district has advanced policies and teachers in her school are being held responsible, she feels it is not enough. Ruby indicated that she also wanted to exercise leadership and have conversations with these teachers to help educate them. In this case, both authority and leadership are needed to make progress on addressing students the way they choose to be addressed.

Karen also provided an example in her school where policies were sought for authority. She explained that working through certain situations with transgender students were a bit more unclear. She particularly highlighted dressing rooms for physical education (P.E.) and sports as a challenging issue. She said, "What do you do for dressing rooms for P.E. or if they're involved in athletics? What do you do with that? And what is the school policy regarding athletic participation?" It seemed that if policies were in place in the district, it guided the actions. If polices were not in place, then individual schools determined how best to handle the situation. Sometimes her students also had to help change policies at the district-level that were not inclusive. For example, in Karen's school, males wear blue robes for graduation, and females wear white robes, a practice

informed by a district-level policy. So, her GSA students spoke to the school board to help them understand that changing this policy could increase safety and inclusivity for students. Noah also illuminated that policies are not everything. The high schools in the district he lives in has a policy that allows students to wear any color robe. In practice, it is allowed, but it is not made explicit to students that it is an option. School personnel or a GSA in the school building would need to help educate students about the policy and change the culture around robes. Or, they could, like Karen's students, try to advocate for a single color for the graduation robes.

The participants spoke more about building and district policies because they are within the context of the school. However, they did name some legislation that also made an impact on their students. Peter was explaining what drew him into the Pride Coalition of Kansas. He said, "I think the bathroom legislation was a big issue at the time. That's when it was really hitting the news, and so we wanted to be, as a district, culturally relevant." Therefore, their district looked to the Pride Coalition as an authority on the issue and invited Pride to do a professional development workshop.

Noah also explained that the Golden Public School District does not include sexual orientation or gender identity in its non-discrimination policy, and "school districts tend to reflect the values of their community, and the community tends to reflect the values of the school district. It's like a reciprocal relationship. And Golden, the city, also does not have an NDO." In this case, city legislation impacts school policies. In the next section, I highlight more of the connection between district, state, and national levels because they are connected in both their policies and practices. In many ways, people are

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looking across these levels for authority—or direction, protection, and order—on LGBTQ+ laws and policies.

Looking to Others for Direction and Protection

The concepts of direction and protection continued to surface as participants shared examples of people or entities looking to others to guide their actions. Noah described how many small areas around one of the larger urban areas in Kansas added sexual orientation and gender identity to their non-discrimination policies. He further explained, "Unfortunately, our big challenge around here with the smaller school districts is they come back to us, and they say we're not doing it until Golden does it." The smaller schools in rural areas are typically in more conservative communities, so having a larger district change its policies first provides some protection for the smaller schools.

Karen also echoed this and shared a story about how her principal called her in over the summer because "an even smaller rural school called him and said, 'Hey, we hear from Pride Coalition of Kansas that you are doing this and this and this. Can we come talk to you about it?'" They were looking for some direction from Karen's larger, but still small rural school because they knew they should be doing something, but they didn't know what to do.

The Pride Coalition of Kansas itself is also looked to for their authority in this matter. They help people out in the tributaries feel supported. Karen observed,

> Pride Coalition of Kansas if often my sounding board and support system for me in particular. Before I take some big step, I often run things by them to see what other people are doing in the state or nation. I always describe [Pride as] the umbrella. It's protecting us from the rain…So it's like the parent holding the

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umbrella there and you can go running to your parent for help, but you also leave them and go out on your own.

Even though Karen is not part of the grant team, she is a member of the Pride Coalition. This metaphor is quite different than urgency and constant movement of the rivers and tributaries, but it still highlights the movement from doing work on her own (i.e., the tributary) and then connecting back to a central group (i.e., the river). Additionally, it provides an image of Pride Coalition as the safe authority figure providing protection. To hold these two in creative tension, it seems that both the active movement (i.e., leadership) of the tributaries are needed to create more policies and resources that then provide more direction and protection (i.e., authority) for those caught in the storm.

Structure and Sustainability

Order is another element of authority that provides comfort, something that the Pride Coalition is trying to increase. The Pride Coalition of Kansas is still new to its scope. Moving from a city to a statewide focus has provided some uncertainty for the group. Isabella admitted, "We're really messy. None of us know what we're doing. We're just doing it." The messiness should not be mistaken for confusion or lack of progress. There are many people taking action and exercising leadership while they are trying to find clarity in their organizations. When describing her role as regional coordinator, Ruby said, "We didn't know what we were going to be called, you know, like if we're a chapter, a sub-chapter…we don't know what we are, we don't even know exactly what we are doing yet, but we're doing things!" Even within the board, providing order and clarity is still difficult. Teagan shared,

I think sometimes there's like pressure of us being the board here in Golden and to bring others in and explain our process. That sometimes it's just challenging just even to explain what we're doing. And obviously we have a plan. We have a trajectory.

Although they did appear to have a plan for action, they also desired more of a plan for structure and sustainability.

Isabella is the glue for the organization. Everyone interacts with Isabella to come on board as a volunteer. She is the primary contact for the Pride Coalition of Kansas. Her name came up over and over in the surveys, and when I asked each of the Phase III participants who they were connected to in Pride, they all named Isabella. Jason spoke most directly about this challenge for sustainability. He said that Isabella and the board "have created a situation where Isabella is indispensable." She does so much work and is not funded. He pointed out that "eventually there will come a time when Isabella will have to let go/walk away to allow it to function on its own." Jason said they need to expand the volunteer base and have more funds for staff. Alison echoed this, "The biggest adaptive challenge that Pride Coalition of Kansas is facing is raising a sustainable level of funding to hire a paid executive director to lead the Kansas chapter." Ruby too was concerned about financial sustainability and said that if the Pride Coalition is to be a "staple, something that is here to stay…Isabella must receive compensation and so must whoever takes over." The participants were concerned about how much the coalition relied on an unpaid role.

This coalition demonstrated through the narratives that many people throughout the coalition exercise leadership. However, having someone who can exercise authority is

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also required for sustainability. Isabella is the only person whose full-time job (even though it is in a volunteer capacity) is to think about the Pride Coalition of Kansas. She is a central and essential component of the organization. Isabella is also aware of how much order she provides for the organization. She said,

> We have the giant ocean of an adaptive challenge, which is undoing homophobia and transphobia in Kansas. Under that, we have the [four Pride] challenges listed above, and then there are challenges with creating a strong foundation for our growing organization; creating a regional structure; recruiting; onboarding and energizing volunteers (including board members).

She described her scope of work as connecting both the adaptive challenges and the more administrative challenges of the coalition. Teagan also spoke to this balance:

> It's easy to lead with the heart and not always making sure the structure is and the important pieces are in place for sustainability. And that is a fear of mine is just making sure that the structures that we do put in place are sustainable and they will live past us.

The Pride Coalition of Kansas needs a balance of both leadership and authority to make progress on challenges and sustain its work.

One of the main concepts in adaptive leadership is distinguishing between authority and leadership. While distinguishing is the first step, it is also important to know how to understand how authority and leadership are operating and how to leverage both. For example, the Pride Coalition has perceived authority within some schools and school districts. Sometimes using formal or informal authority effectively can help make progress on adaptive challenges. Leadership is often romanticized (Collinson & Tourish,

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2015), and perhaps in leadership development, it is important to be more realistic about when leadership is needed and when authority is needed to make progress.

Culture and Identity Matter in Leadership Work

Adaptive challenges often require attention to culture and behavior. Culture is not specifically highlighted in the KLC principles or competencies, and it is not discussed much in the collective leadership literature. I did not ask questions in my study pertaining to culture or context other than asking participants to describe their adaptive challenges. As I illustrate in this section, the participants identified Kansas or Midwest culture as a main component of their adaptive work on undoing homophobia and transphobia. I would also posit that being Kansan is a part of many of their identities, and the participants illustrated that multiple components of their identities influenced the way they practiced leadership. After presenting the findings on Kansas culture, I share how the participants thought their identities impacted their leadership.

Kansas Culture

I did not think about Kansas culture much until I moved to the South, but as the participants described their views of Kansas, I resonated with them. I can understand why the Kansas culture is such a large element of the LGBTQ+ challenges in the state. Jason spoke to this point. He said, "Since we are situated in the Midwest Breadbasket, an area of strong conservative family values and many rural areas, the leadership we take on…manifests itself differently than it would on the coasts." A large reason for this is what is sometimes termed as "Kansas nice." Noah referred to this:

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I think in Kansas, a lot of this resistance because I'm sure you've heard this, but people are 'Kansas nice' about it. So, it's like, I don't hate anybody, but you know, I'm going to push out utterly ridiculous legislation, and I think it's been my experience that a lot of that really doesn't come from a bad place.

In a way, Noah is demonstrating this niceness by giving people who create conditions of oppression the benefit of the doubt that it does not come from a bad place. Frank also named the biggest adaptive challenge as "that old school Midwestern polite mentality." During Phase I when they spoke about this, they seemed baffled at how people can think everything is okay. They elaborated in Phase II, "We literally have had people say, right in front of a child who's saying, 'I don't feel safe,' saying, 'What do you mean? Our kids are safe. You're safe. Our kids are safe.'" It's almost as if people do not want to acknowledge the problem because it may get uncomfortable.

