

UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION STUDENTS' LEADERSHIP UNDERSTANDINGS

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Department of Educational Administration

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By

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore and represent students' leadership understandings that emerged from discussions of their past and current leadership experiences in everyday life, their school experiences, and their college level contexts.

In this study I used a multiple method (QUAL + QUAL) research design and the data were analyzed within principles of grounded theory drawn from Strauss and Corbin's (1998) grounded theory approach. Individual and focus group interviews were the main data collection methods used in this study: individual interviews with fifteen undergraduate education students and six focus group sessions (held in succession) generated the data.

As the leadership understandings held by the students unfolded, four broad themes became prominent. The first theme, *the ubiquity of relationships*, emerged from the students' discussions of collaboration, context, power, and vision. Highlighted in these conversations was their perspective that, with respect to leadership, relationships are everything. The second theme included the students' understanding that self-esteem and self-actualization were important aspects of effective and energizing leadership. Third, and perhaps more informative, was the manner in which the students articulated their leadership understandings. One of the biggest findings to come out of the study was the students' *tendency to speak in dualities* in order to process, conceptualize, and articulate their leadership understandings. Additionally, the students' sensemaking reflected the important role *language and framing* played in articulating their leadership understandings. Their perspective that small things (positive and negative) had momentum and led to ramifications emerged as the fourth broad theme. In my quest to understand this phenomenon, I developed the concept of *leadership throw* as the

metaphor that conveyed the students' understanding of small things having big ramifications.

Implications for theory, research, and policy arose from the students' beliefs that leadership was collaborative, interactive, and featured the harnessing of individuals' skills for the betterment of communities. In view of what was learned about the students' use of language, framing, and *leadership throw*, their leadership synthesis has implications for an enhanced pre-service teacher preparation program suggesting greater congruence with the lived realities of K-12 schools.

In conclusion, it became apparent that the students' leadership understandings were part content, part process, and part articulation. Remarkably, I came into this research looking for the students' denotative leadership understandings and came away from the study with a clearer understanding of language and framing, leadership throw, and the implications of these concepts powerful argument this makes for nurturing student voice and the capability for expression and framing at all levels of leadership, organizational life, and community relations.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my wife, Susan whose spirit and enduring love fill my world and continue to sustain me. Thanks for always being there.

To my family – your reassurance and recognition of my achievements encouraged me.

I had a wonderful experience working with an amazing group of beginning educators in the process of conducting the research for this dissertation. Thank you for enabling me to learn as much about my own orientation to leadership as I learned about your leadership understandings. I will never forget the power of language in leadership situations.

Experience involves everything that makes us human – our bodily, social, linguistic, and intellectual being combined in complex interactions that make up our understanding of our world.

Mark Johnson. 1987

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PERMISSION TO USE.....	i
ABSTRACT.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
DEDICATION.....	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vii
LIST OF TABLES.....	xiv
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xv
CHAPTER ONE	1
BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE STUDY	1
Purpose of the Study	4
Research Questions: A Point of Departure	5
Importance of the Study	5
Definitions	7
My Role as Researcher and Other Influences on the Study	9
Preamble: My Leadership Story	10
Other Influences on the Study	13
Organization of the Dissertation	14
CHAPTER TWO	16
CONTEXT AND LITERATURE FOR THE STUDY	16
Leadership and the Context of Undergraduate Students	17
Undergraduate Students: The National Context	19

Canadian Campuses and New Trends for	
Undergraduate Students	21
Undergraduate Students: The Saskatchewan Context	22
Undergraduate Students: The Institutional Context	25
Exploring Leadership Literature	30
Extant Leadership Perspectives and Evolution of	
Leadership Thought	32
Emerging Leadership Models	35
Non-hierarchical Leadership and the Social Change Model	38
Transformative Leadership	42
Transformational Leadership	48
Undergraduate Students and the Twenty-First Century	
Context	52
The Context of Postmodernity	53
Millennials: The Undergraduate Generation	55
Millennials' Focus on Needs of Communities	56
The Canadian Millennial Generation	57
Millennials' Relationship to Leadership in Higher Education	60
Summary	62
CHAPTER THREE	65
METHODOLOGY	65
Background to the Research Design	65
Epistemological and Ontological Orientation	66
Choice of Method	67

Grounded Theory: Methodology	68
Grounded Theory and the Pragmatist View	72
Constructivist Grounded Theory	72
Selection of Participants	75
Data Collection	76
Multiple Methods Research Design	77
The Interview Method	78
Conversational Interviewing	79
Conducting Focus Group Interviews	80
Conducting Individual Interviews	80
Developing the Interview Guide	82
Piloting the Interview Guide	83
Results of the Pilot	85
Data Analysis	85
Coding	86
Role of the Researcher	90
The Researcher as Instrument	91
Trustworthiness	92
Ethical Considerations	93
CHAPTER FOUR	95
PRESENTATION OF RESULTS	95
The Participants	95
Spirited Discussions: My Engagement with the	
Participants	96

Engaging the Participants:	
The Individual Interviews	97
The Focus Group Interviews	98
Focus Group One	100
Focus Group Two	102
Renderings: Participants' Views of Leadership	107
Inspiring Us to Get Involved	109
Harnessing the Talents of Individuals	111
Anyone Can Lead	117
Building Relationships and "Going the Extra Mile"	119
Leadership is Working with People	121
Vision says, "This is What We Can Do" ...	123
The Back-and-Forth Relationship of Working Together	124
Having Goals and Working Together	129
Trust Made Me Want to Reciprocate	130
It's More of a Community Thing: Leadership and The Practicum	132
Working for Students: Leadership within the College	133
Knowing What We Want and Working Hard	136
Making a Difference: Leadership and the Community	136

Doing What is Best: Leadership and the Practicum	138
Giving Up Control and Giving Up Power: Leadership in the College	140
Taking Part Opened My Eyes to Making Leadership Happen	143
I had this Idea and had to Make it Work	144
Enjoying the Process of Working Together ...	144
Seeing the Vision Through: The Ultimate Goal of Leadership	145
Finding What Works: Knowing Leadership is Happening	148
Adapting to the Abilities of Our Team	154
Principles for Establishing Effective and Energizing Leadership	156
Concluding Reflections: Students'; Leadership Understandings	161
 CHAPTER FIVE	 170
DISCUSSION, POINTS OF DEPARTURE, POSSIBILITIES	 170
Going Deep: Focus Group Process	171
Spirited Conversations: Collective Interaction	172
Deriving Meaning: Speaking in Dualities	175
Congruent Leadership Talk and Action	177

The Emergent Themes	178
The Ubiquity of Relationships	179
Relationships in Discussion of Collaboration	180
Relationships in Discussion of Context	184
Relationships in Discussion of Power	186
Relationships in Discussion of Vision	189
The Importance of Emotional Well-Being	191
Getting Slammed: The Negative Impact of Abusive Words and Tone	193
Students' Sensemaking: Constructing Leadership Understandings	198
Language and Framing	199
Conferring Meaning	203
Leadership Throw: Small Things with Big Ramifications	206
Developing the Metaphor	207
Throwness: Heidegger's View	209
Affordances: Gibson's Adaptation of Throwness	210
Reflections and Further Ponderings	213
A Departure Point: Some Key Findings	215
Departure Point: The Students' Leadership Understandings	217
The Possibilities	222
Methodological Reflections	222
A Possibility for Leadership Literature	228

A Departure Point for Related Research	229
Contributions to Policy	230
Epilogue	232
REFERENCES	236
APPENDICES	248
Appendix A: Interview Instrument	248
Appendix B: Strauss and Corbin (1998) Approach to	
Coding Data	250
Appendix C: Application to Ethics Review Board	254
Certificate of Approval	258
Appendix D: Letters of Transmittal	260
Appendix E: Participant Consent Forms	266
Appendix F: Transcript Release Form	269

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1	Initial Meanings of Leadership Terms Used	8
Table 2.1	Four Essential Competencies for Leaders	45
Table 2.2	Transformational Leadership: The Role of Influence	49

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1	Literature Review Components	17
Figure 2.2	Social Change Model: Conceptual Map.....	40
Figure 2.3	Transformative Leadership “Flow”	43
Figure 2.4	Transformational Leadership “Flow”	49
Figure 3.1	Grounded Theory as Continuum.....	68
Figure 3.2	Principles of Grounded Theory Used in this Research.....	70
Figure 3.3	Flow of Grounded Theory.....	86

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

The changing climate of higher education has necessitated a rethinking of university organizational structures and the efforts to successfully address the challenges of social diversity and complexity (Woodard, Love, & Komives, 2000). According to their respective studies, Astin and Astin (2000), Berg (2003), Cherrey and Allen (2001), Komives, Lucas, and McMahon (1998), among others, underscored that the mandate and responsibility for leadership training and preparation of all students attending higher education remains within the purview of the institution. Throughout the years, participation of undergraduate students in leadership activities in higher education has been discontinuous (Astin & Astin, 2000), and may represent a “disconnect” between students’ leadership understandings and the hierarchical, linear attributes of student leadership presently observed in many institutions of higher education.

In contrast, non-hierarchical relational and collaborative attributes of leadership foster new transformative leadership capacities to flourish in students by facilitating connections to reality that transcend the boundaries of traditional hierarchies (Brown & Barr, 1990; Cherrey & Allen, 2001; Komives et al, 1998). Society is changing and becoming “radically different [because of the] shift away from traditional transactional norms ... towards flexibility, teamwork and collaborative problem-solving” (Claes, 1999, p. 439). Claes (1999) stated that complex societies may benefit from transformative leadership ideologies, allowing men and women to develop leadership understandings through interaction with each other. This research, then, examines

undergraduate education students' leadership understandings and how it has contributed to pre-service teacher preparation and teacher leadership.

Berg (2003), identified that leadership

is a necessary phenomenon for the well-being and advancement of any group of individuals who desire to change or to accomplish something. Democratic states, by their very nature, need leadership within all components of society [and] [t]he necessity for leadership throughout the democratic system places a responsibility on each citizen for democracy to work effectively. Each individual needs to contribute to the leadership of causes larger than personal self-interest. (p. 1)

Leadership in complex societies and organizations requires that individuals are skilled in strategic thinking and communication, possess a sense of community, are involved citizens, demonstrate adaptability, and have a commitment to developing fully the talents of others (Woodard et al., 2000). Collaborative, interactive leaders tend to facilitate leadership appropriate to diverse needs. Within the context of Canadian institutions of higher education, however, the nature of undergraduate education students' leadership understandings remains largely unexplored.

Current North American society and institutions of higher education are characterized by pluralism and diversity (Cherrey, Biggs Garbuio, & Isgar, 2001). However, literature particular to research into undergraduate education students' leadership understandings is scarce, making it difficult to (a) identify how undergraduate education students perceive leadership; and (b) delineate the possibilities for undergraduate education students interested in leadership. The expressed intent for higher education to develop future leaders predates by two hundred years the history of leadership as an area of study (Thelin, 1996). Furthermore, as higher education developed and expanded, this objective has remained an important institutional goal because historic documents and emergent institutional missions seldom neglect to laud

the important purpose of developing leadership among students and graduates (Roberts, 1997).

Viewed from a modernist perspective, developing leadership is a reasonably straightforward proposition within traditional hierarchical, linear, homogenous organizations: the status quo is reinforced and diversity limited. However, society and higher education are no longer status quo, linear, hierarchical, or homogenous, as demonstrated in the literature (Cherrey et al., 2001; Faris & Outcalt, 2001; Komives et al., 2001; Robertson & Lubic, 2001). Faris and Outcalt (2001) reported that as higher education diversified and evolved from a privilege of the elite to a right for the masses, the objective of leadership became diluted, for society became more interconnected and characterized by greater diversity and pluralism. Astin and Astin (2000) reported in their findings to The Kellogg Foundation that the quality of leadership has eroded in recent years, with resulting discord:

shaky race relations, growing economic disparities and inequities, excessive materialism, decaying inner cities, a deteriorating infrastructure, a weakening public school system an irresponsible mass media, declining civic engagement, and the increasing ineffectiveness of government, to name just a few [problems]. In a democracy, of course, citizen disengagement from politics and governmental ineffectiveness not only go hand in hand, but also cripple our capacity to deal constructively with most of the other problems. (p. 2)

Leadership applies not only to people who are elected, but to those who perform important civic work and make positive differences in society. In this way, any individual, faculty, staff, or student—regardless of formal position—who serves as an effective change agent is a potential leader.

Leadership is socially constructed, and so it is fluid and subjective:

Leadership is, therefore, a socially constructed phenomenon, and it is very real. To understand social construction, think of the fact of being one of two sexes—a woman or a man; however, the concepts of masculine or feminine are socially

constructed. Seeing, hearing, thinking, and feeling are all perceptual processes. People interpret their perceptions and draw meaning from them. (Komives, et al., 1998, pp. 16-17)

Berg (2003) suggested that in a “multicultural society, the valuing of individual contributions and the complexity of problems facing organizations are moving the understanding of leadership toward a new paradigm of collaboration,” and that “[t]he complexity of the times require more than one mind to clarify, analyze and respond to issues” (p. 5). Similarly, Komives et al. (1998) observed that “[l]eadership today shows that there is great wisdom and energy in the group and everyone in the group has a great deal to learn from each other” (p. 19). Accordingly, research by Berg (2003), Bibby (2001), and Howe and Strauss (2000) concluded that students currently entering higher education are more collaborative and have a preference for relational approaches to leadership.

Exploring and drawing out undergraduate education students’ leadership understandings provided one means of answering questions about leadership perspectives within the context of higher education. To meet its mandate of providing future leaders, higher education will benefit from the ensuing discussion of undergraduate education students’ leadership understandings that emerged from this study.

Purpose of the Study

My purpose in this study was to explore and conceptualize undergraduate education students’ leadership understandings. Recognizing the complexity of the times and within institutions of higher education, responding to student leadership issues should benefit from bringing more than one voice more fully into the leadership conversation.

Research Questions: A Point of Departure

In this research, I employed principles of grounded theory in the multiple methods (QUAL+QUAL) research design, which enabled an interactional method that involved ongoing comparison and asking questions of the data. For this reason, I avoided excessive reliance on specific research questions that would have had a delimiting function similar to entering the field with an *a priori* conceptual framework. In consideration of this view, one key research question was utilized as my point of departure:

1. From the perspective of undergraduate education students' past and current leadership experiences (including events, activities, and/or feedback) what are their leadership understandings?

My focus in this study was on participants' past and current experiences of leadership, but given the emergent, iterative, and recursive nature of this multiple method (QUAL+QUAL) research, other areas of investigation arose. Therefore, follow-up questions were formulated in the process of coding participant responses generated in the initial focus group and individual interviews, which were included in successive focus group sessions.

Importance of the Study

The mandate and responsibility for leadership training and preparation of students remains with institutions of higher education (Astin & Astin, 2000; Berg 2003; Komives et al., 1998; Woodard et al., 2000), but, from the perspective of undergraduate education students, what constitutes leadership? It follows that the quality and quantity of leaders emerging from institutions of higher education may be enhanced by means of a clearer sense of undergraduate education students' leadership understandings. In this

way, determining undergraduate education students' leadership understandings would provide an important first step towards enhanced leadership opportunities for all students within institutions of higher education.

Literature regarding undergraduate education students' leadership understandings is scarce, yet Canadian society needs leaders and leadership reflective of and complementary to the diversity apparent in today's Canadian society and institutions of higher education. The results of this study should be significant for the leadership perspectives held by undergraduate education students. Findings from this study will add to leadership theory and practice, student affairs literature, and a strengthened undergraduate education student voice within the area of leadership study.

I collected data from undergraduate education students who were completing their final term of study in the College of Education at the University of Saskatchewan. The students' leadership understandings that emerged ought to be considered useful for undergraduate education students, student affairs practitioners, and institutions of higher education when organizing, developing, or revising students' leadership experiences and opportunities.

The students in the study revealed leadership understandings that should contribute to student affairs literature, particularly in the area of students' leadership understandings and enhance work in this area by Astin and Astin (2000), Cherrey and Allen (2001), Komives et al., (1998), and others. In addition, Bibby (2001) and Howe and Strauss (2000) identified Millennials, ". . . born in or after 1982" (p. 4) as a new generation entering higher education, and even though they have been the subject of some study, they have not received much attention for their specific leadership understandings. For this reason, the findings from this research should facilitate a greater

awareness of leadership understandings among undergraduate education students, building on research by Berg (2003), who found that student leaders perceived leadership as an interactive process between members of a team.

According to research by Mueller (2005), undergraduate students completing credit ethics courses demonstrated an “understanding of leadership principles, primarily through modeling ethical behavior and actively taking on the roles of advocate or role model” (p. 85), but they did not necessarily understand the theoretical links. For this reason, I believe deeper inquiry into undergraduates’ conceptions of leadership is required. The findings here should also contribute to a greater affirmation of undergraduate students’ leadership understandings as an area worthy of investigation (Berg, 2003; Cherrey, Biggs Garbuio, & Isgar, 2001), especially in view of the gradual shift towards non-hierarchical leadership approaches at the college level (Cherrey & Allen, 2001; Komives et. al., 1998; Roberts, 1997; Woodard et al., 2000).

Definitions

Definitions can be restraining with respect to the emergent orientation of the principles of grounded theory used in this research. For example, relational leadership, a process of people coming together to accomplish change or make a difference of benefit to a common good (Komives et al., 1998), emphasized a collaborative, collegial, and empowering approach to leadership. More generally stated, leadership involves influencing others for ethical purposes (Leithwood & Duke, 1999, p. 46). Following an exploration of various leadership descriptions I found in the literature (see Table 1.1), I chose this more general definition as least delimiting to this emergent study. However, as data were obtained, students’ understandings of leadership emerged (as discussed in Chapter 5).

I explored leadership and student affairs literature in order to address conceptions of leadership and to determine whether researchers have been looking at the same phenomenon. For example, the relational model of leadership (Komives et al., 1998) is developed further in Chapter 2.

Table 1.1.

Initial Meanings of Leadership Terms Used

TERM	INITIAL MEANING
Leadership	Generally stated, leadership involves influencing others for ethical purposes (Leithwood & Duke, 1999; Thompson, 2004).
Relational leadership	A relational process of people coming together to accomplish change or make a difference for the common good (Komives et al.).
Transformational leadership	A focus on collective interests of a group and the individual leader's capacity to reach the souls of others or to change people's operative attitudes, values, and beliefs from self-centered to higher, altruistic attitudes and values (Bennis & Nanus, 1997; Bennis, 2003; Leithwood, 1992; Leithwood & Duke, 1999).
Transformative leadership	A more expansive leadership concept that includes qualities of critique and working for change; contains a social justice and pragmatic orientation to solutions; the organization is not more important than the people in it (Brown, 2004; Foster, 1989).
Collaboration	A partnership and a relationship; in the symbolic interactionist sense, collaborators are co-creators of meaning (Burns, 1978; Komives et al., 1998).
Voice	The constructed sense of reality represented in phenomenological and/or narrative text (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).
Understanding	An individual's interpretation of something, or a belief or opinion based on an interpretation of or inference from something (Encarta Dictionary).

As with any emerging literature, various definitions and terms related to leadership used in leadership studies may impact the comparison of research across various studies (see Table 1.1), and for this reason broad categories of terms related to leadership were employed.

The terms listed in Table 1.1 were used regularly in leadership and student affairs literature, but were not associated with the "leader-as-manager" (Antonakis,

Cianciola, & Sternberg, 2004) meaning of leadership. The initial meaning associated with the term leadership was used as a departure point, but that meaning was revised as the study proceeded and meaning of the term evolved. In view of the students' leadership understandings that emerged, the term was not reduced to a finite definition.

The students believed that when it comes to leadership the relationship is everything. In addition to the ubiquity of relationships, the students understood collaboration as working together, a perspective consistent with the initial meaning provided in Table 1.1, although their sense of collaboration also reflected a belief that leadership was emergent. Furthermore, the students understood collaboration to be a co-construction of meaning, in which they represented their lived experience in the text of their narrative. In this sense, the students' understanding of voice was not a major departure from the initial definition.

Perhaps the biggest departure from the meanings presented in Table 1.1 was with respect to transformational and transformative leadership. Interestingly, the students' leadership understandings captured the essence of critique, working for change, and betterment of conditions related to transformative leadership. However, in constructing their leadership understandings, they also spotlighted the importance of attending to individuals' self-esteem and self-actualization.

My Role as Researcher and Other Influences on the Study

Qualitative research generally accepts that the realm of meaning is emergent (Tedlock, 2000) and qualitative research methods, then, are used to obtain intricate details about phenomena such as feelings, thought processes and emotions, which are more difficult to extract or learn about through more conventional or traditional methods (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Research, according to Stake (1995), is designed to meet

objectives determined by the researcher in an effort to make the most of studying a selected phenomenon. For this reason, in order to understand what is going on in a situation, the researcher must enter into the process of defining meaning, and in this way the various assumptions of the researcher might influence the qualitative research design, data collection, and data analysis (Schwandt, 1997).

Preamble: My Leadership Story

I recall my first education methods class back in 1979—Introduction to Education, or, EDGEN 126, *The teacher as learning facilitator*. At the time, I had to look up the word “facilitator” in my thesaurus, and found it to mean someone who “assisted the progress of” others. I embraced the term, thinking that it was a novel and fitting metaphor to describe the role of a teacher. With the benefit of my twenty-one-year career in public education, hindsight has confirmed for me the “teacher-as-facilitator” metaphor. From my perspective and experience, the era between 1983 and 2003 were times of considerable change in society, schools, and classrooms. Provincial Department of Education curriculum initiatives began to emphasize student-centered teaching and assessment methods, and schools began to move away from industrial models of teaching, learning, and discipline. These changes were acknowledgement that classrooms reflected the social, political, economic, and spiritual realities associated with an increasingly diverse and complex society. I consider myself fortunate to have been extensively involved with curriculum development in the province of Saskatchewan, allowing me to situate myself in the process of educational change.