Alex shared that her community is conservative, and there is a lack of support and acceptance for LGBTQ+ people. She explained that although there have been discussions about gender, race, and age, "sexuality and gender identity are still topics that are not easily talked about." This lack of attention to and knowledge about LGBTQ+ issues is problematic for many reasons, but one that Peter highlighted was that when parents learn their child has a non-dominant identity, they do not know what to do. He said, "They may love their child, but they don't know how to be supportive." He has referred many parents to the Pride Coalition so they can learn more about LGBTQ+ identities and steps they can take to be supportive.

When Heather was asked to name one adaptive challenge related to the Pride Coalition of Kansas, she answered, "Most certainly people who react to LGBTQ+ people

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and issues with hate, as well as people who don't understand and don't think there is a problem." Although the Kansas mentality may lead people to ignore the issue or be polite about it, I think it is important to acknowledge that hate and explicit discrimination do happen in Kansas. It is the home of the Westboro Baptist Church, a church known for its picketing of funerals and hate speech directed at LGBTQ+ people (Southern Poverty Law Center, n.d.; Walters, 2011). Frank noted that volunteers are met with "opposition as intense as Christianity" in the Midwest. Ruby's personal example was growing up in a Christian home and community where her parents expressed disgust when Ellen DeGeneres came out on TV, and where being gay was "repulsive, sinful, and condemnable." Christian opposition is not always as overt as the Westboro Baptist Church, sometimes it comes in the form of naming gay acts as sinful according the Bible.

Melissa said that being "in a small town in Kansas is not the open-minded place." She experienced this when she was "asked to take down a specific sign that was in regards to a certain sexuality" because her school administration did not think it was appropriate for her non-GSA students to see. Examples like this may be non-confrontational or could seem small, but they reinforce a school environment that is not inclusive. Given this, it does not seem surprising that Ruby's students "made the national news because of homophobic comments that [they were making] on an online platform." Students see homophobic and transphobic behavior modeled by adults, and this permeates the culture of Kansas. Kansas is experiencing many LGBTQ+ issues, which the participants named as being connected to the culture including politeness, Christianity, and conservativism, with elements of ignorance and hate. Their awareness

of the cultural elements of this adaptive challenge is an important part of the Pride

Coalition of Kansas' civic practice of leadership because it provides them context for the

resistance they face.

The participants explained that advocating for LGBTQ+ school safety in Kansas

requires courage and vulnerability. Frank named courage and vulnerability as a theme

that surfaced in their individual stories in Phase I. Coming out in Kansas takes courage

and makes people vulnerable, and that was compounded when being identified as the

"go-to LGBTQ+" person as Teagan, Ruby, and Claire shared. Doing LGBTQ+ advocacy

work requires showing up in powerful ways, and Isabella explained this both in my

conversation with her prior to the study and in Phase I. I shared that one of the KLC

faculty thought that the Pride members showed up in a powerful way at the KLC

trainings. She believed this was because the work of the Pride Coalition requires people

to show up powerfully (i.e., demonstrate vulnerability, engage in difficult conversation)

in many settings. In one of her KLC trainings, there were several people (not from the

Pride Coalition) coming out. She spoke about this experience to articulate how having an

LGBTQ+ identity requires courage:

> There were three people in that group who came out publicly like in the first day. And somebody made a comment one night and said something about that the KLC structures in place, the climate, and how they're doing such a great job to make people comfortable enough to come out. [Frank: laughter] And I said, 'I don't think—I'm going to give an alternate perspective. I don't think it has anything to do with what KLC is doing. I think it has to do with those people are comfortable doing this on a regular basis. And so they just have a lot of courage that's more than everybody else's comfort level. And so I think that's why our group shows up in a more powerful way than maybe some of the other KLC groups because everybody here has to be courageous on a daily basis.

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Courage and vulnerability are characteristics that adaptive leadership requires since *leadership is risky* (O'Malley & Cebula, 2015). It requires engaging in disequilibrium, having courageous conversations, and speaking the unspeakable (Heifetz et al., 2009). This is an example of how identity matters in leadership work, and that identity is something that people bring into leadership development experiences that ought to be attended to as part of the learning process. Next, I elaborate on the ways participants spoke about the relationship between identity and leadership.

Intersectional Identities

Particularly because the Pride Coalition's work is focused on issues of social identity, I was curious to see how the participants thought that their social identity impacted their practice of leadership. While I expected to hear some about either identifying as LGBTQ+ or not might impact their work in the coalition, the participants demonstrated a more intersectional view of their identities. The Pride Coalition especially works to create school safety for LGBTQ+ individuals, but they also take an intersectional approach and ultimately work toward creating school safety for all students. This could be partly why they had such layered responses to my prompt in Phase II: Describe any components of your social identity that you believe impact your thinking or action around your practice of leadership with Pride Coalition of Kansas (ex. age, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, etc.), and how you think they impact your practice of leadership. There was not a question about identity in Phase I, but participants also shared about their identities as it related to their stories and action steps.

One specific way that some of their social identities impacted their work, was that other people placed responsibilities on them because of their LGBTQ+ identity. Ruby shared that "a lot of the staff in the district identify me as the gay person who knows all the LGBTQ+ stuff, so a lot of people come to me with questions." Similarly, Melissa also explained that she is the "go-to LGBTQ person" because she's one of the only open LGBTQ+ people. Teagan said she is the only LGBTQ+ identifying person in her building, and so she is now seen as an expert or a guru. She laughed at this when explaining it to the group, and others laughed as well. While they may have taken up the responsibility because it needed to be done and they care about kids, it does not mean they feel like experts or that they know about all LGBTQ+ people's experiences.

Others attributed their passion for the work to their marginalized identities. Frank shared, "I was a suicidal youth a million years ago when I came out. I've been out as queer for 27 years. And so my commitment is to kids in small towns." They are giving back to kids like themself. Alex also explained that "being in multiple groups personally that experience discrimination and oppression has [given] me a foundation to understand the importance of being an ally and if I am capable, being a leader." Their personal backgrounds and experiences have led to work within the Pride Coalition of Kansas. Melissa shared that her sexual orientation (lesbian) allows her to empathize with her students who are in the LGBTQ+ community. Heather also noted that her immediate family "represented every letter of LGBT," and it has created a "deep passion in creating a safe and accepting environment for other LGBTQ+ people." While many participants named marginalized identities as a strength, there were also several people who discussed

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having a mixture of marginalized and dominant identities and people who named dominant identities as strengths.

Isabella named her female identity as a strength. At first she was socialized to believe that sensitive people did not make good leaders, but now she understands her empathy as a strength. Ruth highlighted that her privilege is "an automatic platform" that she can use to bring attention to community members. Claire also explained that her education level and university position lead others to perceive her as dominant on the board, and therefore, she is conscious to step back and make space for others.

There were a few people who noted that the way they are viewed in the world is from a dominant position, but they have marginalized identities that are not visible. For example, Piper is pansexual and is married to a transgender woman, which allows her lived experience and insight to these marginalized identities. However, these identities are not visible, and therefore, in addition to her White and cisgender identities, she holds a level of privilege. She said she uses all these privileges to be an advocate and ally for those with marginalized identities. Another example includes Frank, a transgender man who lived as a woman for 35 years. They shared that for 18 years now, the "world treat[s] me with White male privilege." They explained that "whatever skin you put on, you have to deal with how you're treated in with that skin on." Therefore, although they benefit from White male privilege, they are also excluded from women-only spaces, which used to be a big part of their life. Frank illuminates that identities are complex and not as binary as privileged and marginalized.

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Claire also demonstrated this when describing her identity. She is bisexual but has been in a "heterosexual relationship for 20 years so [her] identity is almost completely invisible." Although she personally identifies with the work of the Pride Coalition, she explained that getting to experience privilege means that the work is not about her and should come from the primary stakeholders who do experience marginalization due to their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Most people listed numerous components of their identities, weaving together different aspects. Jordan is a trans man of color, which he highlighted as important because "it didn't appear that there were any other [people of color] at the [board] meeting." He also shared that none of the other grant team members at the KLC training were people of color. Jason shared that being "white, cis-gendered, and male [allows] privilege and access in interacting with educators and members of the community who do not have marginalized identities," but his marginalized identities help him have difficult conversations with "people on all sides of the social and political spectrums." He called himself a bridge builder.

Race and ethnicity were sometimes mentioned in the naming of the participants' identities, but they were not discussed in any in depth. Only a couple of participants identified as non-White. I do not have information about the demographics of the Pride Coalition as a whole outside of the participants, and further investigation into race, ethnicity, and the work of the Pride Coalition would be worthwhile. The participants pointed to the mission of the Pride Coalition as promoting safety from an intersectional lens and not just for those with LGBTQ+ identities.

Ultimately, the participants had a layered view of social identity and found benefits from having dominant, marginalized, and a mix between dominant and marginalized identities. They also highlighted the complexity of identity and troubled the binary of dominant and marginalized identities. Social identity does matter in leadership and in all things we do, but it seems to particularly matter for the Pride Coalition's civic practice of leadership because their work is related to social identity.

The participants confidently asserted that their Kansas culture and intersectional identities were core elements impacting their practice of leadership. Naming these elements may be considered a component of *diagnosing the situation* or *managing self* (O'Malley & Cebula, 2015)*,* but they are not elements that are explicit. Other frameworks of collective leadership also nod to context through the connection to complex adaptive systems, but they fail to focus in on the concepts of culture and identity as the participants have demonstrated in practice.

Conclusion

The themes—(a) the river and its tributaries, (b) both leadership and authority are needed, and (c) culture and identity matter in leadership work—were important findings from my exploration, even though I did not set out to find them. The image of the river and tributaries has challenged my previous thinking of collective leadership and has changed my initial reaction of, "Oh, no!" to "Oh, wow!" It leads me to wonder if other loosely affiliated coalitions would identify with this metaphor or if each group would have a new metaphor appropriate to their practice of leadership. Additionally, the participants reminded me how important it is to use both leadership and authority to

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advance adaptive challenges. Adaptive leadership emphasizes distinguishing between the two, but it does not discount authority. More authority is needed within the Pride Coalition, but it is also an important authority figure within the LGBTQ+ school safety movement. Lastly, while culture and identity have been noted as important elements of leadership, sometimes it seems they are limited in leadership development. Leadership educators ought to consider how to be more explicit in the process of understanding culture and identifying intersectional identities as part of diagnosing the situation to inform future action. The participants demonstrated a sophistication in their practice of civic leadership that can provide learning for leadership educators and scholars.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

The findings from this study demonstrate that the KLC Leadership

Transformation Grant impacted the practice of civic leadership for the Pride Coalition by

providing a common language and framework, leading to leadership interventions, and

supporting their practice of engaging others. Leadership scholars and educators can also

learn from the Pride Coalition's civic practice, specifically from how their structure

represents a river and tributaries, how their work requires authority and leadership, and

how their culture and identity impact their work. In this concluding chapter, I discuss the

ways these findings relate to the original research questions as well as a question that

emerged from the study. Additionally, I present the implications and recommendations

resulting from the study. Then I share thoughts on future research that should occur on

this topic, and I summarize the significance of this study. Finally, I identify the strengths

and the limitations of this study and then provide a post-research reflection and

conclusion.

Discussion of Research Questions

This exploratory study was guided by three research questions, and a fourth

question emerged during the study. In this section, I discuss the three guiding questions

individually to highlight how this study provided insight to these questions. I weave the

fourth research question (*In what ways does the practice of civic leadership inform the*

way collective leadership development ought to be taught?) into the discussion of the

other three questions because this question is more representative of a new way of

viewing the guiding questions than a distinct question in itself.

Question One

The participants of this study were part of the KLC Leadership Transformation

Grant. I identified this as collective leadership development because (a) the KLC

framework builds on adaptive leadership—a framework that falls within the collective

paradigm—and teaches that leadership is an activity, not a position; and (b) 25 members

of the Pride Coalition, including those with and without titles and positions, attended

leadership training. I identified the Pride Coalition of Kansas as a community coalition

doing work in the civic arena because (a) their membership represents multiple sectors;

(b) they work to address a complex adaptive challenge that does not reside in one sector;

and (c) they have an orientation toward social change that creates conditions for people to

make progress on social, political, and moral issues (Kliewer & Priest, 2013). The

primary question of this study was: *In what ways does collective leadership development*

impact the practice of civic leadership?

At times during the study, I found myself defaulting to linear and deficit-based

thinking. For example, it is easy to create a narrative about participants of leadership

education programs as being without a leadership practice. From that perspective,

leadership educators bestow leadership knowledge upon participants through a leadership

development intervention. Then, afterward, this new knowledge can be evaluated or

assessed through learning outcomes or other measures. I have had to trouble that

narrative and question why it even comes to mind. Perhaps it is because that is how education is often portrayed in formal schooling. Students are taught and then they are tested to see if they learned. While I believe the participants in this study learned new things from the KLC, the participants helped me re-write this narrative.

Enhance and activate leadership. The collective leadership development experience *enhanced* and *activated* a civic practice of leadership. This study focused on leadership activity after the KLC training, and in some cases, participants noted new leadership being activated as a result of the training. However, others, who had been exercising leadership on LGBTQ+ issues before their KLC training, highlighted how the training did not activate, but rather enhanced, their practice of leadership. For example, Frank said they have been in the ocean for 27 years. The KLC training for them was not transformational, but it enhanced their practice by contributing a few tools to their leadership toolbox. Participants also noted gaining more self-awareness around their own leadership practices, such as Teagan's default behavior of being quiet. This awareness led to her speaking up and engaging in difficult conversations. Isabella, who demonstrated leadership in establishing the Pride Coalition of Kansas after identifying a need in her city, said that the KLC trainings helped her identify and problematize her default thinking. She often concluded that she was not doing enough, and now, she has acknowledged that she cannot do it all and has been trying to grow the leadership capacity throughout the state.

One of the major themes in the study was the adoption of a common language and framework. The participants identified this as an enhancement to their leadership work.

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They said that it made engaging in the leadership work quicker because they did not have to explain the concepts. One example of this is when Ruby and Isabella worked through a challenge with the board and used the language to diagnose the situation before presenting to the board. They successfully gained the support of the board by the end of their meeting. Participants shared that the trainings enhanced their practice of leadership in the Pride Coalition of Kansas through this common understanding but that their leadership practices in other settings were also enhanced. The concepts were transferrable to other practices of leadership.

From a leader-centric paradigm, gaining a title or position grants someone permission to "lead." This is often conflated with permission to exercise authority, but it also means that people without titles or positions may not feel they can lead. Teaching participants that leadership is an activity and not a position was a way to activate some of them to lead without authority. This principle encouraged participants to lead within their tributaries and within the board. For Teagan, that was working to promote structure and sustainability in the Pride Coalition of Kansas board, and for Paige, it was power mapping the school board and her relationships to the members.

There were some participants, who even after the collective leadership development intervention, did not feel they were able to lead. Comments like Melissa's, "I do not see myself as taking leadership within or without Pride Coalition of Kansas; I prefer to observe and learn from others at this point," are paradoxical to her examples of leading in Pride and in her school. Perhaps a first step to learning collective leadership is to unlearn leader-centric perspectives of what "leaders" look like.

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KLC training versus grant program. Even though the impact of the KLC trainings provided significant outcomes for the Pride Coalition, there were limited references to the grant program. Most participants only referred to the KLC trainings. Isabella and Frank spoke about the value for the Pride Coalition of being part of the grant program, but most people only talked about the impact that the trainings had on their practice. This is not surprising given that the participants did not identify as a grant team and may not have felt they were part of a grant experience. Two participants noted still having resources (e.g., small cards with the KLC competencies and principles, the *Your Leadership Edge* book) provided to them through the KLC trainings. No one mentioned the online program that was free to all participants. While I did not ask specifically about the online program, my questions were focused on the grant overall and most participants only referenced the in-person trainings. More investigation into the use of additional resources would be worthwhile to determine whether if they are an important part of trainings for civic groups.

Ultimately, the KLC trainings did impact the leadership practice of the Pride Coalition of Kansas by providing them with a common language and framework, which enhanced and activated leadership within the Pride Coalition. The KLC philosophy provided permission to lead without authority. The participants also made visible their pre-existing work and leadership. Leadership educators need to meet participants where they are in their own leadership journeys. Some may require more than one training to unlearn leader-centric perspectives, while others may already understand that and benefit from more advanced training. Additionally, while the grant provides a unique opportunity

for a large group of people connected to the same adaptive challenge to attend leadership training, simply calling it a grant does not necessarily make the participants experience the trainings or their group differently, something which the KLC has already attempted to change for the 2020 grant year.

Question Two

Collective leadership by nature is multi-level. It includes individual actors who exercise leadership with others, either in small groups or within larger systems. Studying collective leadership by studying the individual only—as most studies on collective leadership do—is incomplete. Therefore, my second guiding question was: *How do experiences of this impact compare across multiple levels (i.e., individual, group, and system)?* I designed a study that looked at the individual practices of leadership (i.e., those of participants of the grant team), the practice of leadership within a small group (i.e., the grant team), and the practice of leadership within a system (i.e., LGBTQ+ school safety). Ultimately what I found was that (a) the multiple levels are identifiable but are inseparable, (b) the grant team felt like an artificial group to the participants, and (c) the coalition was already dispersed geographically and in leadership approach.

Multiple levels identifiable but inseparable. To understand the individual, group, or system experience, it was important to look at all three together. There were a few leadership frameworks that I reviewed during the design that led me to believe there was a relationship among these levels. The Social Change Model of Leadership (HERI, 1996) emphasizes the relationship between individual, group, and community/society. Adaptive leadership requires individuals to intervene in systems (Heifetz et al., 2009).

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Complexity Leadership Theory depicts multiple agents within complex adaptive systems (Uhl-Bien & Marion, 2009). Additionally, in my doctoral studies, I became familiar with the concepts of the sociological imagination (Mills, 1959) and sociological mindfulness (Schwalbe, 2017) that highlight the value of viewing individuals and groups or systems as separate but interacting components. These concepts demonstrate the value of looking at these levels holistically and suggest that examining only the individual without considering the individual's system would provide an incomplete understanding of the individual and vice versa.