Between 1984 and 2000, I immersed myself in teaching methods that championed learner interests and needs, initially in the role as a pilot teacher with Saskatchewan Learning, then as a curriculum implementation leader, later still in the

capacity of provincial social studies curriculum assessment team leader, and finally as a member of the provincial middle years curriculum reference committee. Looking back, I find it rather profound that I did not recognize this work as leadership, mainly because I believed that leadership was the domain of school-based and central office administrators and consultants, and I equated leadership with position and seniority. For me, these experiences were formative as I learned the importance of collaboration among educational stakeholders and the value of teachers' commitment to learners as co-creators of knowledge, skill attainment, and conceptual understanding.

In 1988, I was appointed social studies/history and English language arts department head in a large middle years school in which I was teaching. At the time, I understood that "instructional leadership" included philosophical conversations about "progressive" and "traditional" approaches to teaching. Colleagues who opposed student-centered initiatives viewed these approaches as gimmicky, trendy, and fleeting. I remember looking forward to subject area "grade" meetings because they evolved to become more of a forum where teachers were encouraged to share their teaching successes and challenges, curricula, and instructional strategies, and thus maintain a growth orientation.

The process of change was slow and subtle, but by the early 1990s collegial consultation became the norm (although it had not completely replaced adversarial debate in our subject area meetings). I later learned that students were allies in advocating for a type of learning that included learning style preferences and opportunities to "stretch" into non-preferred learning styles. My principal at the time regularly acknowledged my contributions to curriculum and instruction and encouraged me to consider school-based administration, so as to continue to effect positive

educational change at the school and school division levels. At this time I began to consider the possibility that my engagement with curriculum and instruction was, in fact, leadership.

In 1998, I was appointed to my first principalship in a rural K-8 school, and was struck by the disconnect that I perceived between my teaching approaches and the interpersonal skills, expectations, and responsibilities associated with the principal's role. It came as quite a surprise to me that much of the principal's job focused on managerial tasks such as student attendance, discipline, and assorted administrative duties necessary for the smooth running of a school.

Looking back, I can see how a small staff working in close physical proximity fostered regular opportunities for collaboration among teachers, educational assistants, caretaker, school secretary, and me. It was exciting to get together to share our teaching successes and also provide support to each other when experiencing challenges with students and parents. I also found that sharing pedagogical strategies with local board members had advantages for our school, mainly because keeping these elected officials engaged and informed translated into greater support for our school within the larger community. At that time in my career, I regarded these types of initiatives as common sense rather than as leadership in the traditional sense of someone at the front of a group pulling everyone else along. I now recognize that I was usually most comfortable leading from the middle or the back of the group, harnessing interdependence, skills, and contributions of various stakeholders in much the same way that teachers, students, and community were interdependent.

Reading Lambert (1999) cemented my intuitive notions about the practice of leadership as building capacity and highlighted the role of leader as choreographer rather

than prima ballerina and this insight was significant for me. The choreographer metaphor became part of my identity and remained with me into my next principalship, and later into graduate studies. Within the leadership discussion, I situate myself in the “leadership as choreography” camps.

The choreographer metaphor was one factor that influenced my Masters of Education thesis, *Patterns of the psychological contract among rural Saskatchewan vice-principals* (Propp, 2004). The findings of that research affirmed a hunch I had that effective and energizing leadership was as much about followers as leaders and the interaction between the two groups. Throughout my career in education and graduate studies, I have been interested in why some people chose to be actively involved in leadership, while others preferred to be less actively engaged, contributing with ideas and criticism.

During my career in public education, I have had the pleasure of working with extended practicum teachers, beginning teachers, and veteran teachers. Not surprisingly, when asked, “What is Leadership?” responses typically focused on leadership as position, rather than as a collaborative process. In 2004, in my role as a doctoral student, I decided to explore undergraduate education students’ leadership experiences; in 2006, I arranged focus group and individual interviews as a forum where their leadership understandings could emerge.

Other Influences on the Study

I have assumed that undergraduate education students (a) possess the knowledge and skill to ascertain the factors that influence their understandings of leadership; (b) are honest; and (c) can understand the interview questions. I further assumed that participants would remain with the project until completion. In fact, however, two

participants chose to withdraw from the study, and their data have been removed from the study.

I sought to gain understanding of participants' leadership beliefs related to their past and current experiences, and in order to maximize the potential knowledge gained from undergraduate education students' leadership understandings, this study was delimited to data generated by principles of grounded theory, as advocated by Strauss and Corbin (1998). The specific features and procedures used in collecting the qualitative data are presented in Chapter Three.

Organization of the Dissertation

In Chapter One, I outlined the context and background to the study, purpose of the study, research question, significance of the study, initial meanings of terms, and my role as the researcher and other influences on the study. In recognition of the multiple methods (QUAL+QUAL) research design, in Chapter Two I present information regarding the Canadian, Saskatchewan, and institutional contexts in which undergraduate students are situated. In addition, I have reviewed literature that explores aspects of the leadership phenomenon, including those regarding leadership ideologies, the evolution of leadership thought, emerging leadership models, postmodernity and the 21st century context, Millennials (the current undergraduate generation), and leadership in higher education. In Chapter Three, I describe the research design used to explore undergraduate education students' leadership understandings, and I include material on the grounded theory methodology, the participants, the multiple method (QUAL+QUAL) research design, data collection and analysis, and ethical considerations. In Chapter Four, I present the results of the data analysis with respect to the research question posed in Chapter One, and I highlight the students' leadership

understandings that emerged from the data. In Chapter Five I discuss the students' leadership understandings, my reflections and further ponderings on their leadership understandings, and the possibilities for the methodology, leadership literature, related research, and policy.

CHAPTER TWO

CONTEXT AND LITERATURE FOR THE STUDY

When preparing a literature review, it can be challenging to determine its scope. In a qualitative study, the literature review may facilitate exploring characteristics of the central phenomenon to be addressed (Creswell, 2003). In keeping with Creswell's suggestion, I provide literature to enable exploration of leadership ideologies, emerging leadership models, the Millennial generation to which current undergraduate students belong, and, more generally, students and leadership in higher education. However, given the emergent nature of the study, the literature is preceded by my discussion of national, provincial, and institutional contexts in which undergraduates live and work. Leadership that occurs within institutions of higher education takes place within larger societal contexts, and so it is important to understand this context in order to appreciate the understandings of leadership held by undergraduate education students.

Even though there are leadership ideologies appropriate to the discussion of undergraduate education students' leadership understandings, given the emergent nature of the methodology, I consciously tried to avoid imposing ideologies onto the study in an effort to prevent conflict with the methodology (Creswell, 1998; Crotty, 2003; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Locke, 2001; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Drawing out undergraduate education students' leadership understandings was akin to forging a new trail, and my use of a multiple method design, which included principles of grounded theory, provided the boots to work in the trail and enable the students' understandings to emerge from the undergrowth.

Structuring the literature review in this qualitative study was not premised on an existing conceptual framework. Given the emergent and data-driven nature of this multiple-method (QUAL+QUAL) study, an examination of literature informed the study positively as the study progressed during data collection and analysis. As presented in Chapter Five, the literature provided a vehicle for revisiting the data analysis, conceptualization, and synthesis that emerged. However, as an emergent study I had to introduce some new literature in Chapter Five in order for the discussion to proceed.

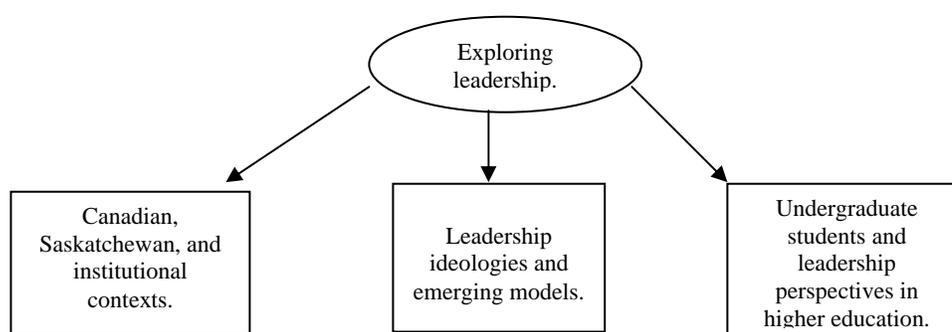


Figure 2.1 Literature review components.

With Figure 2.1 in mind, I sought to do three things in this literature review: (a) present information regarding the Canadian, Saskatchewan, and institutional contexts in which undergraduates live and work; (b) examine *new* leadership ideologies, especially emerging leadership models; and (c) discuss literature related to the Millennial generation to which most contemporary undergraduate students belong.

Leadership and Context of Undergraduate Students

Leadership always takes place within a particular organizational context where there are specific goals and existing rules and regulations. Context is the space in which individuals continually develop their capacity, encourage each other to “learn how to

learn,” and develop trusting, supportive relationships. This is particularly true in complex contexts where

everything is in motion ... [m]ergers and acquisitions ... changing demographics ... changing industry structures ... the threat of terrorism ... certain social problems This, then, is the context. (Bennis, 2003, pp. 6-14)

Leadership cannot occur in a vacuum. Rather, it occurs within a context permeated by social, political, historical, emotional, and economic forces.

Foster and Young (1999) maintained that understanding leadership made more sense when placed within the broader framework of public education and social change. Foster and Young identified ambiguity, authority, and change as contextual issues that they believed were of central importance to leadership:

1. **Ambiguity:** Leadership today has to be exercised within an environment in which there is no clear consensus as to the role and purposes of public education, the relationship between schooling and the workforce, and an ambiguous “technology of schooling.” In this ambiguous context, leadership has on occasion been characterized as “the management of uncertainty.”
2. **Authority:** The 1980s and 1990s have seen a breakdown of *a priori* educational consensus, where educational decision-making was left largely to the profession, issues of pedagogy were left largely to the classroom teacher, and matters of management and direction were assigned to senior administration and the school principal. In place of this decision-making structure, consensus leadership became more contested and more political. Traditional patterns of authority are now challenged from outside the profession by politicians, business people, and parents, and within it by a more expert and politicized teaching force.
3. **Change:** The rapidity of current societal change suggests that students are being prepared for a future that cannot presently be seen. Lifelong learning becomes the mantra of teaching, and for educators this carries with it the image of schools as “learning organizations” and educational leadership as capacity building within schools. Simply managing the status quo is no longer a viable option. (¶ 7-8)

Similar to the context of public education, the issues of ambiguity, authority, and change, and the impact on undergraduate leadership within higher education organizations encouraged some rethinking of leadership at both the conceptual and practical levels.

Antonakis et al. (2004) proposed that “contexts encourage those studying leadership to reconsider temporality, causal relations, units of analysis, and dependent variables consistent with the social construction of human agency within the given context” (p. 43). Hoffer suggested: “In a time of drastic change it is the learners who inherit the future. The learned find themselves equipped to live in a world that no longer exists” (cited in Bennis, 2003, p. 183). Perpetual learning is a key aspect of leadership in the twenty-first century.

As Bergquist (2001) observed, in this type of fragmented, uncertain, diverse world, “we may never return to a world of greater simplicity. Regional or national coherence and consistency may be nostalgic remnants of the past” (p. 487). Maccoby (2001) advised that when selecting leaders, attention be given to the whole person within a particular context and consideration be paid to the kind of individual or team of leaders needed to fill roles in different parts of an organization (§ 16). From this perspective, the impact of context could be of considerable importance to the relationship between undergraduate students and their leadership understandings, especially in view of the ephemeral and uncertain world in which undergraduate students find themselves.

Undergraduate Students: The National Context

Canada has entered the twenty-first century with a population better educated than ever before (*Canadian Social Trends*, Winter, 2003, p. 21). Since the late 1990s, Canadian universities have continued to experience record growth in enrolments of female and male students, with women representing a majority of college graduates (*The Daily*, StatCan, July 30, 2004). The twenty-first century has been driven by knowledge, skills, and creativity, and Canadians have responded by continuing their education not only to obtain good jobs, but to access higher levels of education and skills necessary for

smooth adjustments to a continuously changing environment (*Canadian Social Trends*, Winter 2003, p. 24). This reality of twenty-first century Canadian society has been a force for change and has shaped the current Canadian university context in which undergraduate students presently live and study.

As reported by *Maclean's* (2006) in their annual ranking of Canadian universities, the quality and dedication of students had a tremendous impact on the learning environment (p. 26), so it followed that the learning environment or context was in large part a product of students' experiences. In describing the undergraduate context in Canada, *Maclean's* 2006 findings are presented regarding student graduation, success of a student body winning national awards, class characteristics, and the caliber of faculty.

Maclean's measured the percentage of full-time undergraduates who completed their degree within one year of the expected completion date, and reported that 74.6% to 93.8% of students completed their degrees within a reasonable time at forty-three of the forty-seven Canadian institutions surveyed (p. 28). According to these data, undergraduates were determined to finish their programs of study as opposed to dropping out.

Comprehensive universities, denoted by "a significant amount of research and a wide range of programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels," (p. 16) reported between 1.6 and 7 students per thousand received national academic awards for the five year period between 2000 and 2004 (p. 28). The disparity in the number of students receiving national awards was more a reflection of the overall nature of the institution. Specifically, research oriented universities such as McGill have a greater number of students receiving awards (9.9 per thousand students) than St. Thomas (0.1 per thousand

students), a primarily undergraduate institution with few graduate programs. As identified by these data, a university's research objectives were related to the overall character of the institution and the context in which students lived and studied.

Maclean's measured the percentage of students in classes according to the following class-size ranges: 1 to 25; 26 to 50; 51 to 100; 101 to 250; 251 to 500 and 501 and higher (p. 17) in order to represent this attribute of the undergraduate context. For comprehensive universities, most undergraduate students in Canadian universities were in classrooms within the 26 to 50 and 51 to 100 ranges (p. 32). Interestingly, results for class-size range for third and fourth year levels indicated that most students were within the 1 to 25 and 26 to 50 ranges, suggesting that within the undergraduate context, class-sizes become smaller as students proceeded through their programs of study.

Another feature of the undergraduate context in Canada was the percentage of first-year classes taught by tenured or tenure-track professors. Tenured and tenure-track faculty teaching undergraduate students was considered an important indicator of the commitment level to undergraduate students. In the 2006 rankings, *Maclean's* reported that 33.8% to 78.8% of first-year classes at comprehensive universities were taught by tenured or tenure track professors (p. 17). Percentages of third and fourth year classes taught by tenured or tenure track professors were not provided in the 2006 rankings.,

Canadian Campuses and New Trends for Undergraduate Students

According to an article in the 15 February 2006 edition of the *Globe and Mail*, hundreds of undergraduate students from across Canada gave up a beach vacation or week of relaxation and instead chose to participate in a "new Canada-wide university movement called Community Service Learning" (¶ 3). This initiative, begun in the United States, combined "voluntary service with classroom learning," where students

“volunteer in local or overseas projects and then return to a classroom setting to engage in group discussions, listen to speakers or write analytical papers” (¶ 4).

The purpose of community service learning is to make connections between their learning and the “so called real world” (¶ 10). Most importantly, and perhaps most profoundly for undergraduate students in Canada, is that interest is growing. In 2002, “only 20 UBC students volunteered compared to 300 students in 2006” (¶ 10). This type of community service learning represents a movement towards enriching, qualitative options within the Canadian undergraduate context.

Additionally, Eisenkraft (2006) presented results of the 2004 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), which measured the level of academic challenge, the amount of active and collaborative learning, the quality of student-faculty interaction, the availability of enriching educational experiences, and the degree to which there was a supportive campus environment (p. 29). Students from a number of Canadian universities acknowledged that the level of academic challenge was a highlight, but they also identified that a “greater emphasis needed to be placed on ways to enrich students’ experiences through engagement and interaction with faculty” (p. 30), and enhance these aspects of the Canadian undergraduate context.

Undergraduate Students: The Saskatchewan Context

The following description, paraphrased from Wikipedia, provides a context for the population from which this study drew its sample.

Saskatchewan is the middle province of Canada's three prairie provinces. It has an area of 651,900 km² (251,700 mi²), and a population of 985,386 as of 1 July 2006. Most of the population lives in the southern half of the province. Saskatoon is the largest city in the province, with a population, as of 1, July 2005, of 235,800. Regina, the

provincial capital, is the second largest city and had, as of 1 July 2005, a population of 199, 000. Saskatchewan's other major cities, in order of size, include Prince Albert, Moose Jaw, Yorkton, Swift Current, and North Battleford. In recent years, Saskatchewan has experienced an overall depopulation of rural communities, and a general out-migration.

Saskatchewan's economy is traditionally associated with agriculture. However, a more recent increased diversification in agriculture, forestry, and fishing together now represents 6.8% of the province's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Wheat is the most familiar crop, and perhaps the one most often associated with the province, although other grains like canola, flax, rye, oats, peas, lentils, canary seed, and barley are also produced. Nationally, Saskatchewan's beef cattle production is exceeded only by Alberta. Mining is another major industry in the province, representing thirteen percent of the provincial GDP. Saskatchewan is a world leader in potash and uranium exports, and is responsible for supplying much of the western world's uranium needs. The uranium industry is closely regulated by the provincial government, which allows great latitude in setting world uranium prices.

Structurally, Saskatchewan has the same form of government as the other Canadian provinces, with a lieutenant-governor who represents the Crown, a premier, and a unicameral legislature. In Saskatchewan, The New Democratic Party (NDP) has dominated provincial politics, and it has governed continuously since 1944 (when it was known as the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation) except for two interruptions, 1964-1971 and 1982-1991. The current premier of Saskatchewan is New Democrat Lorne Calvert, whose government was re-elected in the 2003 election with a slim majority winning thirty seats in the fifty-eight-seat legislative assembly, leaving twenty-

eight seats to the Saskatchewan Party (SP), which became the official opposition. The Saskatchewan Party, a new party that formed in 1997, grew out of the remains of the Progressive Conservatives and former Liberals, and even a few New Democrats frustrated by the NDP's inability to "grow" the economy and population. Most NDP members of the legislative assembly (MLAs) represent cities and towns, while most SP MLAs represent rural ridings.

First Nations and Metis people are politically involved through band councils and other organizations, but their representation in the legislature is very small. An ongoing debate in Canadian academic circles is whether the extension of the franchise to First Nations inadvertently "regularized" their status from members of nations that had signed nation-to-nation treaties with the Crown into merely another Canadian ethnic group. Demographically, those with European ancestry are most numerous in Saskatchewan, followed by Aboriginal and First Nations people.

Despite the NDP's three long stretches as the provincial government, the province leans more to the right in federal politics. Of the fourteen federal constituencies in Saskatchewan, twelve are currently occupied by Conservative members of parliament. The federal NDP has been shut out of the province for two consecutive elections. The only Liberal MPs are the former finance minister, Ralph Goodale, and Gary Merasty, former grand chief of the Prince Albert Grand Council.

Recently, Saskatchewan has amalgamated health districts and school divisions. As of January 2006, eighty-one school divisions were amalgamated into twenty-eight new, larger divisions as part of the provincial government's Education Equity Initiative (EEI). A three-phased approach to restructuring Saskatchewan's education system, the EEI, focuses on improving equity, affordability, and sustainability of the system. This

includes: (a) the transition to fewer, larger school divisions (amalgamation); (b) re-establishment of the Foundation Operating Grant External Reference Committee to review the operating grant system for school divisions and make funding simple, transparent, and equitable; and (c) property tax relief from the commitment of thirty percent of any new, ongoing equalization funding received from federal natural resource revenues to reduce education property tax.

As reported in Saskatchewan Learning's *2005-2006 Annual Report*, sweeping social, economic, and demographic changes have profoundly affected Saskatchewan citizens, particularly children (p.21). The forces that are impacting children, youth, and their respective educational successes included: (a) the transition to a knowledge-based, global society; (b) a growing number of children with special needs; (c) the number of young offenders and children living in poverty; and (d) rural depopulation and pupil mobility (p. 21). These social, economic, and demographic changes have occurred continuously and were acknowledged as major features of the provincial context in which undergraduate education students currently find themselves.

Undergraduate Students and the Institutional Context

The following subsection provides a general description of the university context in Saskatchewan, and a specific description of the University of Saskatchewan and College of Education context. This is followed by descriptive information about both the University of Regina's and the University of Saskatchewan's teacher education programs, the number of education graduates, and, finally, the diversity of the sample involved in this study.

As described by its website, the University of Regina is an urban 930 hectare campus, founded in 1974, and provincially supported. The University of Regina grants

certificates, diplomas, and bachelors, masters, and doctoral degrees. With respect to entrance requirements, ninety-one percent of applicants were admitted, suggesting a minimal difficulty entrance level.

The University of Regina is a co-educational institution and currently has 11,273 undergraduate students, of whom sixty-four percent are full-time. Of full-time undergraduate students, sixty-one percent are women and thirty-nine percent are men. Undergraduate, graduate, and certificate programs are offered in the Faculty of Education at the University of Regina, but in the case of this study I have delimited discussion to undergraduate programs.

According to the Faculty of Education website, most new students are enrolled in the four-year bachelor of education (B.Ed) degree program, although students with approved degrees and required prerequisite courses are enrolled in the two-year B.Ed after-degree (BEAD) program, and specialize in either elementary or secondary education.

The Elementary Education program is broadly based, and prepares school professionals for teaching core curriculum subjects, including arts education, health, language arts, mathematics, physical education, science and social studies. The program consists of three components: academic courses taken outside the Faculty of Education; professional courses taken within the Faculty; and in-school experiences. Students may register in Early Childhood Education (PreK-3), Early Elementary (K-5) or the Middle Years (5-9) stream within the Elementary Education program. This program prepares future teachers to create environments where children are active and engaged in learning. Other program themes include integration of subject areas and resource-based and group learning approaches.

The Secondary Education program is responsible for the preparation of teachers who will generally work in high schools. This program requires that students declare (and work towards) a teaching major area, as well as a teaching minor, as part of the B.Ed. degree. A hallmark of the University of Regina's program development has been the faculty's insistence on continual experimentation and innovation within the program and the ongoing inclusion of new elements.

Education students may also specialize in Aboriginal and First Nations education and enroll in the Indian Education program, Department of Indian Education (INDED) through the First Nations University of Canada, the Saskatchewan Urban Native Teachers Education Program (SUNTEP), Northern Teacher Education Program (NORTEP), or the Yukon Native Teacher Education Program.