Therefore, I designed the study to include all three levels, although naively still designing three phases looking at the individual, group, and system separately. I thought I could gather that data on the levels separately, but then the analysis would bring them together for a holistic view. Instead, from the first point of data collection, the deliberative civic engagement forum, the participants spoke about individual, group, and systems elements of their work seamlessly. They even depicted the interactions among these systems through the metaphor of the tributaries, the river, and the ocean.

This metaphor illustrated the connectedness of all three levels, but it also provided some distinctions between each level. Rivers and oceans have their own names because they do have some definition. However, the molecules of water flow from one area to the other without knowing the imposed boundaries. The water may flow from the tributary to the river and into the ocean. It might also be evaporated into the air and circulated to another tributary. The messiness of this metaphor represents the reality of civic work so well. This is a different image than the Social Change Model, which is depicted using

three separate circles for each level with arrows in between the circles or the image used in Complexity Leadership Theory with circles of complex adaptive systems with multiple agents inside each circle. Perhaps this illuminates the uniqueness of loosely affiliated coalitions that do not fit within clear boundaries or organizations or sectors.

Issues like LGBTQ+ school safety need individuals in many areas exercising leadership. The participants provided several examples of how they exercised leadership in their tributaries. These individuals are literally dispersed across the state across multiple sectors, all working toward the same goal. Even two of the participants from Phase III turned out to have KLC knowledge because of their participation in the Pride Coalition. Originally, I thought their answers would only shed light on the larger system. Instead, they provided very insightful information about their individual practices, their participation in the Pride Coalition, and a clear perspective of the larger system.

The larger system of LGBTQ+ school safety was depicted in all phases of the study. The major population groups within their work were teachers, school social workers, GSA advisers, administrators, parents, teachers, students, and general community members. Looking at the whole system of LGBTQ+ school safety helped to define the Pride Coalition's role within the system—providing high quality training to school personnel. The Pride Coalition members described this work in Phase I and II, but ultimately, the Phase III participants helped to position this role within the larger system.

Grant team as an artificial group. When designing the study, I identified the "group" as the members of the grant team. Therefore, as the researcher, I drew boundaries that seemed artificial to the participants. Even Isabella, who wrote the grant

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and recruited the participants, did not have a full list of the grant team. My initial

assumption was that this lack of a cohesive team was a limitation of the grant. However,

the participants challenged this assumption by illustrating other groups in which they

applied their learning, such as their school staff and their GSAs. Since the KLC language

and framework were transferrable, they were able to practice leadership in groups they

were already associated with in their relevant tributaries. Additionally, there was a

smaller group of participants that were on the board of the Pride Coalition. They provided

examples of practicing leadership within this group, such as bringing in an outside

perspective to give them a balcony view of their board. Lastly, the Pride Coalition of

Kansas itself was a group, and the participants talked about practicing leadership as part

of that group. While they did not often interact with other Pride Coalition of Kansas

members, their ability to contribute to the river provided a sense of a group among Pride

members. Throughout the study, I came to understand that their "group" was the Pride

Coalition of Kansas. The board would have also been an interesting group to study, if

more board members had been part of the KLC grant.

     Already distributed. As the participants illustrated their tributaries and their

leadership within those areas, it became clear that the distributed nature of their coalition

was less a choice and more a characteristic of their work. The studies of shared,

distributed, and collective leadership outside of the civic context the authors portrayed

this more of a choice. For example, cockpit pilots could choose to be the authority in

flight crews (Bienefeld & Grote, 2014), hospital systems could retain their centrality of

power (Denis, Lamothe, & Langley, 2001), or principals could decide to hoard the title of

leader (Dampson, Havor, & Laryea, 2012). Studies like these demonstrate contexts where leader-centric practices have occurred previously, and where the individual and organizations chose to share or distribute leadership to those without authority. In hierarchical organizations it might be effortful to try to share or disperse leadership. It requires a shift in culture and a redistribution of power.

The Pride Coalition demonstrated that in civic work, leadership can already be distributed. The members of the Pride Coalition are volunteers who are out in their own tributaries exercising leadership through their own work such as consulting, mentoring students, or advocating for policy changes. Therefore, a model like collective leadership represents the leadership they are enacting rather than leadership they are moving toward. Perhaps leadership development opportunities that are designed for dispersed organizations could better support distributed groups or loosely affiliated coalitions.

In summary, the civic practice of leadership across multiple levels was not appropriate to compare. Instead, a holistic view of the interconnected parts of the individual, group, and system was illuminated through this study. The Pride Coalition of Kansas demonstrated that adaptive challenges such as LGBTQ+ school safety may already exist across dispersed systems, and therefore leadership educators might consider strategies for embracing this already dispersed nature to then enhance and activate leadership. Secondly, when creating leadership development opportunities or grant programs, leadership educators might also recognize that dispersed groups may have a particular unit they would like to see as their "group." Efforts to engage with their group

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or apply leadership learning during or after the grant may need to occur in this context larger than just the "grant team."

Question Three

In leader-centric practices of leadership, parts of an individual's position are defined. Often the "leader" holds a title that authorizes them to be positioned over others and to carry out certain tasks. When distinguishing authority from leadership, positions are not defined as part of the practice of leadership. Yet, we are all positioned in some way in the world. Therefore, as part of my inquiry I asked: *In what ways does an individual's position influence the operationalization of collective leadership development in civic leadership practice?* Primarily, I was interested in looking at position from two perspectives: (a) positions of authority and (b) social position.

Positions of authority. One of the KLC principles is that *leadership is risky* (O'Malley & Cebula, 2015). I was curious to see if any of the participants articulated exercising leadership differently depending on their position of authority since the position of authority may afford them a buffer against risk. Claire identified herself as having a lot of informal authority within the Pride Coalition, not because of a formal title, but because of her education level and position at work as a university faculty member. She said that sometimes her perceived authority can make her more "dominant on the board, which can interfere with making sure everyone has a voice." Therefore, the board has assigned her informal authority based on the prestige of her job and education.

She also notes that her lack of formal authority on the board sometimes leads her to "defer too much to others." She also shared about practicing leadership with varying

levels of authority. She explained, "Perhaps because of my perceived authority and comfort in my work, I have found it easier to apply the principles I learned at KLC there than I have in the Pride Coalition of Kansas." When asked to elaborate on why, Claire explained that she felt more confidence and ownership in her job, and therefore, felt more empowered to practice leadership. There are likely other contextual elements impacting her practice of leadership in her work and the board, but she is interpreting part of the difference as perceived authority, which may mean there is less perceived risk for her to exercise leadership in her job context.

Other participants demonstrated that even having titles like regional coordinator or director of research helped encourage them to enact leadership. These positions were both new and were undefined, but they provided some authority to act. A few participants also noted that they do not exercise leadership with the Pride Coalition of Kansas because they do not have leadership positions. While this points to an incongruence with the KLC framework, it also demonstrates that formal authority and leadership are entangled. Some of the GSA sponsors such as Ruby, Teagan, and Melissa also noted informal authority that was given to them by members of their school. Since they were members of the LGBTQ+ community, people viewed them as having expertise and assigned them formal authority such as being a GSA adviser.

The data point to some significance of positions of authority, both formal and informal, as being catalysts for leadership activity. In Phase II, I asked participants to describe how they are situated within the Pride Coalition of Kansas—including formal and informal roles/titles—and how they think the way they are situated within the Pride

Coalition impacts their practice of leadership. In hindsight, I wish I had asked this in two separate questions, as most people only provided their roles and titles and did not respond to the connection to the practice of leadership. More inquiry on roles of authority and leadership with attention to risk may help to better understand how position within the group impacts the practice of leadership.

The Pride Coalition of Kansas was also seen as a formal authority on LGBTQ+ school safety. This was pointed out by Phase III participants when they were asked to position the Pride Coalition of Kansas within the larger system. The participants from Phase I and II did not speak to their authority as a coalition, which may be hard for them to see since the organization is still so young and messy. A deeper analysis of authority—both formal and informal—may be worthwhile for the Pride Coalition of Kansas, and more attention to how to recognize and leverage authority in leadership work may also be valuable in leadership development experiences.

Social position. Leadership is not an independent activity, but rather one that occurs within groups and systems. Dugan (2017) writes that "social location becomes a critical determinant of how one navigates systems and is dynamically constituted through power, knowledge, and identity" (p. 42). Furthermore, he defines social location as "the position one holds in society based on a variety of social identities (e.g., race, socioeconomic status, gender identity, sexual orientation, geographic location, occupation)…" (p. 39). Upon design of this study, I wanted to include space for participants to discuss their social identities because I knew they would be important in their practice of leadership, but I did not know *how* it would be important.

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The participants articulated complex and intersectional identities. They discussed elements of age, race, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation. They also discussed other roles as part of their identities such as professional roles, public roles, and parenting roles. They highlighted benefits to leading from both marginalized and privileged identities and blurred this binary. Many credited their marginalized identities with providing them the passion and motivation for LGBTQ+ advocacy work. Others noted that their privilege provided them a platform for advocacy. Therefore, the participants did not demonstrate that some identities were more important than others in their civic work or afforded them more of an opportunity to exercise leadership. Yet they articulated that their intersectional identities were an essential part of their leadership practice.