The Faculty of Education at the University of Regina is home to approximately eleven hundred full-time and one hundred and thirty part-time students. The undergraduate programs are designed to foster rich professional and personal development, develop collaborative and collegial professionals, and educate teachers as inquirers and curriculum builders. This is conducted through the practice of student-centered learning, support and close supervision in the field, extensive and practical experiences in schools, cross-cultural and multicultural awareness, and equity in the areas of age, gender, culture, race, and physical and mental abilities. For undergraduate education students, the Faculty of Education at the University of Regina is non-departmentalized and is characterized as a collaborative, relational, and interactive context.

According to information accessed from the University of Saskatchewan's website, the College of Education was formed in 1927. Initially, the College offered a

secondary education degree, later broadening its after-degree admissions to include elementary pedagogy. Presently, there are four departments within the College: a) Educational Administration; b) Curriculum Studies; c) Educational Foundations; and d) Educational Psychology and Special Education.

The present bachelor of education (B.Ed.) consists of 126 credit units —60 credit units of external coursework and 66 credit units of education coursework. As well, students may complete a five-year combined bachelor of education/bachelor of music in music education or Bachelor of Science in kinesiology/bachelor of education. The four departments within the College offer programs leading to the master of education degree, as well as programs leading to a Ph.D. degree.

The College currently has approximately four hundred graduate students and twelve hundred undergraduate students. Undergraduate students have a choice of enrolling in one of three program options: (a) Elementary; (b) Middle Years; or (c) Secondary Years. Within each option, students choose two teaching areas related to subjects commonly taught in Saskatchewan schools. An internship in the schools is an integral part of the Education program. Students are placed in classrooms throughout Saskatchewan schools for a sixteen-week period. The internship program involves working with a variety of teachers at different grade levels and subject areas. Interns are required to plan and teach formal lessons and unit plans, learn a variety of teaching methods and skills, supervise, and observe and participate in professional development, extra-curricular activities, parent-teacher interviews, and the evaluation of students. Students also have the opportunity to complete their internship overseas in countries such as Italy, England, or China.

The College of Education has a variety of services available to the public, including: the Aboriginal Educational Research Centre (ARC), a new research centre that was founded in 2005; the Saskatchewan Education Leadership Unit (SELU), a non-profit agency that serves as coordinator, developer, and administrator of leadership development activities; the Saskatchewan Principal's Short Course, a program that has been offered by the College for more than forty years and provides intensive in-service for current and future school administrators; School Psychology and Counseling for graduate students in the Department of Educational Psychology & Special Education, which offers psycho-educational assessments and career and personal counseling in partnership with agencies or through direct client referral; the National Congress on Rural Education, an annual conference that focuses on issues in rural education that attracts over six hundred presenters and participants from across Canada; and the Breaking the Silence Conference, an annual event devoted to examination of gay and lesbian issues in education.

The College of Education offers four programs to meet the specific needs of Aboriginal students. These are: the Indian Teacher Education Program (ITEP), for students of First Nations ancestry; the Northern Teacher Education Program (NORTEP), for students in Northern Saskatchewan; the Northwest Territories Teacher Education Program, a three-year program leading to a Northwest Territories Department of Education Teaching Certificate; and the Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP), a direct entry teacher education program for Metis and non-status Aboriginal students in both Saskatoon and Prince Albert.

Identified on their website, undergraduate students in the Faculty of Education at the University of Regina enjoy a relational and collaborative environment. In contrast,

the students in my study described in interviews that the College of Education at the University of Saskatchewan was hierarchical and lacking collaborative relationships.

This study of undergraduate education students' understandings of leadership was situated at the University of Saskatchewan and the participants' background and life experiences were related to Canadian and Saskatchewan contexts. Much of the literature and discussion about undergraduate students was drawn from the United States, and while there are political, economic, and social differences between Canadian and American societies and the corresponding individual backgrounds and life experiences of undergraduate students, this literature was relevant, even though American and Canadian contexts were not isomorphic.

Exploring Leadership Literature

Leadership has been described as an elusive concept, characterized by different ideologies and theorists articulating diverse views of leadership. According to Komives, Lucas, and McMahon (1998), leadership is socially constructed. Metaphorically, then, leadership is like "a trail we forge as we walk it," and no two "trails" are created in quite the same way. Leithwood, Janzi, and Steinbach (1999) acknowledged that leadership as a concept and set of practices has been the subject of an enormous quantity of popular and academic literature. However, most of the literature that they covered discussed particular "approaches to," or "models" (p. 5) of leadership, with little attention given to the leadership understandings.

Burns (1978) noted that leadership was one of the most misunderstood concepts in our language, and that the misunderstanding was a conceptual one. Leadership "like many other labels ... covers a great deal and seems to mean whatever the user intends" (Foster, 1989, p. 39) because "[t]here remains ... a sense that leadership *is* a real

phenomenon, one that makes a difference” (p. 39). Antonakis, Cianciola, and Sternberg (2004) stated that leadership is “easy to identify *in situ*; however it is difficult to define precisely,” and “[g]iven the complex nature of leadership, a specific and widely accepted definition of leadership does not exist and might never be found” (p. 5).

Most scholars agreed that leadership involved an influencing process (including its resultant outcomes) that occurred between leaders and followers. This influencing process was explained by the leader’s dispositional characteristics and behaviors, follower perceptions and attributions of the leader, and the context in which the influencing process occurred (Antonakis et al., 2004). Antonakis et al. emphasized that “necessary conditions” for effective and authentic leadership include, but were not limited to,

the creation of empowered followers in pursuit of a moral purpose, leading to moral outcomes that are guided by moral means. A definition of leadership also requires we differentiate it conceptually from power and management [Thus] the ability to lead requires that one has power [A]s seen from the “new” perspective (i.e., transformational and charismatic leadership theories)— [leadership] is purpose driven, resulting in change based on values, ideals, vision, symbols, and emotional exchanges. (p. 5)

Drucker (1998) claimed that basic assumptions about reality were the paradigms of social science, and that these assumptions determined which issues were examined and which were pushed aside—“get the assumptions wrong and everything that follows from them is wrong” (p. 152). Drucker’s point was that paradigms have shifted and leadership assumptions that were valid yesterday might become invalid and, indeed, wholly misleading in no time at all. In particular, “one-size-fits-all” organizational structures or a leader’s failure to abandon invalid assumptions might cause problems in management and leadership. In view of these problems, Drucker proposed a new

paradigm, which he described as “the managed institution [that] might exist only to produce results in society” (p. 175).

In this study, I conceptualized “paradigm” as a set of beliefs, values, and patterns of behavior that functions as a “filter” on how humans perceive reality. I further described “ideology” as a “school,” or systematic social or political theory. Rohmann (1999) noted that one’s worldview was comprised of and delimited by paradigms and ideologies. In consideration of Rohmann’s view, to truly have leadership that makes a difference voices need to be heard and perhaps the focus of leadership studies should be on bringing ideologies *out of* the field rather than going *into* the field with preconceived and pre-established leadership paradigms and ideologies.

One aspect of leadership on which there seems to be some agreement is that leadership involves individuals interacting in an environment while in pursuit of organizational goals. In contrast, there is a general lack of agreement on the matter of leadership paradigms and leadership ideologies, which further confounds an accepted definition of leadership.

The following section presents an exploration and discussion of the literature related to (a) extant perspectives on leadership, (b) emerging leadership models, (c) postmodernity and the twenty-first century context; and (d) the Millennial generation to which current undergraduate students belong.

Extant Leadership Perspectives and the Evolution of Leadership Thought

Historically, researchers have drawn little distinction between leadership and management. In contrast, today there is widespread agreement that leadership and management are not the same thing, although these terms were typically used interchangeably (Sashkin & Sashkin, 2003).

Most of the research conducted between 1900 and the 1980s did not distinguish between “leaders” and “managers,” and tended to focus on supervisors and lower-level managers. Therefore, most leadership studies were of first-line supervisors and lower-level managers, not middle managers or executives (Sashkin & Sashkin, 2003).

Antonakis et al. (2004) divided leadership research into the following eight major schools:

1. Trait school of leadership;
2. Behavioral school of leadership;
3. Contingency school of leadership;
4. Relational school of leadership;
5. Skeptics school of leadership;
6. Information-processing school of leadership;
7. The new leadership (neocharismatic/transformational/visionary) school; and
8. Emerging issues school of leadership.

In recognition of the shifting *leader-focus* to *leadership-focus* and contributions made to the evolution of leadership, this study’s discussion of the extant views of leadership is limited to trait, behavioral, contingency, relational, and the new leadership schools.

My purpose in exploring the evolution of leadership thought was to highlight the ever-changing nature of leadership as a preamble to my discussion of emerging leadership models. As such, the following discussion is only intended as descriptive of leadership approaches and not to be taken as prescriptive recommendations.

At the turn of the twentieth century, researchers focused on identifying individual differences (traits) associated with leadership to differentiate leader characteristics from non-leader characteristics. Trait, military, and great man theories all shared a belief that leadership was a birthright and not a skill that could be developed. Komives et al. (1998) indicated that trait theory did not stand up to critical, academic scrutiny, especially with respect to the omission of *situational* leadership behaviors and

followers' motivations as mediating factors. Gradually, leadership study focused on what “a leader *does* [as] more interesting than what a leader *is*” (Komives et al., 1998, p. 38; emphasis in original).

By the 1950s, the trait movement gave way to behavioral styles of leadership, which focused on two key assumptions: (a) there was one best way to lead; and (b) effective leaders were equally concerned with people and production (Antonakis et al., 2004). Shafritz and Ott (2001) identified behavioral and style theories as the most optimistic and humanistic school of organizational theory mainly because the “essence of [the] relationship between organization and people [was] redefined from dependence to codependence” (p. 145). According to behavior and style theory, organizations were conceptualized as people, groups, and relationships. This type of thinking facilitated huge contributions to human relations theory between the 1950s and the 1980s (Komives et al., 1998), and many of these human relations ideas have been incorporated into other perspectives of leadership. For this reason, these theories are of importance to the discussion herein.

Hanson (2003) stated that a contingency theory of leadership captured the field in the 1970s and shifted the focus to a leader's role in clarifying actors who would act to meet followers' goals, or the conditions under which leadership could become unnecessary because of follower capabilities, organizational systems, and procedures. Work in this area continues, although interest has tapered off, possibly because aspects of contingency leadership led to contextual approaches of leadership (Antonakis, et al., 2004). For instance, the relational school of leadership evolved into what is now termed leader-member exchange (LMX) and is based on the idea that leadership is a two-person relationship (Sashkin & Sashkin, 2003). A LMX relationship was deemed successful

when followers were few, although complexities arose when working with teams. In response to this paradigm shift, a new charismatic leadership school emerged.

Work by James McGregor Burns in the 1970s inspired yet another new leadership paradigm. Burns (1978) claimed a different form of leadership was required to account for follower outcomes, sense of purpose, and idealized mission. Burns referred to this type of leadership ideology as transformational leadership, in which inspiring leader behaviors induced followers to transcend their own interests for that of the greater good. Leadership became moral when the level of human conduct and ethical aspirations of both leader and led were raised and had a transforming effect on both (Sashkin & Sashkin, 2003).

This brief exploration of the extant views of leadership approaches demonstrates that the concept of leadership has evolved in terms of who is characterized as a leader and how leadership is measured. The subject matter continues to draw interest from scholars, who seek to develop new and emerging leadership models.

Emerging Leadership Models

Theories, models, and descriptions of leadership have been dynamic in nature for the past twenty-five hundred years (Antonakis et al., 2004; Faris & Outcalt, 2001; Komives et al., 1998; Sashkin & Sashkin, 2003), and this dynamic aspect of leadership has contributed to its history and evolutionary traditions. Beginning with scientific management in educational administration in the 1880s, considerable contributions to the educational administration field and leadership theories were derived from this leadership perspective. In this discussion of evolving and emerging leadership, I have focused on the development of perspectives since 1975, which I regard as a departure point for the current era of educational administration.

Leadership as a research area has evolved over the last thirty years, and can be represented by the following movements: (a) the introduction of subjectivist inquiry (phenomenology) into the study of administrative structures (Greenfield, 1974); (b) critical theory and active and continued reconceptualization of life practices, where common ideals of freedom and democracy stand important (Alvesson & Deetz, 1996; Foster, 1989); (c) postmodernism, an alternative to modernist approaches to leadership and education, emphasizes the potential to transform leadership by building personal, interpersonal, and organizational capacity (Sackney & Mitchell, 2002); (d) social justice and ecological perspectives advocate “breaking the habitus” (Shields, 2004, pp. 114-119), which promotes deeper understanding, more meaningful interconnected relationships and minimized deficit thinking, and leads to the desired result of enhanced social justice for everyone involved with schools (Furman & Gruenewald, 2004; Shields, 2004); (e) models of mind, cognitive theories, neural networks, and “pluralist” approaches promote education and holism, and perhaps provide alternatives to hegemonic modernism in educational administration and leadership studies (English, 2001; Robinson, 2002).

The new science, and chaos and complexity theories have taken organizational and leadership studies into an area of self-organizing systems, order-in-disorder metaphors, and an exploration of leadership possibilities gained from adapting to continuously changing circumstances (Biggiero, 2001; Marion, 1999; Wheatley, 1992). Finally, the quantum world and models of leadership that have their origins in quantum physics and holism emphasize process, synergy, and affirmation (Wheatley, 1992, 1999; Komives et al., 1998). From Taylorism and bureaucratic approaches to human relations

theories, relational leadership, and finally contextual leadership, leadership ideologies continue to emerge and develop.

As leaders in schools and higher education organizations embraced contextual leadership and the reciprocal relationships between leaders and followers, Rost (1991) recommended that post-industrial leadership focus on change and collaboration.

Komives et al. (1998) endorsed this point and emphasized the importance of relationships in leadership. In their discussion of the current nature of leadership, Antonakis et al. (2004) stated that

researchers are now in a position to integrate overlapping and complementary conceptualizations of leadership ... [because] there are many ways in which hybrid approaches could be developed ... [and it is] only through consolidation of findings that leadership will go to the next level—where we may finally be able to construct and test a general theory of leadership (pp. 10-11).

Bennis (2003) argued that opportunities and challenges for leaders were boundless, but cautioned leaders about becoming context driven and going nowhere. Hence,

[t]he first step in becoming a leader [or perhaps in leadership generally] is to recognize the context for what it is—a breaker, not a maker; a trap, not a launching pad; an end, not a beginning—and declare [the leader's] independence. (p. 19)

Paraphrasing Bennis, moving leadership ahead might be difficult within complex contexts when numerous diverse and competing interests appear to overwhelm the leadership process. In response, non-hierarchical leadership models may facilitate inclusion of complex and diverse interests and allow leadership to move forward.

In summary, the study and understanding of leadership evolved from relational, reciprocal, and contextual dimensions of leadership to prospective hybrid approaches that have the potential of moving leadership towards a more holistic orientation than has historically been the case.

Non-hierarchical leadership and the social change model. Putnam (1995)

found that volunteerism in the U.S. was on the decline and that fewer people were willing to take the time to make a difference in communities. In response to the decline of community volunteerism and leadership within higher education, in 1996 the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) created an ensemble research group to study the issue of leadership development programs in higher education. HERI's ensemble had the mandate to: (a) understand the values and worldview required of individuals who might become social change agents who work to resolve problems that have a lasting impact on society; and (b) map out the processes by which individuals could positively contribute to such efforts. Ultimately, HERI's efforts evolved into the Social Change Model (SCM) of leadership (Bonous-Hammarth, 2001), which provided a framework for understanding different levels of interaction among individuals, and cultivated leadership understandings by clarifying values on three levels: (a) individual level; (b) group level; and (c) society level.

According to Bonous-Hammarth's (2001) investigation of SCM, this model includes seven basic values that reflect individual, group, and community aspects of leadership in relation to the concept of *change*, SCM's central hub. Excerpted from Bonous-Hammarth (2001), the seven basic values of this model are:

1. *Consciousness of self* means to be self-aware. Knowing oneself is a fundamental skill required to understand others and to understand how one can best contribute to a group effort.
2. *Congruence* refers to thinking, feeling and behaving with consistency, authenticity and honesty towards others. Congruent persons are those whose actions are consistent with their most deeply held beliefs and convictions.
3. *Commitment* is the energy that motivates the individual to serve and energizes the collective effort. Commitment implies passion, intensity and duration. Without commitment knowledge of self is of little value; conversely, without

knowledge of self, commitment is easily misdirected. Congruence is most readily achieved when the person acts with commitment and knowledge of self.

4. *Collaboration* is a value characterized the relational aspects in the model, viewing leadership as a group process. Collaboration capitalizes on human interactions, relationships, diverse talents, perspectives and the power of diversity to generate creative solutions to issues affecting the community or society at large.
5. *Common purpose* involves framing the work within shared set of aims and values to facilitate the group's ability to engage in collective analysis of the issues to be undertaken.
6. *Controversy with civility* is a value that recognizes two fundamental realities of group interactions: (a) differences in viewpoint are inevitable and valuable and (b) that such differences must be explored openly and with civility. Honest and open dialogue with the group's commitment to understand the sources of the disagreement and to work cooperatively toward common solutions.
7. *Citizenship* implies an active engagement of the individual and the leadership groups in an effort to serve the community, and a genuine concern with and caring for others (pp. 36-37).

As presented in Figure 2.2, the seven core values in SCM continually interact with one another to influence individual and group values.

Leadership within the SCM is dynamic and focused on people and their interrelationships to both physical and social realities. This leadership model emphasized that self-aware, consistent, and honest people are capable of collaborating with others and resolving controversy with civility. In this way, leaders become “committed participants in the shaping of the group's common purpose by leading as responsible citizens” (p. 38). I found it interesting that as leadership understandings emerged in conversations with the participants in the present study, a similarity was noted between the core values contained in SCM and the students' perspective on leadership talk and action (to be discussed in further detail in Chapter Five).

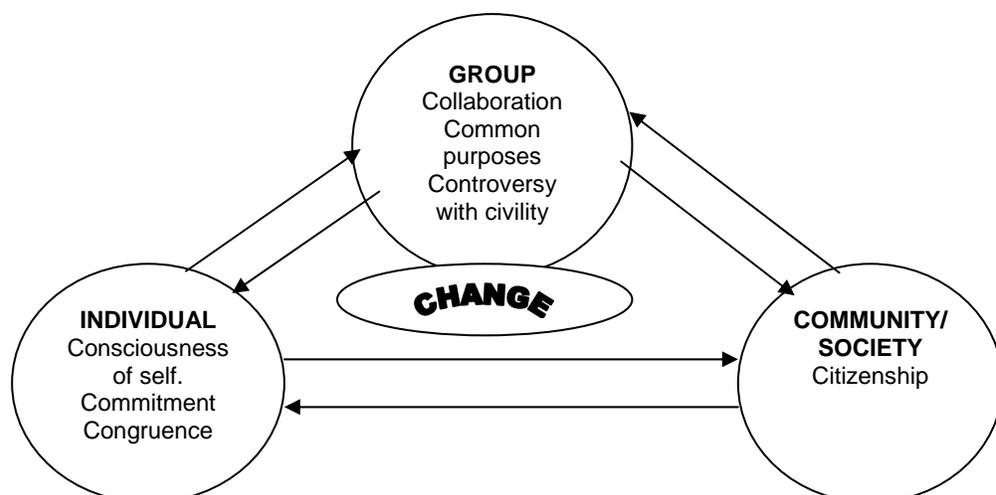


Figure 2.2. The Social Change Model Conceptual map.

From *Developing social change agents: Leadership development for the 1990s and beyond*, by M. Bonous-Hammarth, 2001, In C. Outcalt, S. Faris, and K. McMahon (Eds.), *Developing non-hierarchical leadership on campus* (pp. 34-39).

The SCM's philosophy emphasizes trust, collaboration, and inclusion among individuals engaged in this model. This philosophy stands in contrast to leadership models of the industrial paradigm, which resonated with competitive self-interest and individualism.

Similarly, leadership in higher education associated with the industrial paradigm was characterized by self-interest, sameness, status quo, hierarchy, control, and exclusion of diversity (Komives et al., 1998). In contrast, SCM embraced a communitarian philosophy. Kymlicka (2002) identified tolerance, diversity, inclusion, affect, accommodation of differences, shared values, attachment, affirmation, reciprocity, and sociability as communitarian principles (pp. 208-222) that were also reflected in SCM. As emphasized by communitarians, the ME needs the WE to BE, a key theme that resonated in SCM. Philosophically, consistency was observed between

communitarianism, the SCM leadership model, and relational leadership in higher education.

Communitarianism's inclusion of diversity, feminism, and multiculturalism merge easily with pluralism (Kymlicka, 2002) and SCM, with its underpinnings in communitarian-supported leadership for a common good and our common life (Guttman & Thompson, as cited in Smith, 2004, Political communitarianism section, ¶ 1). Based upon postmodern assumptions, conflict is inevitable. The key is whether individuals can learn to respect and engage with each others ideas, beliefs, and behavior (Smith, 2004) as they interact.

Astin's 1993 longitudinal study of a university undergraduate peer group found that the amount of interaction that students had with each other was one of the most potent sources of influence on leadership. This study also revealed that effective leadership included key principles of collective action, shared power, and a passionate commitment to social justice ideals (Faris & Outcalt, 2001). Astin's findings reinforced ideas about the importance of collaboration and "development of the self" (pp. 14-15) as essential first steps towards enhanced group interactions.

In the context of higher education, SCM "serves as a vehicle for leadership development by emphasizing clarification of values, trust, capacity to listen and serve others, collaborative work and change for the common good" (Bonous-Hammarth, 2001, p. 35), or, perhaps more appropriately, change for our *common life*. The SCM conceptual framework and philosophical orientation emphasized a transformational approach to leadership in higher education. In this way, the transformative elements of non-hierarchical leadership, such as those contained in SCM, are important scaffolds for

exploring emergent leadership understandings constructed and held by undergraduate education students.

Transformative leadership. Leadership is a process that is ultimately concerned with fostering intentional change and assumes that there is movement from wherever we are now to some future place or condition. Leadership is a purposive process that is value-based and, by definition, a collective process (Astin & Astin, 2000). Terry (1993) stated, that “[l]eadership is a subset of action [but] not all leadership is action” (p. 107). Foster (1989) identified leadership as oriented toward social change and argued that a transformation of consciousness occurred prior to a transformation of social conditions, and that this transformation required a community of leaders rather than one single leader. Drath and Palus (2001) suggested that humans have two processes for meaning-making: (a) individual meaning-making; and (b) social meaning-making. These interactive processes are related to the social systems in which we live, and in this way “[l]eadership in organizations ... [is] more about making meaning than about making decisions and influencing people” (p. 4).

Astin and Astin (2000) believed that producing more effective leaders was essential to building a better society, and that leadership development was a critical part of the college experience. The undergraduate experience, they argued, should empower students and provide them with a sense of control over their lives. Astin and Astin espoused a transformative ideology of leadership that, in the broadest sense, envisioned the purposes of leadership as encompassing:

1. a supportive environment where people can grow, thrive, and live in peace with one another;
2. harmony with nature and sustainability for future generations; and
3. communities of reciprocal care and shared responsibility where every person matters and each person’s welfare and dignity is respected and supported (p. 11).

In presenting their perspective of transformative leadership ideology, Astin and Astin identified the following value-ends of leadership:

1. enhanced equity, social justice, quality of life;
2. expanded access and opportunities;
3. respect for difference and diversity;
4. strengthened democracy, civic life and civic responsibility;
5. cultural enrichment, creative expression, intellectual honesty; and
6. advanced knowledge, and personal freedom combined with social responsibility (p. 11).

Figure 2.3 presents transformative leadership as a social network of interpersonal and interdependent relationships of leader-followers and the interplay and flow between context and community.

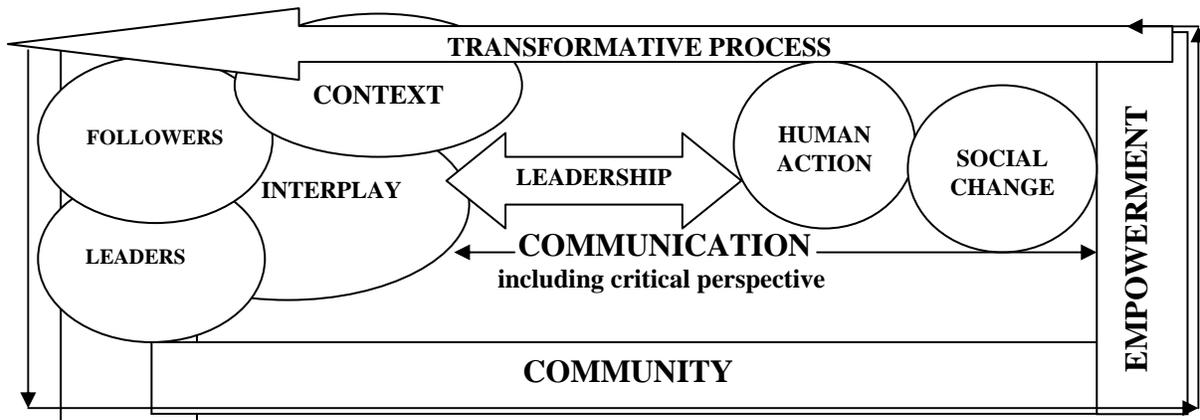


Figure 2.3 Transformative leadership flow.

Transformative leadership ideology includes the qualities of critique and working for social change. Thus, interplay and dialectic communication between leader-followers and community empowers and facilitates human action and social change.

In the transformative process, communication, empowerment, and collective action and social change are integral aspects of leadership. However, transformative leadership ideology includes the critical perspective of looking inside, which makes this ideology quite expansive conceptually.

Foster (1989) was critical of the leadership-as-position aspect of transformational leadership, arguing that this view of leadership neglected two crucial aspects: (a) leadership is always “context bound”—it occurs within a social community as a result of human interaction and negotiation; and (b) leadership is not voluntaristic and can not occur without followership. Foster continued: “Leaders normally have to negotiate visions and ideas with potential followers, who may in turn become leaders themselves, renegotiating the particular agenda” (p. 43). Bennis and Nanus (1997) reported that transformative leadership ideology championed leadership that “knows what it wants, communicates these intentions, positions itself correctly and empowers its workforce” (p. 79). Thus, leaders and followers reframe and renegotiate leadership according to ever changing contexts.

Bolman and Deal’s (2002) four frames for reframing leadership challenges from multiple perspectives corresponds with Bennis and Nanus (1997) perspectives on transformative leadership. Bolman and Deal’s human resource and symbolic frames provide lenses for dealing with social and emotional leadership issues and seem to parallel Foster’s criteria of transformative leadership ideology. Bolman and Deal’s structural and political frames provide lenses for reframing power, relationships, and productivity issues in a manner similar to Foster’s (1989) critical, transformative, and educative leadership criteria rooted in his original critique of power.

The point was that “when individuals reframe, they see new possibilities and become more versatile and effective in their responses” (Bolman & Deal, 2002, p. 5). There were a number of similarities between the transformative leadership ideology and Bolman and Deal’s four frames with respect to versatility, effectiveness, and seeing possibilities from multiple perspectives. For example, Bennis and Nanus (1997) and

Foster (1989) portrayed transformative leadership as a community of leader-followers who shared power, interacted, and organized non-hierarchically.

With respect to power relationships, transformative leadership includes the critique of power and contrasts with the role of influence feature of transformational leadership identified by Leithwood et al. (1999). Table 2.1 presents Bennis' four competencies of transformative leadership focus on leader-follower interplay, or "power through" people rather than "power over" people. According to Brown (2004), transformative leadership is an expansive concept, and reflects leadership aspects similar to Bennis' (2003) leader competencies.

Table 2.1.

Four Essential Competencies for Leaders.

Competency: Vision	Competency: Voice	Competency: Character	Competency: Adaptive Capacity
Leaders have the ability to engage others by creating shared meaning; they have a vision and through dialectic argument, both leaders and followers come to accept as their own.	Authentic leaders have a distinctive voice (purpose, self-confidence, sense of self), and "the whole gestalt of abilities now called Emotional Intelligence."	True leaders have integrity (a strong moral compass).	Leading in complexity allows leaders to respond quickly and intelligently to relentless change. Adaptive capacity allows leaders to act, evaluate results of action "on-the-fly"

Adapted from Bennis, W. (2003). *On becoming a leader*. Cambridge, MA: Perseus Publishing, pp. xxi-xxiii.

Leaders eliciting these competencies demonstrated cognitive, charismatic, and moral strength, and it appears likely that these competencies could be transferable to a community of leaders interacting and making meaning, individually and collectively.

Although transformational leadership and transformative leadership both share the values of community, empowerment, and human action, Foster (1989) recognized

that leadership is always context-bound, occurs within a social community and always results from human interactions. Additionally, Foster argued that to challenge the status quo leadership must look in on itself, examine the previous conditions of social life, critique them, and perhaps find challenges that need to be addressed.

Transformative leadership ideology includes the critical perspective that Foster emphasized, and within a context of social community, leaders and followers engaged in a dialectic relationship, arriving at “truth” by means of argument and thesis. A central theme of the transformative leadership ideology is that leadership is not voluntary, but rather occurs by mutual negotiation of visions and ideas, shared leadership between leaders and followers, and recognition that leadership cannot occur without followers and leaders interacting in a context where followers’ roles are reciprocal and could be exchanged. Bennis (2003) maintained that

organizations should by definition, function organically, which means that its purposes should determine its structure, rather than the other way around, and it should function as a community rather than a hierarchy, and offer autonomy to its members ... [and] opportunities and rewards, because ... an organization is the means not the end. (p. 182)

Bennis and Nanus (1997) stated that power, the basic energy needed to initiate and sustain action, translated into the “capacity to translate intentions into reality and sustain it. Leadership involves the wise use of this power [and was defined as] transformative leadership” (p. 17).

In this capacity the wise use of power constitutes a non-hierarchical leadership design emphasizing power relationships that are reflexive, contextual, relational, reciprocal, communitarian, and socially constructed. In addressing control and autonomy, social and cultural context, change versus status quo, organizational structure

and agency, and the dynamics of collaboration and teamwork, the transformative leadership ideology reflects a social network characterized by:

1. autonomy rather than control, equity, social justice, quality of life;
2. a community of reciprocal care and respect (i.e., a supportive environment);
3. access and opportunity;
4. respect for difference and diversity, harmony and sustainability;
5. strengthened democracy, civic life, and civic responsibility, or society-building;
6. cultural enrichment, creative expression, and intellectual honesty; and
7. advanced knowledge and personal freedom combined with social responsibility.

Leadership, in this perspective, is “causative” and able to invent and create institutions that are purposeful and capable of empowering employees to satisfy their needs, and move followers to higher degrees of consciousness, such as liberty, freedom, justice, and self-actualization (Bennis & Nanus, 1997).

The leader role is framed in terms of “social architect” (p. 203), a role complementary to the leadership characteristics and values of the Millennial generation of undergraduate students. According to research by Howe and Strauss (2000), Millennials gravitate towards team learning, community service, and are most likely to accept the role of “community shapers and institution builders” (pp. 154-155). Komives et al. (1998) found that the average college campus was described as a “kaleidoscope community [that] embraces differences, and finds common purpose where common purpose and diverse talents abound” (p. 243).

Bennis and Nanus (1997) characterized transformative leaders as perpetual learners who are able to learn in an organizational context, and in doing so demonstrate “the new competence” (p. 177), which is identified as (a) acknowledging and sharing uncertainty, (b) embracing error, (c) focusing on the future, (d) becoming interpersonally competent (listening, nurturing, coping with value conflicts), and (d) gaining self-knowledge.

Control and autonomy, social and cultural context, change versus status quo, organizational structure and agency, and dynamics of collaboration and teamwork issues are addressed within an empowered, collaborative, emotionally-intelligent, critical, non-hierarchical social network framework. The “social network” framework, based on transformative leadership ideology, reflects the importance of relationships, capacity building, and social enhancement from transformation of the individual, organization, and society. The current generation of undergraduate students—the Millennials—demonstrate process, purpose, community, and centrality of relationships (Bibby, 2001; Howe & Strauss, 2000), but the relationship, if one exists, between these behaviors and leadership is an underlying motivator for further study of undergraduates’ leadership understandings.

Transformational leadership. Burns (1978) advocated transformational leadership as “real” leadership that facilitates the ability of people to envision a new social condition and communicate this vision to followers. In turn, individuals are inspired and transformed as they develop new concerns about humanity, the human condition, and the liberation of minds and bodies. Bennis and Nanus (1997) described a transformational leader as the embodiment of the transforming role and as someone who is supposed to lead the empowerment of members within the organization. Hence, a transformational leader and a transformational organization could be synonymous.

According to Burns (1978), leaders must engage followers with high levels of morality and principled judgment, mesh followers’ goals and values with the leader’s own goals and values, and, in this fashion, convince followers that current realities could change for the better. As presented in Table 2.2, Leithwood et al. (1999) described transformational leadership according to the role of influence.

Table 2.2.

Transformational Leadership: The Role of Influence

Leadership ideology	Who exerts influence?	Sources of influence	Purposes for influence	Outcomes of influence
Transformational	Typically those in formal leadership roles, but not restricted to such persons (involvement of followers).	Inspire higher levels of commitment and capacity among organizational members (moral dimension of leadership).	Greater effort and productivity. Develop more skilled practice.	Increased capacity of organization to continuously improve.

Adapted from, Leithwood, K., Jantzi, D., Steinbach, R (1999). *Changing leadership for changing times*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Transformational leadership ideology is values-driven and involves a moral dimension that elevates followers to new moral heights as they interact, make meaning, and construct leadership. As depicted in Figure 2.4, the role of influence within transformational leadership ideology reinforces its non-hierarchical structure.

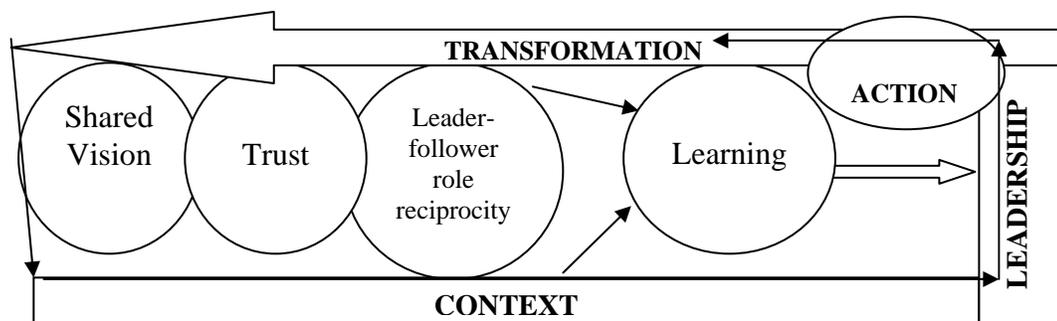


Figure 2.4. Transformational leadership “flow.”

Leithwood’s (1992) conception of transformational leadership, similar to Ouchi’s Type Z organization, emphasized “participative decision making ... power that is ‘consensual’ and ‘facilitative’ in nature—a form of power manifested *through* other people, not *over* other people” (p. 9). Organizational structure and portrays the notion of exercising

power *through* people rather than exercising power *over* people, a key feature of transformational leadership ideology.

Issues pertaining to control and autonomy, social and cultural context, change versus status quo, organizational structure and agency, and dynamics of teamwork and collaboration are addressed within the collaborative and empowered structure of transformational leadership ideology and features:

1. relationships, not hierarchy;
2. dynamic interplay, not seeking absolute stability;
3. continuous learning, not absolute knowing;
4. being connected, not being exclusively self-contained;
5. multiple opportunities rather than singular solutions only;
6. positioning for innovation and creativity, not control; and
7. collaboration, not competition.

Transformational leadership seeks to increase members' efforts on behalf of the organization as well as to develop more skilled practice. Thus, a participative approach and increased capacity for change are central outcomes (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999).

Complementary to Leithwood's (1992) conception of transformational leadership, Bennis and Nanus (1997) contended that employees assume responsibilities for reshaping organizational practices as they adapt to environmental changes, direct organizational changes that build confidence, empower individuals to find new ways of doing things, and overcome resistance to change by creating visions of the future that evoke confidence in and mastery of new organizational practices. Rather than focus on the parts, transformational leadership focuses on the "multiple wholes" that can be made by continuous integration and disintegration as required in a complex, connected knowledge world (Allen & Cherrey, 2000).

Transformational leadership ideology, as identified by Burns (1978), Komives et al. (1998), Leithwood (1992), Leithwood and Duke, (1999), and Leithwood et al. (1999) championed leader-follower interactions, the collective interests of the group, and leaders' capacity to change peoples' attitudes, values, and beliefs. Bennis (2003) claimed that "leaders transform experience into wisdom and, in turn, transform the cultures of their organizations, and in this way, society as a whole is transformed" (p. 143).

Initial investigation of student affairs literature revealed a trend towards implementation of reciprocal, exchange oriented, non-hierarchical, interactive, and contextual leadership ideologies (Cherrey & Allen, 2001; Komives et al., 1998; Outcalt, Faris, McMahon & Tahtakran, 2001; Woodard et al., 2000). This trend has gained momentum in higher education, and is complemented by the Bibby (2001) and Howe and Strauss (2000) studies that identified Millennials as a generation of doers who represent a new service ethic comprised of a team-orientation and collaborative approach to community building and the achieving good deeds.

As identified by Komives et al. (1998), transformational leadership ideology is process-oriented, purposeful, community-oriented, accepting of change, and, most importantly, it acknowledges relationships as being central to effective leadership. Issues regarding control and autonomy, social and cultural context, change versus status quo, organizational structure and agency, and dynamics of collaboration and teamwork are addressed in an empowered, collaborative, non-hierarchical framework.

Transformational leadership emphasizes the importance of relationships, capacity building, and transforming the organizational culture.

We live in “a new world—the quantum world—[which] is different from the linear, rational world that has traditionally been used as a model for how the world works” (Komives et al., 1998, p. 63). Furthermore, as Wheatley (1992) acknowledged, in the quantum world relationships are reality that connect people with each other and ideas and visions. Komives et al. (1998) stated, “When participants focus on the process of group life or community life, they are forced to ask, Why do we do things this way? How could we become more effective? How do participants ensure that they keep working and learning together?” (p. 95). But one might question whether communities are really so simple?

To facilitate an exploration of communities and the complex world in which undergraduate students live and work, the next section presents a review of literature regarding postmodernity and the Millennial generation, and some of the research on undergraduates’ leadership experiences in higher education.

Undergraduate Students and the Twenty-First Century Context

Higher education in the twenty-first century has been characterized by diversity, pluralism, and complexity (Magolda & Terenzini, 2004, ¶ 2). The world has become increasingly interconnected, which has created challenges to living and working globally, but also to developing students who can lead and contribute effectively (Cherrey, Biggs Garbuio, & Isgar, 2001). The modern university is a “pluralistic” institution in having several centers of power and several purposes, and in serving several different clienteles (Liscinsky, Chambers & Foley, 2001). The world is moving from fragmentation to connectivity, and this shift is fueled in part by the increased use of technology and mass communication, not only in our lives but also in the growing global economy (Cherrey & Allen, 2001). Given that context is the space where capacity is

learned and where leadership occurs, an increasingly complex higher education context might affect rethinking leadership at both conceptual and practical levels.

The Context of Postmodernity

Postmodernity is a term used by philosophers, social scientists, art critics, and social critics in reference to aspects of contemporary art, culture, economics, and social conditions that has resulted from unique features of late twentieth century life (Honderich, 1995). Among these unique conditions are globalization, consumerism, a fragmentation of authority, and a commodification of knowledge. Viewed from a sociological context, postmodernity focuses on the prevailing conditions of life in the late twentieth century in most western industrialized nations, and it includes the ubiquity of mass media and mass production, the rise of global economic arrangements, and a shift from manufacturing to service economies (Honderich, 1995; Rohmann, 1999).

Postmodernity in western industrialized nations is marked by an increased focus on civil rights and equal opportunity, as identified by movements such as feminism and multi-culturalism, as well as a backlash against these movements. Bergquist (2001) identified four themes that represent the central realities of a fragmented and inconsistent postmodern world:

constructivism, a postmodern phenomenon [emphasizes] that we construct our own social realities There are no universal truths, principles, nor are there any global models of justice or order Ways of knowing may themselves change over time and in differing situations Language being used to describe [an] ... elusive and changing reality is itself a source of social construction [O]ur world is becoming progressively more global, while at the same time becoming progressively more segmented and differentiated ... we live in an era of contradiction between globalism and localism in our daily lives [F]ragmented and inconsistent images ... [trick us] into believing that we have experienced depth or virtual reality when in fact we have seen only the surface. Does postmodernism suggest that we are in a major transition between a modern society and some new society that has not yet become clear or at least properly named? (pp. 477-487)

Contemporary media and information systems have the capacity to rapidly construct images that replace rather than represent the outside world to the point where the world is reproduced as *hyperreality*, a series of imaginary worlds (Alvesson & Deetz, 1996). What are the implications for leadership in the postmodern era? How does leadership ideology and practice continue if reality is deemed so temporary?

Rohmann (1999) identified postmodernism as a “critical tendency characterized by eclecticism, the repudiation of progress and cultural cohesion, and an ironic embrace of ambiguity ... [and] ... suspicion of *metanarrative*” (p. 310; italics in original). Martin and Frost (1996) identified postmodernism as a vehicle for storytelling, relationships, dialogue, and the art of culture, thus avoiding the tendency to oversimplify culture as a thing. A postmodern approach that is perceived as offering insight into representational strategies might facilitate more polyphonic writing about cultures or organizations that allow multiple voices to be heard. Furman (1998) exposed the unities of self, community, culture, organization, and science as “inescapably plural, conflictual and disassociated” (p. 299); furthermore, she reconciled the cognitive dissonance between community (unifying) and postmodernism (diversifying) by “bringing the two perspectives into closer theoretical alignment” (p. 300), thus recognizing the postmodern community as “a community of difference” (p. 312). What is apparent from this literature is that in postmodern times leaders must be cognizant of uncertain, ephemeral, diverse, and pluralistic dimensions, and understand that chaos is not bad (Shafritz & Ott, 2001).

Distinction between the postmodern lens or postmodernity is more a matter of recognizing that to navigate successfully in this new world, new maps are needed. These

maps must describe leadership that is relevant to rapid change in a world where relationships are everything, multiple realities exist, and it is difficult to identify exactly what causes something to occur (Komives et al., 1998). When viewed through a postmodern lens, the concept of leadership seems focused on what leadership *does*, particularly in ostensibly eclectic, relativistic, and skeptical postmodern contexts.

It is possible that current undergraduate education students possess qualities, attitudes, and concepts particular to a *leadership-does* ideology. Therefore, an exploration of the literature pertaining to the Millennial generation, to which most of the current undergraduate education students belong, is important to better understand their leadership understandings.

Millennials: The Undergraduate Generation

Berg (2003) reported that studying particular generations is a way of understanding students, their leadership understandings, and factors that might require adaptations to current leadership program effectiveness. In view of arguments presented in previous sections, I realized that to understand fully undergraduate leadership understandings, an exploration of the Millennial generation was required.

Generational study assumes that the current generation of post-secondary students—born between 1982 and 2000, and referred to as Generation Y, Millennials, Nexters, the Internet Generation (N-Generation), the Nintendo Generation, Echo Boomers, or Generation 2001—are currently entering universities (Berg, 2003). I refer to this current generation of undergraduate students as Millennials, and find the definition provided by Howe and Strauss (2000) appropriate to this discussion of undergraduate education students' leadership understandings.

As a group, Millennials are unlike any other youth generation in living memory. They are more numerous, more affluent, better educated and more ethnically diverse. More important, they are beginning to manifest a wide variety of positive social habits that older Americans no longer associate with youth, including a new focus on teamwork, achievement, modesty and good conduct. Only a few years from now, this can-do youth revolution will overwhelm the cynics and pessimists. Over the next decade, the Millennial Generation will entirely recast the image of youth from downbeat and alienated to upbeat and engaged—with potentially seismic consequences for America (p. 4).