Although I did not directly ask questions about culture, descriptions of Kansas culture emerged throughout the study. Kansas culture was a key element of the system in which the Pride Coalition of Kansas is working to make progress. Sensoy and DiAngelo (2012) define culture as "the characteristics of everyday life of a group of people located in a given time and place" (p. 15). Kansas culture includes politeness, Christianity, conservativism, and characteristics such as ignorance and hate are also revealed around LGBTQ+ issues. Being Kansan was not named as part of anyone's social identity, but many of the participants shared experiences of growing up in Kansas. Their positions within Kansas and as Kansans allowed them to more effectively diagnose the situation of their adaptive challenge as part of their civic practice of leadership and increased their urgency to address LGBTQ+ issues in the state.

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In conclusion, specific roles and titles or social positions did not surface as impacting the participants' practice of leadership. For example, leadership was exercised by the director, board members, and people without titles. Leadership was also exercised by those with straight, cisgender, gay, and gender fluid identities without a perceived hierarchy within the Pride Coalition of Kansas. However, people's roles, titles, and social positions were very important to how they exercised leadership. The participants also demonstrated a heightened awareness of local culture and how that was impacting their civic work. The Pride Coalition demonstrated a complex understanding of social position, intersectionality, and culture. Their work is unique in that it particularly focuses on a social identity and includes intersectionality in their professional development workshops. The Pride Coalition demonstrates how integrating learning about social position can create a complex awareness of diversity and equity within a group, and how awareness of local culture can contribute to diagnosing adaptive challenges. Leadership educators may be able to learn from this practice to create leadership development opportunities that more deeply analyze social identity and culture.

Significance of the Study

Studies discussed in Chapter II point to collective leadership as a more beneficial—and in some cases a superior—approach to leadership than leader-centric approaches. Collective leadership has led to positive outcomes in a variety of settings. In most studies, the participants engaging in collective leadership did not have the language or framework of collective leadership. A few studies demonstrated that those who were taught components of collective leadership, such as adaptive leadership, demonstrated an

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increased capacity for collective leadership leading to positive outcomes. Most of these studies, while representing a variety of contexts, typically resided within one organization or one sector.

Yet the challenges of the post-industrial society are complex and adaptive. These challenges require leadership that spans across organizations and sectors and are political in nature. Kliewer and Priest (2019) posit that paradigms that emphasize positional leadership as a "leadership lens may be insufficient for community capacity building efforts that seek to support democracy and associational life" (p. 7). Instead, they suggest that a "collective lens is required" (p. 7). The work needed to make progress on challenges in the post-industrial society is messy and will require the leadership of many stakeholders involved in the challenges.

This study was significant because it explored intersections of collective leadership, civic leadership, and leadership development. It provided an opportunity to get on the balcony and observe a civic group who had participated in leadership development that was driven from a collective framework. Due to the community-engaged methodology and collective leadership framework, the data generated in this study includes perspectives from diverse stakeholders from within a key community coalition and other stakeholders involved in exercising leadership on LGBTQ+ issues. These stakeholders include those with formal and informal authority and those with no titles or positions in the coalition or movement.

The study provided evidence that leadership educators and leadership development can impact the practice of civic leadership. In this context, the KLC

Leadership Transformation Grant provided the participants with a common language and framework that helped them make progress more quickly when used around other trained people but that also transferred to other settings. The grant also translated into leadership interventions made by members in different formal and informal roles. The leadership actions occurred both within the Pride Coalition and within the larger LGBTQ+ movement. Lastly, the grant led to a practice of engaging others amongst the Pride Coalition of Kansas. This key practice was used to build an army of people with the Pride Coalition's volunteer membership, grow the LGBTQ+ movement more broadly, and engage other key stakeholders in Pride's work. This practice of engaging others is supporting Pride's expansion from a city to a statewide organization.

Using the community-engaged framework in analysis led to another key set of findings that are significant for leadership educators. Although the original inquiry for the study was to understand the practice of the Pride Coalition as a result of the leadership intervention, the practice of the Pride Coalition also shed light on what is needed in leadership development interventions for civic groups. This is particularly informative for leadership educators who may be used to teaching students or community members who are not connected to a civic purpose or group. The needs of loosely affiliated community coalitions are different than those with clear organizational boundaries.

The participants illuminated the importance of culture as an adaptive element of civic challenges. In this example, understanding how Kansas culture contributed to challenges in the LGBTQ+ community was an important—and arguably necessary— element to making progress. Secondly, the participants named a variety of social

identities and positions within the Pride Coalition that impacted their practice of leadership. They illuminated a particular theme around privileged and marginalized identities and the roles these play in providing a platform for or motivating leadership.

The participants also demonstrated that collective leadership might look like an interconnected but dispersed system of tributaries, rivers, and oceans. This finding is significant because it may help leadership educators embrace the dispersed nature of stakeholders in civic challenges. While the idea of a shared goal (the river) was an important element in making the Pride Coalition have a common direction, the strength was in its participants' leadership actions in the river. Collective leadership development does not need to focus on bringing everyone to the river but rather enhancing or activating work in the tributaries.

Leadership on civic challenges is needed because authority does not reside in one person, organization, or sector. However, community coalitions can also serve as a form of formal authority. The participants named the value of having something larger to contribute toward and to back them in their work. While leadership may occur in the tributaries, knowing that their work contributes to the river—or knowing that the river is there if they need it—provides a level of direction, protection, and order for participants. It helps reduce the risk participants are taking when enacting leadership. The Pride Coalition of Kansas itself is seen as an authority on LGBTQ+ school safety issues, which was a value for its volunteers and other stakeholders.

Ultimately, this study began filling the gap between theory and practice of collective leadership in civic settings. The participants depicted an image of tributaries, a

river, and ocean in that gap. They pointed to the importance of culture and identity and affirmed that authority and leadership are both needed in adaptive work. They helped illuminate how collective leadership development can provide a common language and framework, leads to leadership action, and leads to the practice of engaging others in civic work. Since this research was exploratory, these findings are also significant in providing guidance on a future research agenda at the intersection of collective leadership, civic leadership, and leadership development.

Implications and Recommendations

This study has several implications for the Pride Coalition of Kansas, the KLC, and the field of leadership studies—specifically leadership education. I discuss these implications and provide recommendations for these three groups.

The Pride Coalition of Kansas's practice of leadership can be depicted as tributaries, a river, and the ocean. They model an interconnectedness among individual, group, and systems-level leadership. One of their more immediate goals is to raise funds for a paid director and develop sustainable structures for their organization. While they have multiple people exercising leadership in their coalition, Isabella provides cohesion. Uhl-Bien and Marion (2009) suggest that both administrative functions and adaptive functions are a necessary part of Complexity Leadership. Due to the urgency of the adaptive work, the Pride Coalition has focused on energizing new volunteers, but they have also noted a need to attend to sustainability and structure. They can serve as a model for other grassroots organizations in how they engage others and build the capacity for leadership across the system.

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I recommend that the KLC continue the Leadership Transformation Grants because they provide an opportunity for multiple members in an organization or coalition to share a common language and framework. I would also encourage the KLC to invest in more loosely affiliated coalitions, which may not have formal names but rather are groups who have formed around adaptive issues. The KLC framework can enhance and activate leadership, and the grant mechanism may be one way to encourage leaders across the state focusing on a particular issue to work together across organizations and sectors.

The KLC and other leadership educators may need to consider different approaches to teaching leadership when working with loosely affiliated coalitions. For groups similar to the Pride Coalition, they may already be dispersed and may need to focus more on encouraging participants to lead in their own tributaries rather than how to share leadership within their group. Additionally, these coalitions may need to learn about how to move between the tributaries and rivers to lead in their own place while contributing to the larger mission. Leadership educators and scholars may also benefit from seriously considering the context and history of loosely affiliated organizations. So much of our leadership pedagogy and leadership inquiry is designed to accommodate leader-centric practices or organizational leadership. Loosely affiliated coalitions already practicing leadership in a dispersed manner will require a new collective lens for educators and scholars.

As we saw with the Pride Coalition, simply training individuals of a coalition as part of the same grant team does not make them identify as a team. For the Pride Coalition that did not seem to be a deterrent to many of them exercising leadership to

make progress on their adaptive challenge. Yet opportunities, such as speaking the language with others, may have been missed if participants did not know who else was trained. The KLC in their 2020 call for proposals for the Leadership Transformation Grants have already indicated more efforts to bring cohesion to these teams. I believe enhancing the team portion of the grant will add benefit for the participants.

In the 2020 application, the KLC has also increased the grant term from one to three years. Both Jordan and Isabella said they gained a lot from attending multiple trainings. This makes sense as the KLC trainings shift from exposure, to application, to expansion. From the limited responses on the questionnaires, collected from a small group of participants, it was evident that basic exposure to KLC principles may not be enough to shift deeply engrained narratives of leader-centric perspectives of leadership.

However, it is also clear that the KLC is starting to make headway in Kansas companies, school districts, cities, nonprofits, and other entities invested in sending multiple people to trainings and by starting to shift the culture in smaller groups. Additionally, some individuals have also been able to attend multiple trainings over the last decade to get deeper exposure to the KLC framework. The KLC also allows people from outside Kansas to enroll in their programs, which I think can help spark new ways of thinking beyond Kansas. It is also valuable to focus a larger portion of their work on Kansas, which they do through the Leadership Transformation Grants.

The majority of community leadership programs that exist are still leader-centric (Kniffin & Patterson, 2019). Community leadership educators might consider using the KLC as a model for leadership development in their own communities. Collective

leadership—and particularly the adaptive leadership and KLC frameworks—are more representative of the type of leadership needed in the civic setting. Leadership educators may consider using these frameworks and adjust them to fit their contexts. Community leadership programs might also design curriculum that (a) meets participants and groups where they are in their leadership development journey, (b) understands how the participants identify and depict their groups and systems, (c) creates space to analyze and understand how culture and identity operates, and (d) teaches about formal and informal authority in addition to leadership. These implications are drawn from this current research study and the relevant literature, but ultimately, more research is needed to fully understand the implications of collective leadership development in the civic arena.

Future Research

There have been some significant theoretical advancements on collective leadership theory in recent decades. From the literature review, it appears that many scholars are considering theories such as shared, distributed, networked, and Complexity Leadership Theory but that they are largely divergent in their lines of inquiry. Future research, where scholars dialogue with and across these theories, may help strengthen the collective paradigm of leadership.

Since I have been immersed in collective leadership literature because of this study, I began to think that a large-scale shift in leadership studies was occurring. Perhaps it is occurring in theory, but in attending a leadership education conference recently, reviewing for a leadership education journal, and conducting a review of community leadership programs—I realized that leadership education practices are still largely

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leader-centric. More scholarly work needs to occur that translates theory to practice so practitioners can learn new theories of leadership and practitioners and inform new theories. Learning how to move this emerging theory to practice is relevant for students in higher education programs who are developing their civic leadership practice, and it is also particularly relevant for community members who are exercising leadership on civic issues.

This current study has also highlighted that research in this area does not just need to focus on how leadership development impacts the practice of civic leadership. Importantly, studying the practice of leadership in the civic arena can illuminate how leadership may be best taught and learned. The civic context of leadership—especially loosely affiliated coalitions and grassroots organizations—are understudied. Leadership studies would greatly benefit from learning more about how complex adaptive systems in the civic arena operate and how leadership development can best come alongside them to enhance and activate leadership. As the Pride Coalition demonstrated, research on civic groups can be messy. Methodologies that can allow researchers to move across organizations and sectors and simultaneously study individual, group, and systems-levels may be needed.

Strengths and Limitations

Isabella and I both knew that the messiness of the Pride Coalition would be a strength and a weakness of this research. I knew studying a loosely affiliated coalition would not be easy but that it also needed to be done. The strength was that I gained more insight into how a dispersed coalition is practicing leadership in a civic space and how

participating in a collective leadership development grant impacted their practice. The limitation was that there was no "place" to observe or central meetings to serve as a touch point for the grant team.

In Phase I, the number of participants was both a strength and a limitation. Although additional voices may have added new perspectives to the study, I think the depth of the discussion might have been compromised. The space we were in was loud and having more than eight participants may have changed the intimate nature of the conversation. I believe meeting in person also allowed the participants to connect with one another and spend significant time reflecting on their leadership practices. This two-hour session allowed ample time for all participants to share in depth feedback on the research questions. However, because it was in person, it limited those who could attend because of geographic and time restrictions.

Phase II opened up participation to members who could not attend the Phase I gathering. Its strength was getting feedback from a larger number of people. I was also glad to get some dissenting feedback from participants who did not feel connected to the Pride Coalition, or who did not feel they could apply much from the KLC training without a position. I am not sure participants with this perspective would be likely to show up to a two-hour event, especially in a different city. Therefore, the low barrier of entry to Phase II was a strength in gaining a variety of perspectives. Additionally, being able to submit the answers electronically and independently added to the low barrier nature for participants. The technology may have limited some participation, although I offered to visit with anyone over the phone to reduce this limitation. Additionally, some

of the responses were short, and many participants did not elaborate on their responses after the commenting phase. Digging deeper into their initial answers would have strengthened the study. The collaborative nature of this phase did not engage participants as I had hoped in the commenting phase, but these surveys remain available for the participants if they want to use them in the future.

The strength of Phase III was that it affirmed my previous findings and helped me provide additional narratives about all three levels of the study instead of just the system-level as I anticipated. Therefore, perhaps the limitation of this phase was that it engaged individuals separately. Bringing together people from the larger system and those from the grant team for a conversation could have been insightful for the grant team. It may have helped to create connections. This is the only phase in which all the information resides with me as the researcher. I will share findings from this phase alongside the others to the Pride Coalition and to the KLC so that others can learn from the interviews conducted.

As I elaborate on more in my post-research reflection, community-engaged studies benefit from partnership development. My initial contact with the Pride Coalition was three months prior to the start of the data collection, but I did not formally receive approval for the study from their national office until two weeks before Phase I. This date was very firm because many of the grant team members were already traveling to Golden for another training. The two-week turn around limited my ability to develop rapport with the Pride Coalition and likely reduced the number of participants due to a quick recruitment cycle. At times I felt that my physical distance from the participants may

have limited some opportunities to build relationships, but that challenge existed regardless of my location because the participants were dispersed across the state. Although I was not able to visit the KLC during the study either, the strength of our relationship led to easy virtual connections. When studying loosely affiliated coalitions like Pride, it is important to be able to use technology and not limit participation by face-to-face meetings.

Post-Research Reflection

The subjectivity statement I shared in Chapter III provided some insight to how my identities intersected with the current study. I continued to explore tensions, questions, and growth throughout this study and discus them in this section.

Tensions in Community-Engaged Scholarship

A tension that existed throughout this study was my desire to carry out a community-engaged study while also being realistic about the opportunities to collaborate with new partners. Originally, I wanted to study leadership within Greensboro because it was "my community." From the beginning of my doctoral journey, I tried to align my course assignments to learn about the history and culture of Greensboro and to meet potential community partners. I eventually ran a pilot study with a community coalition that focused on food security in the county. Ultimately, I determined that I did not want to only study the practice of leadership but the practice of leadership following a collective leadership development intervention. I explored the local community leadership programs, and I found no evidence of a robust collective leadership development program in Greensboro.

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I also finally admitted to myself that Greensboro is not "my community." I feel more like a transplant to the community than a member of the community. I have not been able to develop many deep relationships or community partnerships. While I have valued the opportunity to live outside my comfort zone because I have grown and learned a lot, it felt like doing a community-engaged project here may be forced.

When I finally decided to partner with the KLC, I realized that even from far away, Kansas is still my community. I had established relationships with people at the KLC. I understood Kansas culture, which was affirmed many times throughout the study. And I had a huge support network in my family and the Staley School. What I did not consider too well before the study, was that my partnership would also be with a community coalition that I did not know. After receiving initial interest from Isabella, I traveled to Kansas to meet members of the Pride Coalition. During my time, I was supposed to attend a board meeting and share my research proposal, meet with student interns, and attend a Pride Coalition professional development event. Shortly before the trip, Isabella let me know that due to board member conflicts, they were moving their meeting up a week. Additionally, because she would be in another town for the professional development training, the visit to Golden and meeting the student interns did not make sense. She said I could come to the city where the professional development event was happening, but ultimately, the group also decided they did not want me to observe that event. Worried that all this was going to fall apart, I still showed up to meet Isabella for dinner, which is also where I met Frank and Ruby.

At that dinner, I learned more about the Pride Coalition and the passionate people who make up its membership. I built some rapport with three participants. I also learned about concerns they had as a community group. Their national research office had cautioned them about getting involved in a research study because often researchers take the time of participants and then never share back what they have learned. Secondly, Claire, the research coordinator for the Pride Coalition of Kansas, had advised Isabella not to have me attend the training or meet too many people before the study because it might create researcher bias. It finally made sense why everything that week had fallen apart. The strength of my community-engaged approach allowed me to speak to Isabella's concerns. I described my commitment to the participants continuing their leadership development throughout the study and to sharing the findings. I also shared that my approach to research acknowledges bias instead of trying to eliminate it. During the dinner, I felt I had resolved concerns and Isabella said she would bring the proposal back to the board for a vote. They ultimately approved participation in the study if the organization and individuals remained anonymous.

With a commitment to a community-engaged research methodology and a commitment to Isabella that the study would be participatory, I designed every aspect to be as participatory as possible. Yet time was a ghost that haunted the project. Many of the participants—especially Isabella—did not have the luxury of time to deeply collaborate on the research project. The more data I collected, the more I realized the reality of their world is much different than mine. Isabella often works more than 60 hours a week, and she does not get paid. There is no other full-time volunteer in the Pride Coalition of

Kansas. The other volunteers spend time working with the Pride Coalition on top of their other full-time jobs. Even those who had the summer off from their professional school job were full-time parenting.

Therefore, I made sure to make steps of the study transparent and open for anyone who wanted to participate at any stage, but I only asked for engagement in critical moments. When deciding whether to ask for collaboration, I learned to ask myself, "What is my purpose or goal in asking for collaboration? How would this be beneficial to the participants?" One example was wanting collaboration in writing Chapter III. I had envisioned co-authoring that chapter with partners from the KLC and the Pride Coalition. I wanted to either co-write the descriptions or have them write their own description. However, being participatory does not always mean doing things side-by-side. I was able to craft descriptions of the KLC and the Pride Coalition in a participatory way by using resources they had already shared with me and from the knowledge that was generated through the data collection. I shared the descriptions with my primary contacts from the KLC and the Pride Coalition of Kansas and invited feedback, which led to small revisions. This process honored their voices and respected their time.