Today's teens want a name that is a founding word, a word that respects their newness, a word that resets the clock of secular history around their own timetable. The name "Millennial" acknowledges their technological superiority without defining them too explicitly in those terms. It's a name that hints at what their rising generation could grow up to become—not a lame variation on old Boomer/Xer themes, but a new force of history, a generational colossus far more consequential than most of today's parents and teachers (and indeed most kids) dare to imagine. (p. 12)

Howe and Strauss' argued that Millennials' effect on leadership is expected to be considerable, and that institutions of higher education would do well to prepare for the impact of this highly influential and civic-minded generation.

Millennials will reveal themselves as the answer to the central problem facing Xers, the prior youth generation. They will show what can be done about over-the-top free agency, social splintering, cultural exhaustion, and civic decay in an era when Americans are increasingly yearning for community. The Millennial solution will be to set high standards, get organized, team up and do civic deeds. (p. 66)

Millennials' Focus on Needs of Communities

Howe and Strauss (2000) also speculated that the "coming of the Millennials" will match a profound shift in America's social mood, notably a focus on the needs of the community rather than the needs of the individual, resulting in a greater likelihood for initiation of large-scale institutional change. Once again, this focus on needs of the community could be representative of undergraduate education students' understandings of leadership. Perhaps the "word *revolution* might better catch the spirit of what lies ahead" (p. 67). Of particular interest is Howe and Strauss' contention that Millennials

are the generation that might supply the sense of community that their parents could not provide because, for Millennials, “collaborative learning” is the norm. “Millennials have stepped into a teen world with little cohesion, decided they don’t like it that way, and are trying to turn it around” (p. 180).

A new Millennial service ethic is emerging, built around notions of collegial (rather than individual) action, support for (rather than resistance against) civic institutions, and the tangible doing of good deeds. (p. 216)

Millennials don’t interpret gender and sexuality like their parents do or ever did The young Millennial challenge is to create a new sexual *interdependence* by energizing social norms Millennial girls will be joined by the boys and become a major force in American life. That’s when this generation will reveal its true power. (pp. 228-229)

Howe and Strauss believed that Millennials are the generation that will bring a sense of community back to society because this generation is “not as eager to grow up putting self ahead of community the way their parents did” (p. 237). Furthermore, “Millennials can heed moral exemplars, and respond to principled leaders, far better than most of today’s adults could when young” (p. 364).

The Canadian Millennial Generation

Do Canadian Millennials share the same characteristics, values, and goals as their American counterparts? What are the implications of Canadian Millennial values for assessing undergraduate education students’ leadership understandings?

Berg (2003) reported that generation-themed studies are widely accepted, but not all individuals fit the categorizations derived from these studies. Nevertheless, such categorizations are helpful in understanding the current generation within the general context of leadership in higher education. A Canadian study of teenagers conducted by Bibby (2001) established that there were no significant differences among the top-five

valued goals identified by teens in studies made in 1984, 1992, and 2001 (p. 171).

Additionally,

[w]hen it comes to values, Canada's teens place primary importance on relationships and freedom, along with success and a comfortable life. Relationships and being loved tend to be valued by more females than males, a finding that is consistent with females' also being more inclined to place high value on interpersonal traits such as honesty, forgiveness, generosity, and politeness. They also give evidence of being somewhat more courteous and honest in real-life situations. (p. 46)

The findings from Bibby's (2001) discussion of Millennial generation Canadian teens portrayed them as less buoyant and revolutionary than the Millennials portrayed by Howe and Strauss (2000). Yet, complementary to Howe and Strauss' findings, Bibby identified Canadian teens as focused on making substantial contributions to Canadian society:

This is not a generation of young people that shows signs of disillusionment with what they can accomplish. If doomsayers are correct in their predictions that the newest emerging generation is going to have to settle for less than their parents, the message has not got through. Young people in this cohort not only expect to emulate whatever success their parents have known; most expect to do better. The Millennial generation plans to accomplish much. (p. 153)

Three themes from Bibby's study corroborated the values and characteristics of the Millennial generation, as acknowledged by Howe and Strauss (2000). Bibby (2001) identified similarities, autonomy, and expectations as dominant themes:

1. Similarities are more common than dissimilarities, specifically what young people want out of life and how they see themselves getting what they want have changed little over time. What teens want and what they value has tended to remain steady, however, there is a measure of disillusionment with institutions. For example, increases in the confidence of governments suggest that disenchantment with institutional structures is not always permanent. Revitalized and relevant institutions are sometimes re-embraced, rather than discarded.
2. Autonomy persists. Rather than buying into a rigid deterministic model of behavior, youth are convinced they can do battle with their social environments—starting with their family backgrounds and extending to “what

people in power decide”—and still come out winners.

3. Expectations. Compared to the 1992 study, the current generation of youth has almost identical levels of expectations with respect to “just about everything.” Even though 1992 was more turbulent than 2000, teenagers then believed they could rise above social ills of the day and find the job they wanted, have life-long partners and know financial success. The fact that today’s teens know the reality of more buoyant times may contribute to their having similarly high expectations. But the high hopes of teens in the ‘90s suggest that, good times or not, today’s teens likewise would probably dig in and set their sights on “great expectations.” (p. 205)

Bibby’s (2001) findings identified Millennials in Canada as a generation with high expectations for themselves, institutions, and society at large.

Millennials were considered the generation most likely to embrace social challenges, organize themselves, and commit to action required for meeting their personal, institutional, and social expectations. Howe and Strauss (2000) characterized Millennials as team-oriented, communitarian, civic-minded, and possessing a get-things-done attitude. According to Bibby (2001), projections about Canadian Millennials present a similarly optimistic undergraduate context.

According to research by Bibby (2001), Canadian Millennials have an interest in revitalizing relevant institutions, exercising political will, and achieving “great expectations” (p. 205). Although Howe and Strauss’ (2000) projections of the Millennial generation appeared somewhat inflated and altruistic, they “maintain that this generation has a solid chance to become America’s next great generation” (p. 307). On the basis of his study, Bibby offered ten projections about Canadian Millennials. However, I have chosen only his projections about values, influence, personal concerns, social concerns, post-secondary education, and careers given the nature of my study.

1. Current Millennials value relationships, freedom, success and a comfortable life. This generation embraces technology, although interest in sports might continue to wane.

2. With the exception of family and friends, the influence of an array of key sources will be played down.
3. Personal concerns with school and life after school and a sense that they have neither enough time nor money despite what has been said about this generation's relative affluence.
4. Millennials' social concerns depend primarily on what the media can convince them matters, or if the issue affects them directly.
5. Most Canadian Millennials expect to go to university, pursue careers, get good jobs, and expect to be more comfortable than their parents—regardless of the state of the economy. (Bibby, 2001, p. 308)

As identified by Canadian Millennials, relationships, social and economic concerns, and attainment of a comfortable life were of considerable importance and provided powerful impetuses that supported and encouraged Millennials in meeting their expectations. The values and characteristics observed in how the Millennial generation accomplishes its goals reflected their own initial understandings of leadership. Therefore, such information is relevant to this discussion about undergraduate education students' leadership understandings.

Millennials and the Relationship to Leadership in Higher Education

A review of student affairs literature—the majority of which was American—identified the current trend in universities toward non-hierarchical models of leadership (Astin & Astin, 2000; Faris & Outcalt, 2001; Komives, et al., 1998; Outcalt, Faris & McMahon, 2001). Unfortunately, comparable large-scale Canadian studies were not available, but, as Berg (2003) suggested, it is reasonable to assume that conditions on Canadian campuses are mostly similar to conditions on American campuses.

As identified in the literature, the mandate and responsibility for leadership training and preparation of students in higher education remains within the purview of the institution (Astin & Astin, 2000; Cherrey & Allen, 2001; Komives, et al., 1998). Additionally, leadership within institutions of higher education tends to maintain a

linear, hierarchical, control-oriented approach to student leadership (Cherrey & Allen, 2001; Faris & Outcalt, 2001; Woodard et al., 2000). However, undergraduate leadership models are striving to become more relational, non-hierarchical, and communitarian (Komives et al., 1998; Outcalt, Faris, McMahon & Tahtakran, 2001; Robertson & Lubic, 2001). As described by Howe and Strauss (2000) and Bibby (2001), the Millennial generation celebrates pluralism and diversity, and values collaboration and teamwork. However, according to a study by Cherrey, Biggs Garbuio, and Isgar (2001), these factors were not equitably represented in higher education, which further emphasized the importance of leadership study at the undergraduate level.

Traditionally, the mission of higher education has been to guarantee the preparation of a future leadership cohort, and to this end the objective has remained an important institutional goal. However, as higher education has diversified and evolved from a privilege of the elite to a right of the masses, the purpose of leadership has also transformed as society becomes characterized by increased interconnectedness, diversity and pluralism (Faris & Outcalt, 2001).

Berg (2003) argued that in “the multicultural society, the valuing of individual contributions and the complexity of problems facing the organization [shifted] the understanding of leadership toward a new paradigm of collaboration,” and that “[t]he complexity of the times require[d] more than one mind to clarify, analyze and respond to issues” (p. 5). Komives et al. (1998) emphasized that “[l]eadership today shows that there is great wisdom and energy in the group and everyone in the group has a great deal to learn from each other” (p. 19). As presented in the literature, the movement on university campuses tends towards non-hierarchical, relational, and exchange oriented leadership ideology (Astin & Astin, 2000; Berg, 2003; Faris & Outcalt, 2001; Komives,

et al., 1998; Outcalt, et al., 2001). Parallel to this movement on campuses, Bibby (2001) and Howe and Strauss (2000) acknowledged that collaboration, empowerment, and moral relationships were key Millennial values as to how this generation accomplishes goals, and these values were, therefore, important to this exploration of leadership, ideologies, and contexts.

Leadership ideologies span the continuum of theoretical perspectives and ranged from bureaucracy, human relations, critical theory, and postmodernism, to social justice and complexity theories associated with the quantum world. Research on Millennials and studies involving the current context of higher education identified teamwork, community-orientation, civic deeds, and working towards enhanced social conditions as key values held by Millennials. Transformational and transformative leadership ideologies, characterized by collaboration and “power through” leaders and followers, highlight a reciprocal and relational approach to leadership and for these reasons are relevant to this discussion of leadership.

During the last twenty years, the rapid development of technology and dissemination of information has eliminated the barriers of time and space, and created a global village. Moreover, as part of the sweeping and pervasive changes affecting society, traditional hierarchical structures have been re-evaluated (Outcalt, Faris, McMahon & Tahtakran, 2001) and points to the need for further study.

Summary

Leadership paradigms have shifted over the last century. Foster (1989) recognized that “leadership resides in the community itself” (p. 49) and that the ultimate goal of leadership is the achievement and refinement of human community. In this way, leadership is about co-opting individuals because of their value to the capacity building

potential of the learning community. “Certain agents can engage in transformative practices which change social structures and forms of community, and [this is] what we label leadership” (Foster, 1989, p. 49). Foster acknowledged that “leadership, then, is not a function of position but rather represents a conjunction of ideas where leadership is shared and transferred between leaders and followers, each [role is] only a temporary designation” (p. 49). Leadership is a social network where leader behavior is embedded in the organizational context, and in this way leadership can be contextual and situational, where leaders and followers are able to assess the situation and provide the appropriate leadership for particular contexts and situations.

The Millennial generation are identified as more collaborative, team-focused, community-oriented, and willing to organize themselves and accomplish goals. For this reason, current undergraduates’ leadership understandings seem disconnected from the bureaucratic and hierarchical leadership traditionally found on college and university campuses. However, these traditional structures are in the process of changing. As identified in the leadership literature, leadership studies currently place a high priority on capacity building and organizational learning in a manner similar to what Fullan (1998) described as “reculturing,” or the process of “changing the norms, values, incentives, skills and relationships in the organization to foster a different way of working together” (p. 9). Reculturing “contributes to personal and collective resilience in the face of change” and “helps people persist ... when things go wrong” (p. 9), partly because shared processes help in maintaining commitments to change.

Bennis (2003) stated that “learning to lead is easier than most of us [think] because each of us contains the capacity for leadership” (p. xxvii). Foster (1989) agreed, stating that leadership “happens in everyday events, when commonplace leaders exert

some effect on their situations” (p. 52). Leadership ideologies have evolved to acknowledge: (a) relational, reciprocal, and contextual dimensions of leadership; (b) prospective hybrid approaches; and (c) the potential of moving leadership towards a more holistic orientation. Emerging leadership models, such as transformational and transformative leadership, highlight a holistic approach to leadership underscored by community and capacity building.

As revealed in this exploration of the literature, traditional and hierarchical leadership models are giving way to “more nuanced approach[es] ... less [concerned] with giving instructions and controlling subordinates and more [concerned] with maintaining a network of relationships within the organization and the [external] clientele” (Claes, p. 436). Leadership occurs within institutions of higher education, and undergraduate students, as part of the Millennial generation, have a repertoire of leadership behaviors. However, unfolding the nature of their leadership understandings remains in need of greater study.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This research into undergraduate education students' past and current leadership experience highlighted the relationship between their participation in everyday life, practicum, and college level contexts, and their understandings of effective and energizing leadership. As the participants engaged in deeper discussion of their leadership experiences they explored, conceptualized, and articulated their understandings of leadership. This study drew upon principles of grounded theory because the recursive elements including repeated sorting, ongoing comparison and systematic coding rooted the results in data derived from the field and provided the test of the inquiry process.

In this chapter, I describe the design used to research undergraduate education students' leadership understandings, and, to this end, I have outlined the procedures of the research methodology, research methods, and my own epistemological and theoretical orientation that served as the background to the methodology.

Background to the Research Design

Husen (1999) identified positivism and idealism (naturalism) as the main paradigms present in educational research, and contended that the debate between researchers regarding the legitimacy of positivist and naturalist research was unnecessary because most researchers shared similar assumptions (p. 34). Positivist and naturalist paradigms were classified according to their respective epistemological bases. On one hand, positivism was distinguished by a functional-structural, objective, goal

oriented, manipulative, hierarchical, and technocratic approach. Naturalism, on the other hand, was distinguished by an interpretivist, humanistic, consensual, subjective, and collegial approach.

The functional-structural approach, derived from classical positivism, was linear and consisted of a straight-forward rationale toward preconceived problems. The interpretivist approach, derived from critical theory (Frankfurt School), left room for reinterpretation and reshaping of the problem during the process of dialogue prior to actions (and even during action).

It is my belief that positivist and subjectivist paradigms are not mutually exclusive, but rather are complementary. Keeves (1998) advocated for the “unity of educational research,” (cited in Husen, 1999, p. 37) and conceded that there was a distinction between paradigms and approaches. However, in the final analysis, Keeves believed that there really was only one paradigm but many approaches. Emphasis may be placed more on the positivist approach or subjectivist approach depending on the objective or nature of a particular research project. Because I am interested in undergraduate education students’ leadership understandings, I situated this study within a naturalistic paradigm.

Epistemological and Ontological Orientation

Crotty (2003) wrote that at every point in any research—in observing, interpreting, reporting, and everything else done by researchers—a host of assumptions are injected about human knowledge and realities encountered in the human world. Such assumptions shape the meaning of research questions, the nature of research methodologies, and the interpretability of research findings. “Without unpacking these assumptions and clarifying them, no one (including ourselves) can really divine what our

research has been or what it is now saying” (p. 17). There are multiple realities, where reality and truth are contingent upon what individuals construct. Social science knowledge is subjective, and so the source of knowing is hermeneutic. In this way, interpretation is textual first and, by extension, interpretation of social action is second. Patterns of experiences emerge while people are engaged in making sense of their environment. While their world may appear disordered or nonsensical to the observer, these patterns derive from shared social and symbolic interactions (Hutchinson, 1988). Berger and Luckman (1990) described reality as:

The world of everyday life is not only taken for granted as reality by the ordinary members of society in the subjectively meaningful conduct of their lives. It is a world that originates in their thoughts and actions, and is maintained as real by these people. (pp. 19-20)

Reality and truth are social constructs, and, as such, are contingent on what individuals construct. Ideas, objects, and voluntarism, for example, are real. A subjective-hermeneutic epistemology, then, relates most closely with the methodology that is consistent with these philosophical underpinnings. The methodology that is consistent with the inclusion of multiple voices, views, and visions of lived experience is constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2000). In this way, if reality is socially constructed, then so, too, leadership understandings must be socially constructed.

Choice of Method

In a complex and diverse world, people such as undergraduate education students share common experiences and patterns of meaning and behavior and it is these patterns that are the substance of grounded theory. Research has revealed “the complexities of the real world [undergraduate education students] must derive from theory generated from that world; ‘the relative merits of a theory for predicting, explaining, and being

relevant cannot be separated from the way it is generated” (Martin, 1978, p. 17). Bryant (2003) reported that “all is data,” a well known Glaser dictum, and believed that all that occurs in the research scene is the data, whatever the source. It is not only what is being told, but also all the data surrounding what is being told (¶ 21) and includes the process that goes on in capturing the data, and anything in addition to the data itself. In-depth, recursive focus group interviews and individual interviews enabled participants to reveal deeper meaning related to their leadership experiences. As meaning unfolded, the students’ clarified and affirmed their leadership understandings. In this way, I included the “lived” experience of participants in representing their leadership understandings.

Grounded Theory: Methodology

Grounded theory methodology has evolved since its initial development in 1967 by Glaser and Strauss. Figure 3.1 presents my belief that grounded theory is best represented as a continuum of orientations from positivist to post-positivist to constructionist positions.

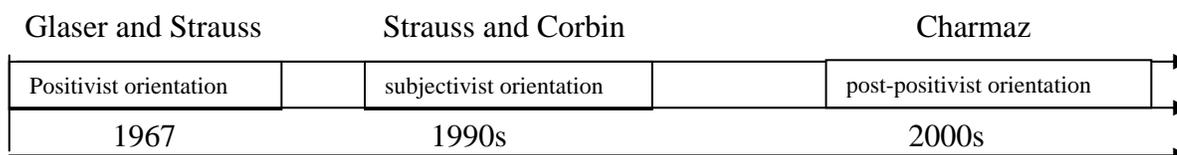


Figure 3.1. Grounded theory as a continuum.

The continuum represents grounded theory from its positivist origins (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), to a more subjectivist approach (Strauss & Corbin, 1998), and on to a decidedly post-positivist-postmodern direction reflected by constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2000).

According to Strauss and Corbin (1998), grounded theory means theory derived from data systematically gathered and analyzed through the research process. Thus, data

collection, analysis, and the eventual theory stand in close relationship to one another (p. 12). I believe that the Strauss and Corbin grounded theory approach is the logical evolution of the grounded theory method, and it is from this approach that I adopted immersion in the data, repeated sorting, ongoing comparison, and systematic coding for this study. The assumption here was that

theory derived from data is more likely to resemble reality than is theory derived by putting together a series of concepts based on experience or solely through speculation Grounded theories, because they are drawn from data, are more likely to offer insight, enhance understanding, and provide a meaningful guide to action. (p. 12)

Principles of grounded theory methodology (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998) support the research purpose previously described. Interestingly, Charmaz (2000) advocated a constructivist grounded theory that appears to go beyond objectivist assumptions and procedures:

A constructivist grounded theory assumes that people create and maintain meaningful worlds through dialectical processes of conferring meaning on their realities and acting within them Thus social reality does not exist independent of human action By adopting a constructivist grounded theory approach, the researcher can move grounded theory methods further into the realm of interpretive social science ... with an emphasis on meaning ... and recognize the interactive nature of both data collection and analysis ... and foster development of qualitative traditions through the study of experience from the standpoint of those who lived it. (pp. 521-522)

A constructivist perspective was consistent with this study because meaning was created from a study of the students' individual lived experiences with leadership in everyday life, practicum, and college level contexts and parallels Berg (2003) who pointed out that for the grounded theory based study to have benefit, the construction must be based on and be consistent with the reality of the respondents.

Grounded theory offers a systematic method to study the richness and diversity of human experiences and generates relevant, plausible theory that is useful for understanding the contextual reality of social behavior. As stated by Locke (2001),

as a set of research practices, and often as a research product, grounded theory reflects symbolic interactionism's theoretical and methodological presuppositions about the nature of the social world and the way it can be studied. (p. 25)

The principles of grounded theory I used in this research (see Figure 3.3) fostered a systematic and emergent process.

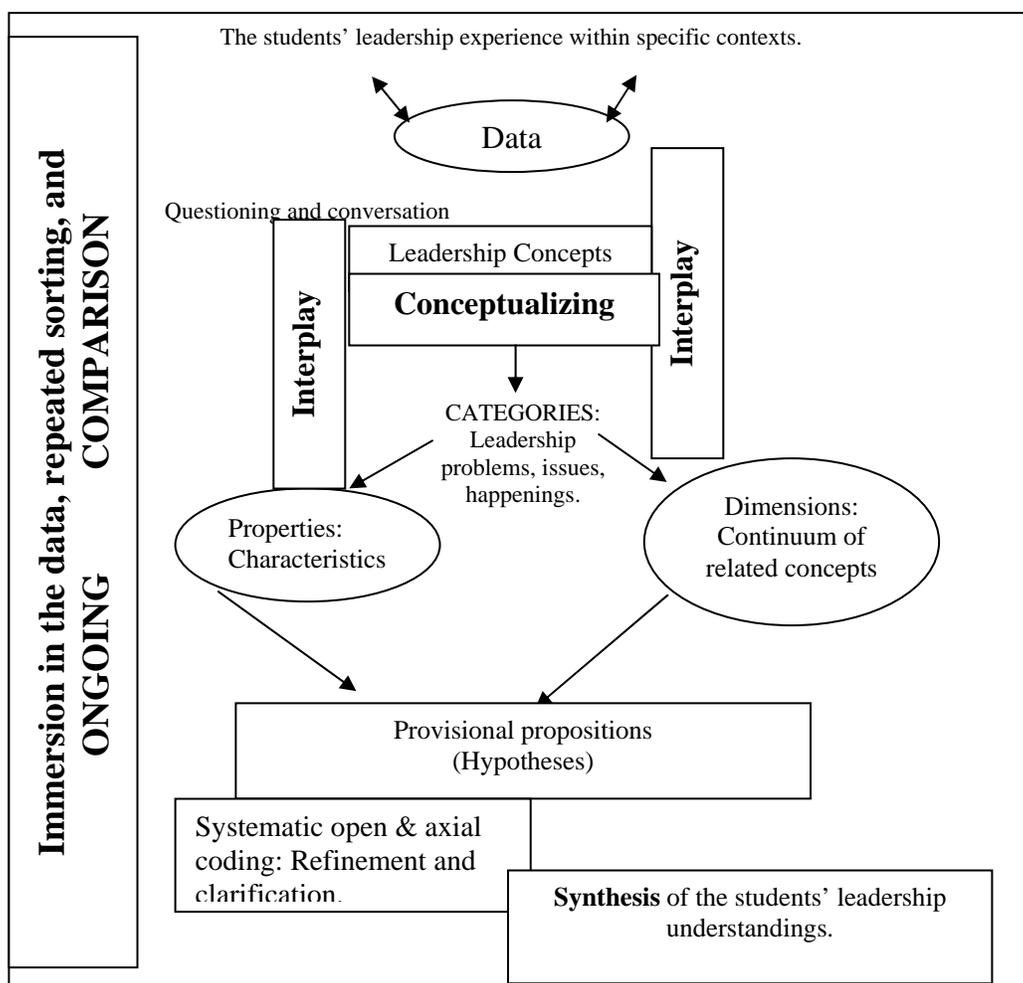


Figure 3.2. Principles of grounded theory used in this study.

Note. Adapted from *Basics of qualitative research (2nd Edition)*, pp. 12-47, by A.

Strauss and J. Corbin, 1998, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

The methodology of grounded theory “underscores the symbolic interactionist belief that each and every aspect of the inquiry process must be subject to the ‘test of the empirical world and has to be validated through such a test’” (p. 25). In this research “the test” or verification of the inquiry process occurred in the repeated sorting, ongoing comparison, and systematic coding of the participants’ leadership understandings emerged from their stories of past and current leadership experiences. Glaser and Strauss (1967) stated that “[in] discovering theory, one generates conceptual categories or their properties from evidence; then the evidence from which the category emerged is used to illustrate the concept” (p. 23). They argued that the grounded theory process necessitates that data collection and analysis occur concurrently so that data are coded as they are collected, then taken back to the field for confirmation or disconfirmation.

This process of data collection and analysis generates theoretical constructs and theory generation rather than theory verification. As Hutchinson (1988) explained, grounded theory contributes substantive theories that explain and predict social phenomena, and propose new and relevant ways of seeing.

Morrow and Smith (1995) identified the Strauss and Corbin model as an analytic and systematic process based on immersion of the data, repeated sorting, coding, and ongoing comparison. Strauss and Corbin (1998) presented five considerations for proceeding with grounded theory:

1. asking analytical questions;
2. open, axial, and selective coding (creating and linking categories, and telling the story);
3. coding for process (theoretical model);
4. theoretical sampling; and
5. memos and diagrams.

I believe that Strauss and Corbin's approach to grounded theory is a logical evolution of the grounded theory method. For this reason, the principles that I employed enabled the students' leadership understandings to emerge (as presented in Chapter Four).

Grounded theory and the pragmatist view. According to Locke (2001), American pragmatism and sociology's symbolic interactionist school of thought constitutes the disciplinary traditions that help inform grounded theory. Symbolic interactionism can best be understood as a working through of pragmatist worldview. Early twentieth century pragmatist philosophers William James, George H. Mead, Charles Peirce, Charles Horton Cooley, and John Dewey wanted to develop a way of thinking about and conceptualizing human behavior that focused attention on people's practices and their lived realities.

They shared an interest in understanding social life "in the making" as it was created (Locke, 2001). Knowledge was considered an experiential process, not a mirror of some independent reality. "The reality that is composed," Locke wrote, "whether by social researchers or other social actors, shifts as it is built up in interaction with the world and with others in it" (p. 21). Therefore, "knowledge generated by social researchers and grounded in particular experiences can take on some limited authenticity" (p. 21).

Constructivist grounded theory. Charmaz (2000) took grounded theory in a decidedly post-positive direction in the form of constructivist grounded theory (CGT), which assumed that people created and maintained meaningful worlds through dialectical processes, conferred meaning on their realities, and then acted within them. Interestingly, the students engaged in interactive and collective sense-making in the focus groups (as discussed in Chapter Five).

Social reality does not exist independently of human action. Hence, people construct all meaning *in situ* by using their language while occupying a particular space and a particular time (Gergen, 2001; Locke, 2001). Symbolic interactionism, a critical component of grounded theory, is represented in CGT because when “we gather rich data, we draw from multiple sources—observations, conversations, formal interviews, autobiographies, public records, organization reports, respondents’ diaries and journals and our own tape recorded reflections” (p. 514). Charmaz (2000) advocated CGT as “[moving] grounded theory methods further into the realm of interpretive social science with an emphasis on meaning ...” constructed from “multiple voices, views and visions drawn from their rendering of lived experience” (pp. 521-526). Charmaz’s approach towards grounded theory is consistent with Locke’s (2001) description of symbolic interactionism and the data obtained from physical (such as a policy or uniform) and social objects (such as social gestures and language) (p. 22). In this study, I noted the students’ sense-making included data derived from social objects to a greater degree than data derived from physical objects.

According to Creswell (1998), “The centerpiece of grounded theory research is the development or generation of a theory closely related to the context of the phenomenon being studied” (p. 56) and in this way is intended to make the researcher’s emerging theories denser, more complex, and more precise (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Charmaz (2000) offered three conclusions regarding CGT and grounded theory studies:

1. Grounded theory methods evolve in different ways depending upon the perspectives and proclivities of their adherents. Once epistemological premises are examined, the limits of studies and ways to reshape them can be acknowledged.
2. CGT can reduce or resolve tensions between postmodernism and constructivist grounded theory when we use the former to illuminate the latter, that is, postmodernism can *inform* realist study of experience rather than serve as

justification for abandoning it. This supports constructivist trends in grounded theory because it explicitly treats author's works *as* constructions instead of objectified products.

3. The future of grounded theory contains both objectivist and constructivist visions. (pp. 528-529)

Complementary to the Strauss and Corbin (1998) approach to grounded theory, the trend toward interpretive study, the quest for understanding, and the challenge to the imagination urges us to take our inquiry into the world. Through sharing the worlds of our subjects, we assist with the emergence of an image of their constructions of reality.

Within the domain of social constructionism and self-reflexive scholarship, substantial concern exists with forms of scientific representation and, particularly, forms of writing. "Much of this work is concerned with writing as reality creating," Gergen (2001) wrote. "But to whom does the authorial voice belong?" (p. 63). Considering that no univocal form of voice in the social sciences exists, but rather "a rich array of varied traditions," "it is important to make a place for all such traditions because each tradition nurtures a certain segment of society, serving as a valuable resource" (p. 80). Although inherent difficulties occur in determining the veracity of recalled perceptions and stories, Neimeyer and Neimeyer (1993) stated that a constructionist approach is oriented towards "assessing the viability (utility) as opposed to the validity (truth) of an individual's worldview" (cited in Morrow & Smith, 1993, p. 299). Therefore, in this study I accepted participants' understandings, perceptions, and stories at face value and as representations of their own lived realities.

Charmaz (2000) argued that constructivist grounded theory is harmonized with a social construction-symbolic interactionist orientation because, "[t]hrough sharing the worlds of our subjects, we come to conjure an image of their constructions and of our own" (p. 529). As identified by Denzin and Lincoln (2000), Charmaz's constructivist

grounded theory offers a powerful analytical framework for “implementing multiple interpretive approaches to social life” (p. 374), which was apparent in this study when the students in the focus groups constructed meaning reflective of their multiple views of leadership.

Selection of Participants

At the time of this study, the current Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) program at the University of Saskatchewan consisted of 126 credit units—sixty credit units of external coursework and sixty-six credit units of education coursework. Undergraduate education students, enrolled in either the elementary, middle years, or secondary program, are placed in classrooms throughout Saskatchewan schools, and complete a sixteen-week, in-school practicum (internship) as an integral part of their degree. Participants in this study had already completed their respective practicum requirements and were in the final term of their degree program.

In March 2006, I was given permission from the dean’s office and individual College of Education professors to contact undergraduate students who were completing sections of a core senior undergraduate course. With the permission of their instructors, I contacted undergraduate education students and invited them to attend an informational meeting where I presented the background to the study, the purpose for the research, and the research design. I invited the students’ participation in this study, and those who were interested contacted me by telephone and email, which I followed up with face-to-face meetings and signing of consent forms.

I accepted participation from student referrals prior to and after the interview process commenced, and also included undergraduate education students whose participation resulted from “shoulder tapping,” a technique identified by McMillan and

Schumacher (2001) as network or snowball sampling. As a result of these contacts, fifteen undergraduate education students consented to participate in the study.

Even though the participants reflected diversity according to gender and teaching specialization, in terms of diversity, this group seemed homogenous by education level, social economic status, and ethnicity. Further, the participants in this study were volunteers, which may have impacted on the research because volunteers, who quite likely have an interest in leadership, may make meaning differently than meaning making in a random group.

Data Collection

Qualitative research occurs in cases where the researcher is an instrument in data collection, is positioned in a natural setting, gathers words or pictures, analyzes them inductively, focuses on the sense-making of participants, and describes a process that is expressive and persuasive in language (Creswell, 1998). Qualitative methods were well suited to uncovering meaning that the students in this research had assigned to their experiences. The methods I used involved: (a) interacting and listening to people; (b) inductively developing codes, categories, and themes *a posteriori* rather than *a priori*; (c) generating working propositions (hypotheses); and (d) analyzing the narrative and the data derived from the students' conversations about their leadership experiences in everyday life and practicum and college level contexts.

From my perspective, recursivity was the lynch-pin of the grounded theory-based method used in this study, and was achieved by using a semi-structured interview guide in the initial phase of data collection. In the initial data collection, I applied from Strauss and Corbin (1998) the idea of a less structured interview protocol. The guide was framed in terms of general questions, such as, "Tell me about a leader for whom you

have tremendous respect ...” and “Describe a leadership experience that powerfully enhanced your leadership capacity” (p. 205). The use of general questions provided the participants a degree of latitude in relating what was important to them, and enabled comparison of responses among the students. In keeping with Strauss and Corbin (1998), the leadership concepts and understandings that emerged became follow-up agenda items that enabled further data gathering and the unfolding of the students’ leadership concepts and understandings.

Multiple Methods Research Design

In recognition of the world as a “multi-faceted and multi-layered reality that reveals itself only in part with any single research method,” multiple method research studies draw upon data from more than one source and present more than one type of analysis (Jacobs, 2005). Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) explained that multiple methods in qualitative study referred to research designs in which the research questions were answered by using two qualitative data collection methods. Darbyshire, MacDougall, and Schiller (2005) identified multiple methods as a valuable research approach that did not merely duplicate data, but provided “complementary insights and understandings that may be difficult to access through reliance on a single method of data collection” (p. 417).

As editor of the *American Sociological Review*, Jacobs (2005) found that “while there are precedents for multiple methods research designs, their use by so many scholars is striking” (p. 3). I believed that my use of multiple methods in researching undergraduate education students’ leadership understandings was a valuable approach that enabled complementary leadership insights and understandings to emerge, which ordinarily may have been difficult to access using a single method.

My research design incorporated multiple methods (QUAL + QUAL), specifically focus group and individual interviews in the format of in-depth conversation (Fontana & Frey, 2000), and interview questions reflecting an ethic of care. Journal analysis and email collaboration were also used as additional data sources; the criteria for determining usable data included evidence of participant reflection, memoing, diagramming, and extending ideas and themes explored in the focus groups and individual interviews. These methods were appropriate to answering the overarching research question (stated in Chapter One) of revealing undergraduate education students' leadership understandings.

The Interview Method

Interviews are a special form of conversation constructed *in situ* as a product of the talk between and among interview participants. This interaction provided the catalyst for developing the understanding of participants' perceptions of reality and the specific phenomenon studied (Holstein & Gubrium, 1997). The aim of any interview was a first-person description of some specified domain of experience, with the course of the dialogue largely set by participants. In this way, questions flowed from the dialogue as it unfolded and reflected findings by Pollio, Henley and Thompson (1997) that

participants be collaborative and [t]he data arising from the interview [be] dialogic in the true sense of the term ... interview participants function as co-researchers and not merely as research subjects [The] research subject "contains" an internal representation of his/her subjective experiences. The researcher's task then becomes one of externalizing such representations without adding biases or distortions. (p. 30)

The data were unavoidably collaborative as the participants constructed meaning in focus groups. Similar to Holstein and Gubrium's (1997) active interviewing and Fontana and Frey's (2000) negotiated interview, the interview guide that I used in this study

respected Strauss and Corbin's (1998) advice for a more "unstructured interview" (p. 205), which afforded me the opportunity to build upon and explore participant responses in both focus group and individual interviews.

Conversational interviewing. Postmodern epistemologies have affected our understanding of the interview process, and in this way the approaches that we use take on a postmodern tenor (Fontana, 2002; Fontana & Frey, 2000; Reinharz & Chase, 2003) with respect to the questioning of traditional assumptions about "one truth" and "one story." Postmodern epistemology is oriented towards a choice of many possible stories, and seeks to understand and express various narratives rather than gloss over them. Fontana (2002) identified postmodern interviewing as an approach that allows diverse voices to come through and focus on the dialogue or conversation between researcher and participant. Schwandt (1997) observed that

[i]t has become increasingly common in qualitative studies to view the interview as a form of discourse between two or more speakers or as linguistic event in which the meanings of questions and responses are contextually grounded and jointly constructed by interviewer and respondent. (p. 79)

Schwandt identified that a conversational approach to interviewing emphasized researcher and participant as equal partners in a negotiated dialogue, thus allowing for talk about feelings as well as activities.

Fontana and Frey (2000) reported that researchers have realized that the results of interviews cannot be taken out of the contexts in which they were gathered and offered as "objective data" without any ramifications. For this reason, the interview is recognized as a practical production where meaning is constructed from the interaction between researcher and participant. As suggested by Fontana and Frey (2000), in order

to “decentre” or move away from the “ivory tower,” participatory and democratic approaches were favored.

Conducting Focus Group Interviews

The main data collection method was the focus group interview, described by Marczak and Sewell (2006) as “a group of interacting individuals [who have] some common interest or characteristics brought together by the moderator who uses the group and its interaction as a way to gain information about a specific, focused issue (¶ 2). In keeping with the focus group method, the students in this study were engaged in conversations on a number of occasions over the course of a seven-week period between March and May 2006.

The focus group interviews enabled participants to reveal their social orientation toward leadership, from which emerged their thoughts and feelings about leadership, explanation of leadership opinions, plans and designs for enhancing leadership, assessment of leadership experiences, and related strategies. The rationale for using focus group interviews in this study was to take advantage of the group interaction, conduct careful and systematic analysis of the data, and use these insights and information at the group level to obtain deeper levels of meaning about their leadership understandings. The focus group participants in this study were selected from undergraduate education students in their final term at the College of Education, University of Saskatchewan, something that may impact upon the transferability of the research findings to a larger population.

Conducting Individual Interviews

The second data collection method was the individual interview, which provided students an opportunity to share with me their personal orientations to leadership.

Complementary to the focus group interview, the individual interview was designed as conversational and included an “ethic of care” (Fontana & Frey, 2000, pp. 665-668) that would foster openness, emotional management, and the development of trusting relationships between participant and interviewer. The ethic of care fostered a relationship where the students and I were “co-equals” engaged in conversations about leadership as a mutually relevant phenomenon, and, in this way, we worked together to accomplish the interview.

The interview principles employed in this study were an aggregate of ethic of care interviewing and postmodern or conversational interviewing, which positioned the interview as a conversation capable of generating a negotiated text or dialogue. Participants in this study were a heterogeneous sample, and raised the issue of a male researcher interviewing female participants. Reinharz and Chase (2003) advised that when interviewing women, men must be aware of issues regarding differences in interviewers’ and interviewees’ social locations (race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, age, disabilities and abilities) and subjectivities. They recommended that men put aside inappropriate behaviors, such as arrogance and inattentive listening (p. 84), to encourage women to respond to male interviewers.

When men study women, then, the same general methodological principle applies as when women study men: It is crucial that the researcher take account of his or her own and the interviewee’s social locations and how they might affect the research relationship. (p. 85)

In this study, fifteen people –eight female and seven male- created the reality of the focus group and individual interview situations. The focus group and individual interviews produced situated understandings grounded in specific interactional episodes. Moreover, I found that respecting the students’ social locations in the focus groups and

individual interviews was important in supporting conversational processes and the meaning derived from the discourse.

Developing The Interview Guide

The interview guide in this study (see Appendix A) was similar to Holstein and Gubrium's (1997) "active interviewing," Fontana and Frey's (2000) "negotiated interview," and includes Strauss and Corbin's (1998) recommendation that interviews follow a more "unstructured" (p. 205) format. In this way, the interview instrument enabled an opportunity to build upon and explore participants' responses.

The wording of the interview questions followed the pattern established by Berg (2003), and initiated participant thinking about leadership by recalling actual concrete stories and actual respected leaders to "stay linked to concrete situations and stories with which they identified" (p. 102). In this way, students maintained focus on their own understandings of leadership.

Complementary to Berg, the interview questions that I used in this research were worded to solicit stories based on participants' past and current leadership experiences from which leadership concepts later emerged. The interview questions sought to stimulate participant thinking of past and current positive experiences with leadership, although I also included students' negative leadership experiences in the data collection and analysis.

The third iteration of the interview instrument was piloted in January 2006, and the criteria for retention of interview questions was that the question: (a) generated participant responses relevant to the research question; and (b) resulted in participants revealing their own past and current leadership experiences.

Piloting the Interview Guide

To determine appropriateness and establish the credibility and trustworthiness of the interview guide, my thesis advisor and I decided that it was prudent to test the questions with undergraduate education students not included in the sample who were completing a section of a core senior undergraduate course. Initial contact and ongoing correspondence with the test group was via email. Communicating electronically, I provided background information about the study, its research purpose, reasons for the pilot, and length of interview (between forty and sixty minutes). Volunteers were notified that every effort would be made to maintain confidentiality, but could not be guaranteed because of the small sample and small population.

Pilot participants were given an opportunity to remain with the pilot or opt out; three individuals agreed to participate in the pilot. With the confirmation of participation from the volunteers, a convenient time and place was arranged for each interview. At the appointed time and place, pilot participants were interviewed, and these conversations were audio taped, then transcribed into an electronic document.

The questions created for the interview guide were adapted from an existing instrument (Berg, 2003) and were designed to reflect the social constructionist orientation of grounded theory. In this way, the interview questions encouraged participants' thinking about past and current leadership experiences, and stimulated participants to recall and describe leadership according to the understandings that they held.

The interview questions were worded to stimulate the memories and imagination of the participants (Berg, 2003). The first question stimulated thinking about leadership and supported participants as they recalled leaders for whom they had tremendous

respect, and encouraged participants to focus on leader characteristics according to a concrete, rather than abstract, example of leadership. As characteristics were revealed, student responses identified their understanding about “who does the leading?”

The second and third questions were worded more broadly to remain rooted in actual past or current leadership experiences and organized participant thinking according to their experience with effective and energizing leadership and also revealed their understandings of leader-follower interplay. In sharing their experiences, students provided their perspectives about behaviors that they believed constituted leadership, in addition to their understanding of when and where leadership happened.

The fourth and fifth questions asked participants to think about past or current leadership experiences and share stories about leadership characteristics that they understood as necessary for them to become the type of leader to which they aspired. These questions encouraged the participants to draw upon their leadership understandings and construct meaning for their view of effective leadership, which included their perspectives about why leadership happened and what the actions were that let others know leadership was happening.

In recognition of the diversity among undergraduate education students and on the advice of my advisor, I decided to pilot the interview guide in order to: (a) gauge the level of success that each question had in deriving leadership understandings held by undergraduate education students; and (b) determine that participants revealed past and current leadership experiences, drawn from their experiences in everyday life, practicum and college level contexts. Following the pilot of the interview guide, a working draft of the interview guide was realized.

Results of the Pilot

Initial open coding produced preliminary concepts that were examined according to the previously mentioned criteria for interview question retention. Upon completion of the pilot interviews, participants volunteered comments about the instrument, and in this way provided me with direction for revision of the instrument. As a result of piloting the interview guide, my advisor and I decided to make revisions to questions two, three, four, and five.

The third and fifth questions, which asked participants to project their leadership characteristics onto potential and future situations, were edited to focus participant thinking on recalling past or current leadership experiences and events before describing a future leadership experience or event. Furthermore, the second and fourth questions were very similar in asking about extraordinary leadership experiences or events, so they were blended to create the final question four.

The interview instrument guide pilot also indicated that undergraduate education students recalled past and current leadership experiences drawn from their lived experience in everyday life and practicum and college level contexts rather than respond to interview questions exclusively from a cultural framework or ethnic background. Based upon the results of this pilot, it was decided to proceed with the revised interview guide (as presented in Appendix B).

Data Analysis

Initial interviews were audio taped, transcribed into electronic format, and printed as hard copies. Considering that the formal data collection and analysis commenced in April, I realized I had a small window of opportunity for face-to-face contact with participants. Accordingly, to supplement the face-to-face contact that

occurred ongoing recursive contact and collaboration with students occurred via electronic Delphi (asynchronous email). In addition to the focus group conversations, individual interviews, and student journals, I kept notes reflecting ideas, concepts, categories, themes, and metaphors that emerged during focus group and individual conversations with students about their leadership situations and experiences. These memos provided useful departure points in the coding process.