LGBTQ+ Learning

Leadership is a process, and therefore, leadership education is relevant for all content areas and social issues. My own leadership work at the Staley School focused on food insecurity because we had a departmental commitment to this issue. We aligned many curricular and co-curricular efforts to this topic. I became deeply involved in that work through my efforts coordinating a storytelling project around food insecurity in my

leadership practicum course. Eventually, I became deeply connected in the community and across campus related to this issue. I sought out opportunities to exercise leadership on this issue in Greensboro. When one of the potential community coalitions for this study was centered on food security efforts, I thought my background in this issue could be an asset to the study.

Instead, I got to learn more about and become an advocate for a new social issue: LGBTQ+ school safety and undoing homophobia and transphobia more broadly. I grew up in the conservative, Christian, "Kansas nice" environment that the participants described. Being part of the university world for the last 14 years has exposed me to new people and ideas and has made me re-evaluate my values. Although I have interacted with people who identify as lesbian, gay, and/or queer more especially since college, this study helped me realize I have limited relationships with people who identify as transgender. I am now more aware of the unique opportunities and challenges associated with gender identity, and I am more conscious about distinguishing between gender identity and sexual orientation.

I also became more aware of the issues facing the LGBTQ+ community and shifted some of my own attitudes and behaviors. I shifted my language from LGBT to LGBTQ+ because the participants modeled this for me as a more inclusive practice. I added my pronouns to my email signature, even though I knew pronouns were important before. I became more fluid in using they/them pronouns when speaking about some participants. I spoke more to my friends, family, and colleagues about my disagreement with the Catholic Church's stance on LGBTQ+ community. I was surprised to experience

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no push back. There were a few moments when I experienced "Kansas nice" reactions—some people would listen to me and agree that LGBTQ+ students should not be unsafe in school but still wanted to exclude them in various ways. I am grateful that along with learning about leadership practices of the Pride Coalition, I also learned how to be a better ally.

Civic Leadership Scholar-Practitioner-Activist-Educator

At the Staley School, I was exposed to the idea of collective leadership but not in that language. When I found literature on collective leadership (e.g., Ospina & Foldy, 2016), I felt inspired by having language to contrast collective leadership with leader-centric perspectives. Similarly, Rost's (1993) piece helped me to see that this assumption about leadership translates into development—particularly that we ought to be focused on *leadership* development and not *leader* development. I thought my future research agenda would mostly consist of contributing to the development of collective leadership.

However, throughout this study, I have come to realize that the drive behind my desire for developing collective leadership is because I believe it is a more effective practice for addressing public challenges. My personal desire is to have more people exercising leadership in their communities to address these challenges, rather than waiting for a "leader" or authority figure to "save" them. My hope is that my scholarship moving forward contributes to the advancement of civic leadership. Additionally, I have a commitment to exercising leadership in my own communities and letting that practice inform my inquiry and letting my inquiry inform my practice. Thirdly, scholarship can help us change the world and not just interpret it. Lastly, I hope to educate others to

exercise civic leadership. This dissertation has helped illuminate a path forward for myself (and I hope others) to advance civic leadership through intersecting roles as scholar, practitioner, activist, and educator.

I have remained in contact with the coordinator of the community coalition from my Fall 2017 pilot study. I have engaged in volunteer leadership coaching with her, which has allowed me to make a meaningful contribution both to the issue area of food security and my current community of Greensboro. After completing my initial writing of this dissertation, I had a coaching session with this coordinator. When I walked into her conference room, she had a huge map of stakeholders laid out on her whiteboard. It struck me that although this map was not in the form of a river and tributaries, it demonstrated that type of structure. The stakeholders were distributed among the community. I was able to share my findings from my dissertation and how they may relate to her work. Her coalition has already invested money in leadership development for a small group of people, but we were able to imagine together what leadership development across this system might look like from a collective paradigm.

This study has significance for groups beyond the Pride Coalition of Kansas and the KLC. My own learning will guide my interactions with community groups, my approach to leadership education, my advocacy for LGBTQ+ issues, and my future research agenda. I want to continue to weave together my scholar, practitioner, activist, and educator identities within the context of civic leadership.

Concluding Thoughts

This study contributes to the theory-to-practice gap of collective leadership, civic leadership, and leadership development, but a large gap still exists. Loosely affiliated coalitions in the civic setting are unique units to study with and learn from. Groups like the Pride Coalition of Kansas are exercising leadership to make progress on adaptive challenges. Their membership and work spans organizations and sectors. Their work is representative of the difficult work needed in the 21st century. Leadership development, from a collective perspective, can enhance and activate leadership in civic settings. My hope is that leadership educators, scholars, and practitioners work together and learn from one another to build the capacity of our communities to address the pressing adaptive challenges of our time.

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APPENDIX A

PHASE I PROTOCOL

Phase I of this study includes collaborative meaning making. Participants will be invited to attend a 2-3-hour session in person. This session is not a traditional focus group but does include inquiry in a group setting. This session will follow the format of Story Circles (Roadside Theater, 1999). They describe story circles as a group of people sitting in a circle, telling personal stories, led by a story facilitator. Each story is different according to its purpose. Additionally, a deliberative civic engagement framework (Kliewer & Priest, 2016) is used to build themes and actions from the stories. The purpose of this activity is to generate data that will provide insight to the study's research questions. There are four main elements to this process that are described below.

I. Community Commitments
   a. The participants will be asked to determine a set of community commitments that will guide their interactions. For example, commitments may include being a good listener or embracing vulnerability.
II. Round I: Story of Self
   a. In this round, each participant will tell a 2-minute story related to the prompt. Examples of the prompt include:
      i. Tell a story about a time when either you or someone else in Pride Coalition of Kansas exercised leadership to make progress on LGBT school safety.
      ii. Tell a story about an experience when you applied learning from the Kansas Leadership Training to your civic practice or observed someone else do so.
      iii. Tell a story about a time when you saw leadership in action in the Pride Coalition of Kansas context.
      iv. Tell a story about a time when you found your leadership training was either impactful or deficient.
   b. The prompt will be solidified through discussion with participants prior to the session.
III. Round II: Story of Us
   a. In this round, participants will be asked to name themes from the story.
      i. Prompt: Now that you have heard each person's story, what are some themes you notice across these stories?
IV. Round III: Story of Now
   a. In this round, participants will be to consider how their stories, themes, and mission of their coalition connect for future action.

  i. Consider the mission of Pride Coalition of Kansas, your role/sphere of influence, and areas of potential action to think about your "next story." Write this down and then share out to the group.

  ii. Semi-Structured follow-up questions based on this "next story."

    1. How might you integrate what you learned from the KLC training into this civic leadership plan?

    2. What else might you need to be successful in your next story?

APPENDIX B

PHASE II PROTOCOL

This questionnaire will help illuminate your experiences with the KLC Leadership Transformation Grant program, including its impact on your practice of leadership and your thoughts about the practice of leadership within Pride Coalition of Kansas.

> **Step 1 (June 25-July 12):** Answer the questions below (in this word document) and email the document back to me, Lori Kniffin, lekniffi@uncg.edu. I anticipate this will take about 60 minutes.
>
> **Step 2 (July 12-26):** These documents will be shared with all 25 members of the grant team in google docs. Each of you will be invited to comment to ask for clarification or elaboration on any questions.
>
> **Step 3 (July 26-August 9):** You will be able to elaborate on your answers in response to the comments by myself and the other 24 participants.

*If you prefer to answer the questions orally, you can email me, Lori Kniffin, lekniffi@uncg.edu, to set up a time for an interview or to arrange submission by audio recording.

Grant Team: For the purposes of this survey, the "grant team" refers to the 25 people (including yourself) who attended a KLC training as part of the Leadership Transformation Grant. See the roster for the list of 25 grant team members if needed.

Anonymity: Remember that your responses will be shared with the other 24 participants of this phase of the study. Please keep this in mind as you are responding to the questions below. I will use your pseudonym/fake name for any information being shared beyond this group but use real names in this questionnaire.

Confidentiality: To maintain confidentiality of all members, it is important not to share what you read beyond this group. Imagine we are in a room with everyone and we are sharing these answers in person; don't let what you hear in the room, leave the room.

Consent: Before beginning, please review the adult consent form. By participating, you are agreeing that you read, or it has been read to you, and you fully understand the contents of this document and are openly willing consent to take part in this study.

Questions:

A little about you:

1. What is your name?
2. What are your pronouns?
3. Describe how you are situated with(in) Pride Coalition of Kansas. What are your formal or informal roles/titles? How long have you been with the group? How do you think the way you are situated with(in) Pride Coalition of Kansas impacts your practice of leadership?
4. Describe any components of your social identity that you believe impact your thinking or action around your practice of leadership with Pride Coalition of

Kansas (ex. age, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, etc.), and how you think they impact your practice of leadership.