Coding

Researchers must be open to all possibilities during interviews, and as presented in Figure 3.3, the process was iterative and emergent with grounded theory-based coding

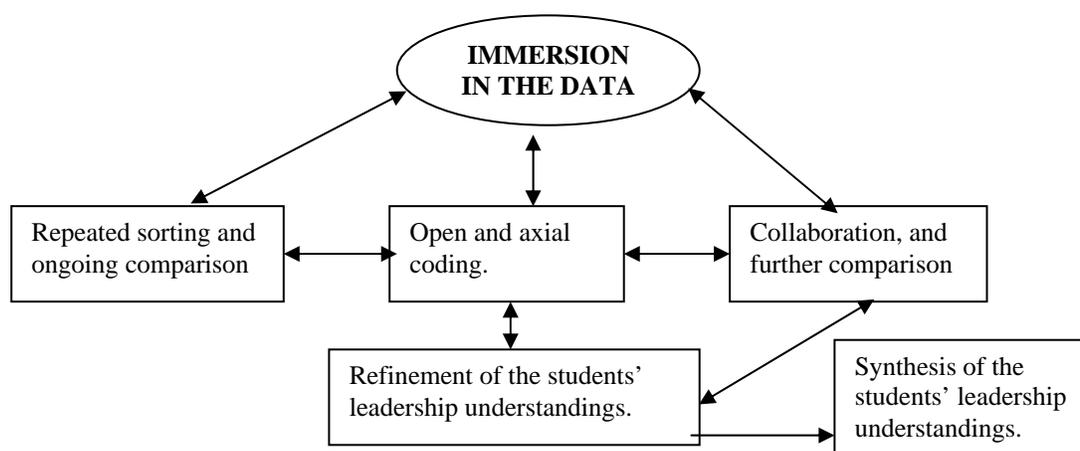


Figure 3.3. Flow of grounded theory based data collection and analysis. Bi-directional arrows indicate interplay between components.

Note. Adapted from *Basics of qualitative research (2nd Edition)*, pp. 207-212, by A.

Strauss and J. Corbin, 1998, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

activities in the initial data collection and analysis. observations, and when reading documents, and be willing to take full advantage of every opportunity that comes up, exploring as much data as possible (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Consistent with the Strauss and Corbin's (1998) approach to grounded theory, the open coding phase of my data analysis involved paragraph-at-a-time and phrase-by-phrase coding. Implemented at the beginning of the study, open coding enabled me to generate categories quickly and develop those categories through further analysis. I also coded paragraphs by their main ideas, and, in both cases, open coding commenced following my initial interaction with focus group and individual interviews and the emerging data. Therefore, the resulting evidence (concepts and understandings derived from the data) evolved over the duration of the study. Strauss and Corbin's phases of coding the data further complemented the emergent nature of grounded theory.

The participants' language guided the development of code and category labels for leadership concepts and qualities, which I identified with short descriptors or *in vivo* codes. Referring to Morrow and Smith (1995), I systematically compared and contrasted codes and categories in order to generate inclusive categories. Following Strauss and Corbin (1998), I wrote analytical and self-reflective memos that documented and enriched the analytical process by making explicit those thoughts that were implicit, and in this way expanded the data corpus by summarizing and analyzing the main concepts provided by the participants during data collection. Morrow and Smith (1995) identified analytic memos as consisting of "questions, musings, and speculations about the data and emerging theory" (p. 302). My memos included personal reactions to participants' stories, questions, and speculations about the students' leadership understandings and my representation of them.

Following open-coding, axial coding began the process of reassembling data that I had fractured during open coding.

In axial coding, categories are related to their subcategories to form more precise and complete explanations about phenomena. Axial coding requires the analyst have some categories, however, how categories relate often emerges during open coding, thus these phases do not have to occur sequentially. (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 124)

A category was a phenomenon, such as a problem, issue, event, or happening that was of importance to participants. A category explained what was going on, while subcategories answered analytical questions about the phenomenon, such as when, where, why, how, and with what consequences, thus “giving the concept greater explanatory power” (p. 124-125). Procedurally, axial coding related categories to subcategories along the lines of their properties and dimensions. Although participant stories in the individual and focus group interview transcripts and the email collaboration provided clues about how categories related to each other, the actual linking that took place in axial coding occurred at a conceptual level (rather than descriptive) and involved the following four basic tasks:

1. Set out the properties of a category and its dimensions, a task that began during open coding.
2. Identified the variety of conditions, actions/interactions, and, in some cases, consequences associated with undergraduate education student leadership understandings.
3. Related categories to subcategories through statements that denoted their relationship to each other.
4. Explored the data for “cues” that denoted relationships among the major categories.

When I coded axially, I employed analytical questions that *included who, when, where, why, and how* as departure points that facilitated uncovering relationships among

categories. As a principle of grounded theory, answering the analytical questions contextualized leadership, and in keeping with the Strauss and Corbin approach, I was able to identify “the how or means through which a category [was] manifested” (p. 127). By answering the analytical questions with results, I related structure with process. As Strauss and Corbin explained:

Combining process and structure helps analysts get at some of the complexity that is so much a part of life. Process and structure are inextricably linked and unless one understands the nature of their relationship it is difficult to grasp what is going on. The study of structure only leads to learning about “why” but not “how” certain events occur. The study of process only leads to learning and understanding how persons act/interact but not why. (p. 127)

Axial coding reassembled the data in new ways by making connections between a category and its subcategories. Categories emerged from this process and, whenever prudent, were assigned *in vivo* category labels.

The last phase of data analysis was the integrative process of selecting core categories and systematically relating them to other categories, thus validating relationships by searching for confirming and disconfirming examples and filling in categories that needed further refinement and development (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). In my study, I sorted, compared, and contrasted codings and categories until the categories were saturated.

With respect to saturation, I acknowledged individual interview nine as the point in which the students’ data were accounted for in the core categories. The criteria for core status were: (a) a category’s centrality in relation to other categories; (b) frequency of a category’s occurrence in the data; (c) clarity of the relationship to the general synthesis of the students’ leadership understandings; (d) its explanatory power; and (e) its allowance for variation in terms of related concepts (dimensions) and properties,

including characteristics, conditions, consequences, and strategies that I adapted from Morrow and Smith (1995) and Strauss and Corbin (1998).

I determined saturation with focus group one after their second session. However, with focus group two I noted that in each of the three face-to-face sessions, the students' process of constructing meaning was ongoing and new leadership understandings were still emerging. Unfortunately, because of logistical factors with the students, we agreed to discontinue face-to-face-meetings at the fourth session, but continued to collaborate electronically. With respect to the criteria for core categories and the point that saturation occurred, I used all the individual and focus group interview data, and email collaboration data in order to derive a deeper, richer, and more succinct analysis of the data. I excluded data, particularly journal data that (a) did not reflect a relation to other categories; (b) had no frequency of occurrence in the other data; (c) identified a clear relationship to the general synthesis of the students' leadership understandings; and (d) contained explanatory power.

Role of the Researcher

Strauss and Corbin (1998) wrote that the "human grasp of reality never can be that of God's but hopefully research moves us increasingly toward a greater understanding of how the world works" (p. 4). Inquiry that occurs in natural settings demands a human instrument and is built on tacit knowledge by using qualitative methods (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Naturalistic inquiry features direct human-researcher involvement and direction in the research process as a primary data gathering instrument. With respect to my theoretical orientation, overarching research purpose, and the emergent nature of the methodology, my researcher-as-instrument was an appropriate role in this study.

The interactive and complex context that characterizes the situations and settings in which naturalistic inquiry is conducted requires deliberation and, in some cases, intervention. This complexity poses some difficulties for designing adequate and appropriate objective instruments that capture the essence or focus of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Gauging the students' leadership understandings required developing a rapport with them, something which was achieved with "strong listening skills" (Reinharz & Chase, 2003, p. 81), paraphrasing, and mediating, and further necessitated my integration as the researcher within the research.

The Researcher as Instrument

Denzin and Lincoln (2000) equated the qualitative researcher with *bricoleur*, defined as "a kind of professional-do-it-yourself person," and explained that there are many kinds of *bricoleurs*—interpretive, narrative, theoretical, and political. The interpretive *bricoleur* produces a *bricolage*, "a pieced together set of representations that are fitted to the specifics of a complex situation" (p. 6). The *bricolage* is an emergent construction resulting from the *bricoleur's* method. "The product of the interpretive *bricoleur's* labor is a complex, quilt-like *bricolage*, a reflexive collage or montage—a set of fluid, interconnected images and representations. This type of interpretive structure is [considered] a quilt, a performance text, or a sequence of representations connecting the parts to the whole" (p. 6). In this way, it further emphasizes the need for human as researcher in qualitative study.

Fontana (2002) wrote that postmodernism influenced the traditional relationship between interviewer and interviewee, and loosened interviewing from its "traditional moorings" (p. 171). In this study, my use of postmodern interviewing fostered access to students' ideas, thoughts, memories, and ideas that developed from "spontaneous

exchange between interviewer and interviewee” (Reinharz & Chase, 2003, p. 77). The bricolage of students’ ideas is presented in Chapter Five as an array of representations that connect the students’ leadership understandings to the larger leadership phenomenon.

Trustworthiness

In order to establish the trustworthiness of the interview guide, I conducted a pilot of the instrument and made changes according to my criteria for question retention. Results of the instrument pilot have already been mentioned earlier in this chapter and do not need to be repeated here.

As recommended by Morrow and Smith (1995), Creswell (1998), Strauss and Corbin (1998), and Charmaz (2000), I engaged the students as co-analysts of the data that they generated in their focus group and individual interviews. Consistent with the co-analyst perspective, the students used in the data analysis their natural intuitive skills, collaboration, and cognitive and communication skills. As recommended in the literature, I maintained regular contact with the participants throughout data gathering, coding, analysis, and writing of the research account (Charmaz, 2000; Fontana & Frey, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Morrow & Smith, 1995; Tedlock, 2000), so as to enhance my sensitivity and receptiveness to the setting.

Accountability was achieved through ongoing consultation and collaboration with participants, and by maintaining an audit trail that consisted of the outline of the research process, evolution of codes, categories, and resulting synthesis of the students’ leadership understandings. The audit trail also included a chronology of research activities and included pre-entry conceptualizations, interviews, transcriptions, coding, analytical activities, and evolution of the synthesis.

Given that an active search for disconfirming evidence was essential to thoroughness, I applied a strategy from Morrow and Smith (1995), where I examined the data for evidence that disconfirmed any of the various claims that I made as a result of the data analysis, and any inconsistencies were revised accordingly and in consultation with the students.

Ethical Considerations

Participants in this study were not chosen by random sampling nor were they personal friends of mine. No professional or power relationships existed between the participants and me. I conducted focus group, individual interviews, and journal analysis research activities in a manner that was minimally disruptive, and contributed to the *emic* view of the students' leadership understandings. While engaged in these research activities, I realized that these processes enhanced the study and contributed to an enriched representation of the students' leadership understandings.

I understood that qualitative research might raise questions regarding bias and/or subjectivity. However, I had a genuine interest in students' leadership understandings and I explored and represented their leadership understandings through my study of their real-world context. This study proceeded with respect to all ethical considerations relevant to qualitative research. I informed participants of the purpose and nature of the study and how the findings were to be used, documented, disseminated, and communicated.

I also informed the students that their participation was voluntary and they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time, and in which case their data would be destroyed. In the final dissertation, they were told that all information generated from

this research would be presented anonymously. These procedural precautions provided for credibility and trustworthiness of the data.

I made every effort to respect the rights and careers of those who consented to participate in this study and assured confidentiality and anonymity as much as possible through the use of pseudonyms for those involved in the study. I reported information in aggregate form where necessary, and assigned verbatim quotations to pseudonyms. I followed the procedures as outlined by the University of Saskatchewan Behavioral Sciences Research Ethics Board with respect to guidelines concerning consent, confidentiality, right to withdraw participation in a study, and opportunity for feedback. The Ethics Review Board application is presented as Appendix C. Approval from the Board was received 10 February 2006 (see Appendix C).

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

I have always taken quite a leadership role in a lot of things that I do, I mean I am huge on people, everyone's opinions being heard and just kind of going with that (Female focus group participant).

In this chapter, I provide a synopsis of my engagement time with the undergraduate education students who participated in this study, along with the results of those interactions. To begin generating ideas and ways of analyzing the data I asked the following analytical questions of the data: Who leads? What qualities and behaviors constitute leadership? When does effective and energizing leadership occur and what does it look like? Where does effective and energizing leadership happen? Why does effective and energizing leadership happen? and How does one inform others that effective leadership is occurring?

In keeping with the Strauss and Corbin (1998) approach to grounded theory, I used these analytical questions as a departure point for my exploration of leadership as revealed by participants in focus groups, individual interviews of the participants, and their journals. In the latter part of this chapter, I explore the emergent themes that surfaced in conversation with students engaged in this study, and then I present the synthesis, or storyline, of student leadership understandings that emerged from my analysis of their reports of their leadership experiences.

The Participants

The participants in this study were volunteers who were senior undergraduate education students in their last term of the Bachelor of Education program in the College

of Education at the University of Saskatchewan. Following an informational evening and pizza dinner that I hosted on 29 March 2006 at the College of Education, fifteen undergraduate education students (eight females and seven males) agreed to participate in this project. The sample seemed homogenous by ethnicity, age and experience, and represented elementary, middle years, and secondary specialization cohorts. By virtue of their program, the participants had been, on average, attending the university for five years and in the College of Education for two years. The participants had successfully completed their practicum, and were in their final term of the regular session when they agreed to participate in this study. Most students mentioned that they were currently employed in jobs not in the education field, while at the same time actively pursuing teaching positions in Saskatchewan and Alberta.

All face-to-face individual and focus group interviews were held at the College of Education between 29 March and 16 June, 2006. Recursive contact, which extended my collaboration with participants, occurred via email and telephone between 5 April and 24 September, 2006. I also provided journals to participants and invited them to share their personal reflections, questions, and diagrams about leadership that surfaced after individual and focus group interview conversations. At the end of data collection in July, 2006, seven participants submitted journals.

Spirited Discussions: My Engagement with Participants

Data collection and initial analysis began in April, three weeks before the end of the second term of the 2005-2006 regular session, and concluded in July, with the exception of collaboration via email in September 2006. In recognition of participant commitments to preparing for and writing final examinations and their employment

obligations, I used electronic Delphi (email and telephone) to facilitate follow-up contact and collaboration with individual participants and members of the focus groups.

As the research unfolded, occasional challenges required rescheduling interview times around participant work schedules. For example, Ann informed me via email that “I have to work until 3:30pm on Thursday, April 27th but I can make it shortly after that.” Peter informed me that “I sub on Monday and Tuesday, so I will be out of town all of that week.” Similarly, I found participants’ family and work obligations impacted scheduling the focus group sessions. For example, Jack mentioned “that the second focus group would work for me but ... I just need to clear it with work.” Alex apprised me that “the gentleman who was taking my shift tomorrow became ill ... and because I was scheduled for that shift I have to work it.” Erin explained, “this is the first time my husband planned anything for our anniversary,” illustrating the effect that family commitments had on scheduling focus group sessions. In my engagement with participants, I respected their life commitments, and we worked collaboratively to find mutually convenient dates and times for focus group and individual interviews sessions.

Engaging the participants: The individual interviews. I conducted thirteen individual interviews with during April, May, and June of 2006. Each session averaged one hour and forty minutes, resulting in over twenty hours of audio-taped one-on-one contact. Each of the audio tapes was transcribed by an external transcriber into an electronic text format. As agreed upon by the participants, each transcript was forwarded as an email attachment so that each student could proofread their individual interview transcript, making any changes, additions, or deletions necessary to ensure an accurate record of our conversations. Transcripts were returned via email, and I followed up by meeting with participants face-to-face to sign transcript release forms. In situations

where a participant and I were unable to meet face-to-face, the transcript release forms were exchanged via fax.

As I began coding the interview transcripts, and themes and concepts emerged from the data, I initiated recursive contact with participants via email to “make sure I got it right.” Initial data-derived hunches, concepts, and themes were sent as email attachments, asking participants for their collaboration, input, and feedback. Requested changes were made to more accurately represent both the participant view and voice in the data analysis. I found recursive contact via telephone more challenging because some participants were no longer available at the number provided or messages were not returned. These difficulties with telephone contact influenced my decision to use email as the preferred method of recursive contact.

Between 15 and 20 May, 2006, I emailed the preliminary results to the participants and invited their feedback. I received positive responses from twelve students in the study, which affirmed the accuracy of the synthesis and representation of their leadership understandings that emerged from focus group and individual conversations.

Focus group interviews. In my effort to “go deep” with data collection, I decided to meet frequently with smaller groups of participants, and to this end I divided them into two focus groups of six and seven members each. The focus groups were balanced according to gender and grade level cohort (elementary, middle years, and secondary). Scheduling the focus group sessions for dates in April and May, 2006 proved to be challenging, largely due to participants’ family, work, study, and exam schedules. To respect their life commitments, I scheduled two, two-hour sessions for initial focus group data collection and analysis.

When I notified participants of the sessions, I encouraged attendance by providing pizza, submarine sandwiches, pop, and water. In the focus group sessions, I assumed the role of moderator and focused on guiding the discussion agenda. To support my role in the focus groups, I hired a graduate student as my assistant moderator whose responsibilities included creating a written document of the session as a back-up to the audio tapes, and observing the interaction of group members and noting any distinctive non-verbal communication elicited by focus group members. In addition to our notes, an external professional transcribed the audio tapes from each two-hour focus group session into electronic versions of the text documents. To me, data collection and collaboration with the focus groups reflected the most engaging data collection in this study.

The focus groups met for the first time on 19 and 24 April, respectively, near the conclusion of students' final examinations. In spite of allotting two hours for these initial sessions, each session ran 30-40 minutes longer than I had anticipated, illustrating the energy and commitment that participants brought to both the topic and the research. To extend our collaboration, I distributed the transcripts from the initial focus group sessions to participants, along with an invitation for feedback and suggested additional agenda items for the second focus group. For example, as the first meeting of focus group one was concluding, a female student observed that the topic of gender and leadership did not surface in our conversation; consequently, the group agreed to add gender and leadership to the discussion agenda for session two. Although focus group members had similar characteristics related to their education, experience, and age, the interaction and meaning making in the focus groups was quite different when focus group one was compared to focus group two.

Focus Group One

Five females and two males comprised focus group one, representing elementary, middle years, and secondary teaching specializations. I characterized the initial meeting of focus group one as highly interactive and collaborative in their responses to the discussion agenda items.

In this focus group session I noted that the members of this group got along, interacted well, and that they demonstrated energy, a positive attitude, and a commitment to the focus group. Over the course of the allotted time for this meeting, participants began the meaning-making process by contributing ideas related to their personal orientation to leadership, which proved successful for initiating dialogue among the focus group members. Interactive and collaborative conversation among the members demonstrated their social orientation to leadership. For example, as they shared their stories of past and current leadership experiences, they probed for more information and challenged each other in their interactions. Through these collaborative processes, members constructed a preliminary definition of leadership and generated a grouping of characteristics and qualities that they associated with effective and energizing leaders and leadership.

The second session occurred on 2 May, 2006, and they engaged each other in lively discussion about things going on in their personal lives, especially their upcoming convocation. To cue participants to the agenda, I opened the session by speaking to the importance of their participation in the individual and focus group interviews, and keeping up-to-date with entering in their journals reflections, ideas, questions and diagrams related to their sensemaking about in the individual and focus group interviews.

At the conclusion of my introductory comments, students became engaged in a spirited conversation about gender and leadership they shared their opinions, experiences, and knowledge of pertinent research findings. Based on their observations and experiences, they acknowledged that equity was omnipresent in educational institutions and they agreed that for this reason gender “wasn’t even on our radar in session one.”

At about the one-hour point of this second session the conversation moved into a discussion of stories related to their general leadership experiences, but the conversation transitioned to more specific leadership experiences in practicum schools and at the College. At this point, I observed that members were looking tired, and that their conversation was becoming marked by increasingly long silences. During the last thirty minutes or so of this session, I noticed a rather substantial change in the group’s processes, as students seemed less willing to probe, challenge, collaborate, and interact with each other.

For the remainder of this session, students preferred to follow comments volunteered by one member, whom I identified as “the spokesperson” (my pseudonym). For the last part of session two, I observed that the others in the group waited to speak. After a short silence, the spokesperson would contribute to the conversation, from which other members seemed to take their cues and contributed their comments by way of sharing their relevant experiences and corroborating ideas. I learned after the fact that the spokesperson was known for supporting others in class discussions, and, with the benefit of hindsight, I surmised that as the group members grew more weary (this session occurred at the end of final examinations) over the course of this meeting, the

spokesperson role was reprised in an effort to support colleagues in the focus group session.

In our follow-up discussion of session two, my assistant moderator and I recalled energized conversation about gender and leadership, leadership as a process, and stories about individual and collective experiences with effective and ineffective leadership in the College. In the second hour of session two, the energy and dynamics among group members faded, and a repetition of topics from session one may occasionally have prevented new topics from emerging.

Perhaps due in part to the timing of the data collection and students' employment, family, and educational commitments, I was unable to secure a quorum for a third session, and so the group agreed to use electronic Delphi (email) to facilitate further collaboration. Fortunately, five of the seven group participants forwarded their comments about the emergent themes and concepts, and I was able to engage in telephone conversations to ensure accuracy with them. By the middle of July, I confirmed with members of the first focus group via email that my representation of their comments in the sessions was accurate.

Focus Group Two

Focus group two was initially comprised of three females and four males; however, one male student later withdrew for employment reasons. The resulting focus group represented elementary, middle years, and secondary teaching specializations. We held our first session on 24 April, 2006 in the College of Education, and I characterized this session as highly engaged, interactive, and collaborative, as students in this focus group responded to the agenda items. My assistant moderator observed that members of focus group two "seemed to know each other well," and despite some initial

apprehension in contributing to the conversation, their sincere engagement with each other and the discussion topics left a positive and memorable impression my assistant and me.

Over the course of the allotted time for this first session, students began the meaning-making process by contributing ideas originating from their personal orientation to leadership. As students shared their experiences with each other, the dialogue gradually transitioned to descriptions of experiences that reflected their social orientation to leadership, such as with a certain professor and the leadership meaning that they conferred on these experiences. I found it exciting to observe students sharing stories of past and current leadership experiences and growing more energized as they probed each other for more information, challenged each other, and collaborated with each other to reveal leadership characteristics and understandings that they held in common. Complementary to focus group one, the social meaning-making processes that occurred in focus group two enabled the group's construction of a preliminary definition of leadership, which included an extensive inventory of characteristics and qualities that students associated with effective and energizing leaders and leadership.

I noticed that members of focus group two knew each other, worked well together, and were energetic, positive, and committed to the interactive processes that developed within the group. As a follow up to the first session of focus group two, I made contact with members via email, and invited collaboration and further discussion related to the first session. As with focus group one, I attached for their perusal a transcript from the first session, and invited their comments and feedback to ensure accuracy in its representation of their conversation.