A little about your training and experience:

5. Describe your experience with attending the KLC training(s). What were some of your initial take-a-ways or thoughts about this training?
6. Since you have attended the training, how, if at all, have you applied your learning to your work with Pride Coalition of Kansas? Examples strongly encouraged.
7. What is one adaptive challenge related to Pride Coalition of Kansas's work that still needs to be addressed? How do you think progress can be made?

A little about Pride Coalition of Kansas and the grant team:

8. How, if at all, do you think Pride Coalition of Kansas's participation in the KLC Leadership Transformation Grant has impacted Pride Coalition of Kansas's work?
9. Describe how, if at all, you have seen other grant team members exercise leadership?
10. Given that the Pride Coalition of Kansas grant team took part in similar leadership training as you, do you practice leadership within Pride Coalition of Kansas differently than you do in other groups? Why or why not?

Other:

11. The third phase of this study includes interviews with Pride Coalition of Kansas's stakeholders to understand from an 'on the balcony' perspective how the KLC Leadership Trainings have or have not impacted Pride Coalition of Kansas leadership role within the larger system. Beyond the grant team, who are other stakeholders you interact with related to Pride Coalition of Kansas work? If possible, please provide one person's name, title/affiliation, email, and phone number who I may contact for the interview portion of this study.
12. Is there anything else I have not asked about that you would like to share?

APPENDIX C

PHASE III PROTOCOL

This will be a semi-structured interview. The participants from phases I & II may have additional questions they suggest adding here. They may also help refine key phrases about their work (e.g. LGBT school safety." Depending who the participant is in this phase, there may be additional follow-up questions based on their relationship with Pride Coalition of Kansas. "The System" in this study refers to individuals and organizations doing LGBT school safety work, because that is the central adaptive challenge Pride Coalition of Kansas focuses on in their work.

Understanding the Relationship Between the Interviewee and the System
1. Will you please start by telling me a little bit about yourself?
2. What is your relationship with Pride Coalition of Kansas? How do you interact with their members or programs?
3. As you know, you were invited to this study because of your relation to Pride Coalition of Kansas. So, I'm curious how you would describe Pride Coalition of Kansas's mission or purpose?
4. Did you previously do other work related to LGBT issues including school safety?

Understanding the System
5. What are the key issues or challenges in LGBT school safety work?
6. Who are the other stakeholders (individuals or organizations) involved in similar work? [Getting at how they would describe the other players in the system]
7. What are the roles these stakeholders in LGBT school safety work? How do they contribute to LBGT school safety work?

Understanding Pride Coalition of Kansas's Role in the System
8. How would you describe Pride Coalition of Kansas's role in the school community and/or LGBT community?
9. If Pride Coalition of Kansas went away tomorrow, what would be missed?
10. In what ways do you think Pride Coalition of Kansas contributes to making progress on LGBT safety within schools? What are some, if any, of their major contributions toward LGBT school safety Pride Coalition of Kansas has made since the KLC grant program?

THEMES AND CATEGORIES BY PHASE

Phase I Themes and Categories
- What calls me to the river
  - Our purpose/work (the river)
  - Connecting identity to leadership
  - Where the work is needed
- My little piece: intervening in my tributary
  - Tributaries and streams
  - Identifying and filling gaps
  - Leadership interventions
- Engaging others: building an army of people
  - Identifying and building more leaders
  - Engaging others and growing the movement
  - Making connections to others
- Our agenda and structure (the organization)
  - How we execute our mission
  - Building on existing experiences and structures
  - Connecting structure to mission
- This work isn't easy
  - Messy
  - Vulnerability, courage, and uncertainty
  - Scope of work overwhelming
- Stepping up: putting leadership to work
  - Authority vs. leadership
  - KLC language and application

Phase II Themes and Categories
- How one's positioned matters
  - Professional/public roles
  - Intersectional identities
  - Empathy for or experiences of marginalized identities drives Pride work
  - Pride roles
  - Still seeing leadership as a position
- Leadership development can be applied
  - KLC concepts and language utilized
  - Impacts of leadership development
  - Connection to KLC beneficial beyond training
  - KLC principles transferrable
  - See others lead

- o KLC helped me grow individually
- o Gained confidence to lead
- Perspectives of leadership development
  - o Common language helpful, but can work without
  - o Positive views of the KLC grant/experience
  - o Neutral or negative views of KLC grant/experience
  - o Not a grant team
- Pride and its context
  - o About Pride
  - o Factions
  - o Doing this work in Kansas
  - o Sustainability of Pride/Isabella
  - o Investment in volunteers

Phase III Themes and Categories
- The challenge is complicated and messy
  - o Characteristics of the challenge
  - o Safety
  - o Nice but hostile
  - o Misunderstanding and ignorance
  - o Adults perpetuating the problem
- Making progress involves lots of people
  - o Isabella main contact
  - o Factions
  - o Messy
  - o Support/progress
- Pride has a specific scope of work
  - o Mission/scope
  - o Education and awareness (the thinking)
  - o Training (the skills)
  - o Provide resources
  - o Lifeline
  - o Networking
- Looking to others to lead and provide authority
  - o Official vs. informal
  - o Legislation and policies
  - o School, community, district, state, nation
- Leadership is needed, KLC training helps
  - o KLC language or content
  - o Philosophy of leadership
  - o Value of KLC training
  - o Engaging others
  - o Non-KLC leadership thoughts

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APPENDIX E

COMBINED THEMES AND CATEGORIES

Leadership Educators Teaching Pride
- Varying perspectives of KLC training
    - Perspectives of leadership development (II)
        - Positive views of the KLC grant/experience
        - Neutral or negative views of KLC grant/experience
        - Not a grant team
    - Leadership is needed, KLC training helps (III)
        - Value of KLC training
        - Non-KLC leadership thoughts
    - Leadership development can be applied (II)
        - KLC helped me grow individually
        - Gained confidence to lead
        - Connection to KLC beneficial beyond training
- Using a common language and framework
    - This work isn't easy (I)
        - Messy
        - Vulnerability, courage, and uncertainty
        - Scope of work overwhelming
    - Leadership development can be applied (II)
        - KLC principles transferrable
        - See others lead
    - Leadership is needed, KLC training helps (III)
        - KLC language or content
        - Philosophy of leadership
    - Perspectives of leadership development (II)
        - Common language helpful, but can work without
- Leveraging leadership development
    - Stepping up and putting leadership to work (I)
        - Authority vs. leadership
        - KLC language and application
    - Leadership development can be applied (II)
        - KLC concepts and language utilized
        - Impacts of leadership development
- Engaging others: building an army of people
    - Engaging others building an army of people (I)
        - Identifying and building more leaders
        - Engaging others and growing the movement
        - Making connections to others

- - Leadership is needed, KLC training helps (III)
    - Engaging others
  - Making progress involves lots of people (III)
    - Isabella main contact
    - Factions
    - Messy
    - Support/progress

Pride Teaching Leadership Educators and Scholars
- The river and its tributaries
  - What calls me to the river (I)
    - Our purpose/work (the river)
    - Connecting identity to leadership
    - Where the work is needed
  - My little piece: intervening in my tributary (I)
    - Tributaries and streams
    - Identifying and filling gaps
    - Leadership interventions
  - Pride and its context (II)
    - About Pride
    - Factions
    - Sustainability of Pride/Isabella
    - Investment in volunteers
  - Pride has a specific scope of work (III)
    - Mission/scope
    - Education and awareness (the thinking)
    - Training (the skills)
    - Networking
  - The challenge is complicated and messy (III)
    - Characteristics of the challenge
- Both leadership and authority are needed
  - Our agenda and structure (the organization) (I)
    - How we execute our mission
    - Building on existing experiences and structures
    - Connecting structure to mission
  - Looking to others to lead and provide authority (III)
    - Official vs. informal
    - Legislation and policies
    - School, community, district, state, nation
  - Pride has a specific scope of work (III)
    - Provide resources
    - Lifeline
- Culture and identity matter in leadership work

- How one's positioned matters (II)
  - Professional/public roles
  - Intersectional identities
  - Empathy for or experiences of marginalized identities drives Pride work
  - Pride roles
  - Still seeing leadership as a position
- The challenge is complicated and messy (III)
  - Safety
  - Nice but hostile
  - Misunderstanding and ignorance
  - Characteristics of the challenge
  - Adults perpetuating the problem
- Pride and its context (II)
  - Doing this work in Kansas

APPENDIX F

FINAL COMBINED THEMES AND CATEGORIES

Leadership Educators Teaching Pride
- Varying perspectives of KLC training
  - Evaluative comments
  - Perspectives and outcomes
- Using a common language and framework
  - Common language
  - Common framework
    - Leadership is an activity, not a position
    - Adaptive vs. technical
    - Balcony view
- Leveraging leadership development
  - Leadership interventions
  - Seeing others lead
- Engaging others: building an army of people
  - Building more leaders in Pride
  - Growing the movement
  - Leveraging diverse stakeholders

Pride Teaching Leadership Educators and Scholars
- The river and its tributaries
  - The river
  - The tributaries
- Both leadership and authority are needed
  - Legislation and policies
  - Looking for others for direction and protection
  - Structure and sustainability
- Culture and identity matter in leadership work
  - Kansas culture
  - Intersectional identities