Email and telephone contact with members of focus group two enabled me to discover that members of focus group two routinely continued (outside the group setting) their collaboration and discussion of topics and themes that originated in the focus group sessions. I found this student-initiated activity noteworthy because, of their own volition, students demonstrated a willingness to extend the collaboration into their own time. From my perspective, this willingness to extend their discussions suggested emphasized their interest in the leadership topic and their sincerity and dedication to the research and to each other. Students later told me that these informal group discussions enabled clarification of respective leadership experiences and extended their thinking through of ideas that surfaced in successive focus group sessions and individual interviews.

The second session, on 8 May, 2006, began with a presentation of the first agenda topic, gender and leadership, and, somewhat surprisingly, students dispensed with this topic after a somewhat brief conversation. A female student summed up the gender and leadership topic by concluding, “gender doesn’t make the leader; it is the skills he or she has.”

I was interested by the student interaction mainly because of their high level of engagement, interest in each other’s ideas, and commitment to this data gathering process. During session two, themes associated with group-dynamics concepts (e.g., “integrity,” “civility,” “cohesiveness,” “chemistry,” and “congruence”) emerged from students’ stories of leadership experiences. At the end of this session, one female member mentioned receipt of information about an impending social event in the form of a mass email, which students perceived as terse, condescending, and mean spirited; as a result, they categorized this experience as negative and “ineffective leadership.” This

mass email was experienced by everyone in the group and opened the floodgates to students' opinions. Students were passionate in discussing the mass email incident, and became increasingly eager as they explored their reactions to it. A lively and engaging conversation ensued among students that consistently emphasized compassionate human relationships and emotional investment as principal dimensions of effective and energizing leadership, and this element emerged as an overarching leadership understanding. I was moved by the interest and commitment that these people had to the research, and I found this focus group experience to be intellectually, socially, and emotionally inspiring. Students' inspiration and passion for this topic was demonstrated by their request for a third meeting to enable exploration of the still-unfolding mass email incident and the leadership understandings that it contained. Not surprisingly, I had no difficulty in securing a quorum for the next session.

According to the group's instructions, I placed the mass email story as the first discussion topic on the agenda for the third focus group session, held on 18 May, 2006. As per the established custom, I observed that the matter of the mass email subtly entered, then dominated the pre-session small-talk. As I observed the conversation, I understood the transition from small talk to discussion of the mass email signaled students' enthusiasm and readiness to delve further into discussion of this leadership experience. I noted that as students vented their frustration with the tone of this email, they grew increasingly animated. Gradually their anger and resentment were replaced by sentiments about the moral dimensions of leadership, and the conversation became more dialectic as students collaboratively conceptualized what leadership *was* by exploring the mass email incident as an exemplar of what leadership *was not*. Students spoke candidly and passionately about the mass email and their reactions to it,

signifying this event as a critical formative incident to their leadership understandings in the context of their participation in the study.

Students were passionate as they shared their stories about past and current leadership experiences and in the course of focus group conversations, dimensions of social dynamics emerged as a new topic. In exploring their social orientation to leadership, students successfully established and sustained interactive and collaborative conversations, and in the process they conceptualized leadership as interactive meaning-making. Students in focus group two spoke at length about the interpersonal and social dynamics that they understood as integral to effective and energizing leadership. They agreed that the terms integrity, congruence, civility, chemistry, cohesiveness, and catalytics represented these interpersonal and social dynamics conceptions.

In debriefing the conversations that transpired during the second and third sessions, my assistant moderator and I agreed that the positive, enthusiastic, and energizing demeanor exhibited by students in their interaction and collaboration were significant parts of the focus group sessions.

In spite of individuals' employment, family, and educational commitments, we always succeeded in establishing a quorum for each successive focus group session. As the third session drew to a close, the students were passionate about extending the conversation and agreed that there was value in having a fourth session; unfortunately, students' commitments inhibited scheduling of a fourth session. Three students indicated that relocation for employment was imminent, while another student informed me of travel plans, all of which mitigated against further face-to-face meetings with focus group two. However, students agreed that there was value in continued contact and the consensus was to continue collaboration via electronic Delphi (email).

Fortunately, four of the six students in this group provided later comments about my synthesis of leadership themes and concepts, and helped me substantiate the accuracy of the representations. By the middle of July, twelve students in this focus group affirmed via email that the themes, concepts, and synthesis accurately represented their leadership understandings.

Renderings: Participants' Views of Leadership

The focus groups provided a considerable volume of information and insight on students' leadership understandings. I supplemented these insights with individual interviews, journal analysis, and email collaboration with focus group members.

In the individual interviews, students shared stories that highlighted their individual participation and reflections on various leadership experiences, and thus revealed their personal orientation to leadership. I also found that the individual conversations generated additional data when students recalled focus group sessions and offered clarification and corroboration of information that surfaced in their conversations. The individual conversations further provided an opportunity for students to disclose personal and private reactions and feelings about positive leadership experiences. In other cases, students told me about their experiences with negative leadership and the emotional scars that they received from being intimidated, bullied, denigrated, or humiliated. Combined with focus group data, the individual interviews offered an additional source of information about positive and negative leadership, and the moral dimension associated with these experiences.

Journal analysis accounted for a smaller amount of supplemental data because seven journals were submitted, but only four journals contained data that I judged as having sufficient value to be of benefit to the analysis. The journals were largely

reflective of the focus group and individual interviews, and contained personal memos, questions, and diagrams. Natalie used the journal to explore leadership by weaving together her leadership experiences with reflections on the focus group sessions and her reading about leadership. Jill and Kara recorded brief notes comparing positional leadership to processual leadership, and posed questions that were mainly rhetorical.

The journals I received also included undeveloped diagrams about leadership that indicated that students understood leadership as an interactive and collaborative relationship that typically focused on accomplishment of vision. I found an interesting insight in Dawn's journal, where she not only reflected on leadership conversations in the focus groups, but also invited me into her thinking via a drawing of a circle and vision as its hub, which represented her conceptualization of effective and energizing leadership. Journal analysis generated data that was mainly reflective, and it corroborated views of leadership shared in the focus groups. I understood that the reflective aspect of the journals included students' rhetorical comments and questions about leadership. The biggest contribution from the journal analysis was that it enabled me to gain insights into the individual and group discussions about leadership experiences and understandings, and add to effective and energizing leadership the importance of an emotional dimension.

The email collaboration was typically concise, and it focused on affirmation of the textual representation of focus group and individual conversation transcripts. The email collaboration provided opportunities for students to confirm that I had accurately represented a synthesis of their leadership understandings. Students clarified ideas, asked questions, and offered further insights in response to my evolving synthesis of their leadership understandings. At times I was challenged by email responses that

compelled me to look at the data not only for what students said about their leadership experiences, but also for what students implied about leadership understandings. I believe that the biggest contribution of the email collaboration to the data analysis was that it prompted me with additional examinations of the data and motivated rethinking my initial hunches, thereby helping me to more accurately represent a synthesis of students' leadership understandings.

Attending to the who, what, when, where, why, and how analytical questions with an application of results provided me with a starting point for analysis and enabled me to generate ways of looking at the data in the open coding phase. These analytical questions facilitated a transition from open coding to axial coding processes, and helped me uncover relationships among categories and contextualize the leadership phenomenon.

My renderings of students' leadership understandings unfolded from stories that highlighted their past and current leadership experiences. In this section, I present the story of relationships between the people and events of my study.

Inspiring Us to Get Involved

People today do not want to take orders from one person. People like having input, and like the old saying goes, 'two heads are better than one'. I believe that true leadership is a process (Alex, a male participant).

As conversations unfolded about leaders whom students admired, former teachers, parents, cooperating teachers, principals, and political figures were identified, which in turn generated an extensive list of qualities related to the leaders they mentioned. Participants most often mentioned caring, nurturing, trust, and sense of humor as the qualities that they most admired in the leaders about whom they spoke. During an initial focus group conversation, a male student explained, "a leader is like a

role model” and “someone I definitely look up to.” In a subsequent focus group conversation, a female student mentioned her cooperating teacher as someone “who [did] leadership” because “she inspired and motivated everyone around [her],” and “inspired us to reach her level because she was so wonderful.”

During a later focus group session, a male student suggested that someone who leads “can take whole groups and encourage them and motivate them in no time at all.” A female participant echoed this position and explained that from her experience, people who were involved with leadership

[inspired] in a way that [was] very positive and certain [and] concerned with the rest of the group, their interests and whether or not they’re being met ... it’s that motivation that inspired [us to] get involved.

At a later point in the focus group meeting, a male student emphasized that “anyone can be in a leader position,” but this in itself is not isomorphic with energizing, effective leadership because

I think it [represented] ‘do you care more about yourself or do you care about others?’ Are you concerned about yourself because [if you are] then you won’t have the motivation to collaborate with other people ... You could fake it but it might not seem genuine [compared to] someone who actually cared about other people and wanted to work with [them].

Another male student recalled a story about his high school physics teacher and a classroom activity that left an impression on him because the teacher’s progressive approach to physics demonstrated effective and energizing leadership for him.

I remember experiences in school where we had problem based learning. I know we did problem based learning in our physics classes [in] grades eleven, and twelve and those were two of the most fun things ever. [The teacher] gave us physics problems to solve [such as] how would you get an egg from the roof of the gym to the floor without breaking it, or creating a CO² powered rocket for both height and accuracy? [We] had to figure it out and [our] imagination was the limit. Using what [we] had in class [provided] a way for every single person in that class to be involved, everybody had this model of what they wanted to do and [we] were all excited to do it.

In summarizing the conversation about who demonstrated leadership, a female student inferred that “there’s really no clear set of guidelines for leader. ... [L]eadership is just very broad based.” This reflected the common view of participants who understood leadership as a much more expansive idea than that represented by individual or positional leaders.

Harnessing the talents of individuals. Through their stories of past and current leadership experiences, students revealed the commonly held view that “who does leadership,” or was involved with leadership action, was not limited by position or process qualifiers. On one hand, participant stories featured a view that “the positional leader [is] where the power relationship comes in and you get to dictate what happens” (male focus group member). In this way, leadership was conceptualized as an individual person, labeled “the leader,” a role that Jack described in his individual interview as “the organizer,” “the initiator,” or the “definite doer.” Alex reflected on his own leadership experiences during his individual interview and defined *positional leader* as “someone delegated as leader [who] delegates what everyone else does. When [I] look at these situations, I don’t think that they work exactly the best.”

In individual interviews, Erin related her view that leader-as-position implied someone who “took control.” Similarly, Peter envisioned the positional leader as someone who “gets people fired up,” a view of leadership alluded to in a later focus group session when a female student expressed that

it’s interesting to look at how many different types of leaders there are. For example, if you took a classroom you know there might be a leader in a group and there’s the leader of the class and the teacher who’s a leader ... There’s the school principal, and you know there is a leader in every different context within that school.

On the other hand, in a supplemental focus group a male student mentioned, “we can all be leaders ... [but] for me it definitely comes down to leadership as a process,” a view that acknowledged leadership as an *action-oriented* process rather than a decidedly *control-oriented* position.

Speaking to the idea of leadership-as-process in her individual interview, Ann commented on the revelation that she experienced regarding her previous and current conceptualizations of who was involved in leadership:

[I] always thought that leadership was a position. ... [Y]ou have this person [and] its almost like they're kind of higher than you kind of thing. ... Whereas if it's a process, [and] I really believe in this collaboration kind of thing, you don't have to know everything [and] you can't do everything yourself. Sure it's important to have somebody kind of at the core, but there are other people working with you.

In her interview, Natalie qualified this idea, noting that leadership involved an interactive and collaborative process, which she described as

people trying to think of what is best for whom they're leading, so an effective leader changes their style to better suit the needs of their students [or] their people like a principal working with the staff to promote a relationship where you feel that you have somebody to talk to and you won't feel judged, or [have the problem] affect how you are viewed.

Participant stories of leadership experiences portrayed leadership as action that oscillated along a continuum between position (such as Jack's “initiator” role) and process (represented by Natalie's “promoting a relationship”) endpoints.

Natalie envisioned effective and energizing leadership as “smaller groups working together, like on a topic ... [or] action plan.” Ann described leadership “as a whole, sort of group kind of thing,” with “lots of talking,” and “lots of collaboration,” which complemented Fran's view of leadership as “a huge collaboration, which can't just be one person.” Ann's view of leadership-as-process, suggested that “everybody

[had] a valued place in this group,” and as Ann, Natalie, Fran, and students in focus group conversations identified it, the idea of leadership as interactive process where individuals have value in the group emerged from student stories and provided a second category of students’ leadership understandings.

In telling her story of organizing a school Christmas concert, Kara shared her leadership experience, where value was placed on the interaction and collaboration among the students and teachers involved:

When I was doing my internship and I was in the middle years and I had said in the beginning of my internship that I would like to get involved in the Christmas concert, but my homeroom was not involved. Around the time when everyone was planning, I said, ‘well I’ll help out with this’, and it just happened that no one on the planning committee had any art experience and very few people were looking to get involved with something like that. I thought you know, this is something that I could challenge myself with. I developed an art club of middle years students who otherwise might not have been involved with the Christmas concert ... we had set up a backdrop for the Christmas concert and we completely designed everything. It was an international Christmas concert [and] we taught everyone to say Merry Christmas in a language from a different country, we researched their flags and turned it into more of a project than just a backdrop and sort of made the concert go into a completely different direction. I think that [was] a positive experience for the students and for me, and you know it was just great all around.

In relating this experience, Kara used the collective pronoun “we,” which signified leadership as an interactive, shared, and process oriented action, rather than as a title bestowed upon any one individual. Most student stories about leadership-as-position presented situations where a group of people desired positive change and recognized that they had the responsibility and skills necessary to motivate and encourage others to implement an agenda or vision.

Similarly, students in the focus groups discussed leadership-as-process and recognized that processual leadership required harnessing “the talents of group members” to encourage effective and energizing leadership. According to Dawn,

[L]eadership as process obviously takes us to a deeper level of thinking. ... [W]e must be accepting of differences [and] we need to adapt to the abilities of our team members or students

Bringing a group together and finding something that works in a specific situation was the underlying assumption here. Participants in individual and focus group conversations frequently mentioned that “anyone can be a leader” because leadership was not conceptualized as an exclusively leader-follower relationship. From Jill’s perspective, “[with] leadership as a process, I see a group of people working together to make a change.”

The types of leadership observed by participants depended upon context. For example, Ann shared an experience from her practicum that featured

the principal taking on the role of being an organizer. So the principal would have everything organized ... but he did not see himself as superior to the rest of the teachers. ... [As] a cohesive group, everyone had respect for one another, [and] took on that [leadership] role. ... I think that everyone should be active participants ... [and] everyone needs to be equal partners and work together as a group to make that situation work.

In practicum schools, focus group participants often described leadership as involving the principal or vice-principal as “the initiator” or “coach” and staff as “the team,” all focused on working together as a “cohesive group” to achieve their goal. A cohesive group was recognized as essential to effective and energizing leadership, and also represented a student leadership understanding.

Ann positioned the concept of a “cohesive group” within an example of a bullying proofing initiative:

[L]et’s say it’s a bully, the bullying thing, teachers should have that expectation of themselves to be involved and they should know where they fit into a situation. So, if there [are] five different groups, one focused on the playground, one that focuses on the classroom ... and what[ever] the circumstances would be, teachers just know that they fit into that area kind of thing. I guess that would

be the ideal situation.

In this context, Ann stated that “teachers are really, in essence, leaders of the students and of the school,” and “the principal [is] a facilitator” who enabled “everyone [to] voice their experiences and then see what would work best for your school.” The school staff was a cohesive group who embraced or derived a common set of goals, values, and direction to combat bullying in their school. Dawn spoke of her experience in community schools, and explained,

[P]rincipals and vice-principals seemed to share the power in a different way than I’ve seen in other schools. ... I see people working together, sharing, having open communication ... enjoying the process of having open communication and realizing the benefit of—I am going to coin the term— co-leadership[, that is,] sharing power, refraining from establishing one leader. ... I see everyone take on a leadership role, taking on the follower role and being able to interchange them without thinking about consequences. ... [E]veryone is contributing.

Dawn’s experience in community schools complemented the view of her fellow students that “anyone can lead” in positional and processual terms, and feel valued and respected for the skills and experience that each person brought to the group.

Student experiences within the College revealed a possible disconnect between the College mission and the actual leadership-oriented activities occurring in education classes. Jill observed,

for some professors it is easier to believe that they are here just for the title and their ego[, but] do they truly care about the teacher candidates they are instructing? For others, they are here because they feel they can make a great contribution to our learning and us becoming the best teachers we can be.

Stories of leadership experiences in the College included a professor who was described by students as “a very caring and nurturing person,” someone who “cared about what she was doing and that she cared about her students.” In one of the later focus group sessions, a female student explained that this professor used “a lot of group discussion, a

lot of interpretation from us,” and was also able “to get us excited about things, trying new things” because “we were students in some points and teachers [in other points].”

Fran commented in her individual interview that

in the case of this undergraduate program, I think the more blurred the leader, the more cohesive the group, you know, everybody is the leader. I think that works, or can work. I think that’s what I experienced from Professor A’s classroom.

This professor took on the role of mentor and colleague, and focused on multi-modal, student centered strategies in the classroom, which students conceptualized as process-oriented, collaborative leadership. From the students’ view discussion of leadership invariably included experiences that implied no distinction between teaching and leading. For instance, a female student explained in a focus group session that Professor A’s class reflected “leading through others” one concept of leadership that students put forth.

However, some focus group students mentioned a professor whose style focused on control and dominance, and was known for verbally belittling students as a matter of routine. A female student disclosed to her focus group that “there were times when [professor’s name] made us afraid to speak in class, [professor’s name] would yell at us and so we didn’t really care. ... [W]e didn’t feel appreciated.” Such stories came up regularly in initial and successive focus group conversations because most participants in both focus groups were former students of this professor.

Experiences with this professor also arose in individual interviews. During Mike’s interview, he explained that this professor “actually silenced me, [and] would not let me explain my point of view.” To Mike, it was obvious that the class was “all about [professor’s name].” Student experiences with this professor identified their understanding that this misanthropic behavior represented a power-over definition of

leadership. Moreover, throughout the course of the conversations, it became evident that these two professors' in-class behavior accurately characterized students' understandings of "power-through" and "power-over" leadership approaches.

For the most part, stories of students' leadership experiences in the College featured caring professors who, according to one female student in a focus group, "allow[ed] us to grow as individuals [and leaders] and use the leadership qualities we have seen from our professors in our everyday home life, as well as teaching life."

Anyone can lead. Emerging from stories of past and current leadership experiences, students understood that the matter of "who leads" was differentiated according to context. In relating a leadership experience as a supervisor in a non-educational context, Erin spoke of how she was "very cognizant of people's needs [and] for me to have respect from my people. ... I gave respect ... listened to them ... and knew what they were feeling," and her co-workers accordingly felt included and valued. Peter shared an experience from his sports background, prefaced with the comment, "we talked about ... the idea of coaches and if they matter."

I think back to my high school experience ... and I'm just thinking that our coach, we really respected him, and we listened to him, and we looked up to him even though we knew, you know, what worked for our team and what didn't work, and what we could set up with. [Coach] was so passionate about the sport and about our team, even though we knew and he knew that his job was sort of—I don't want to say irrelevant—because we needed a coach and we needed that leadership, but as far as the end result, we didn't need him. . . It sounds bad, but I'm thinking of how much I respected him, even though his overall goal was minimal to our success. . . [T]hat's one experience of a leader where it's leader by default, sort of, but it's still a person that we respected and we did [at times] need him.

This example illustrated Peter's understanding that "cheerleading" and a team-orientation were vital functions of effective and energizing leadership. In the case of his sports experience, Peter equated effective and energizing leadership with players on the

team demonstrating prowess and success, while the coach contributed to the team in a cheerleading capacity, sharing his passion and encouragement with the team.

Jill provided an experience from her practicum that demonstrated students sharing leadership with their teacher. Jill explained her view of “flatter” classroom leadership in the following excerpt:

I think [of] a unit I planned with my students. ... [T]he students who helped me plan the unit [felt] more confident giving feedback on how things were going, and adapted things together.

In this way, Jill’s students engaged in learning as colleagues, which demonstrated her perspective of flattened classroom organization and decision-making practices. She believed that collaboration with students was “empowering for them, they [felt] valued being able to bring their perspectives and understandings ... [and] were more apt to contribute.”

Alex related an experience that featured a fellow education student engaged in leadership:

I found him to be a leader in our cohort. We really had a tight cohort and everyone got along from the first day forward. He took on a leadership role, as kind of the spokesperson for our group. ... [We] looked at him as someone with extra experience and initiative, and he’s well spoken. ... Those qualities made him more of a leader. ... [H]e took the initiative to be the leader in ... our group. In our class, I’ll say ten people were kind of leaders, or just more outgoing, and wanting to do things with the group. ... I guess everyone would be facilitating, but [name deleted] was the person that was putting all of this together.

From his experience, Alex understood leadership to involve a goal, common values held by the group, and an action plan. He additionally explained this view of leadership by acknowledging the role of his colleague as “the initiator” and “the delegator,” even though “he never took the position of ... ‘you guys are just my little

followers'. It was 'we're all one group'." This highlighted Alex's understanding that leadership was interactive and collaborative, and, in this way, that anyone can lead.

Leadership experiences in non-education workplaces, practicum schools, and the College of Education revealed a common leadership understanding that diverse situations required diverse leadership qualities, characteristics, and skills. In her individual interview, Erin stated that "[e]ach issue is independent on the need for leadership ... [which dictates whether leadership is] a person in the role of leader ... or maybe a group of people."

Students acknowledged that effective and energizing leadership was broadly based, and perceived that a relationship existed between context-specific conditions and leadership skills and behaviors appropriate to the situation. Students acknowledged that people and situations provided the inspiration to become involved in leadership, and as revealed in their leadership stories, students recognized that no two situations were the same, and that context-specific conditions determined whether leadership actions were positional and hierarchical, processual, interactive and relational, or some combination of those approaches.

Building Relationships and "Going the Extra Mile"

I just equated effective leadership behavior with, you know, you've accomplished something (Female participant).

Natalie shared a story of an archeology project that she categorized as energizing and effective leadership behavior:

[I]t really showed me what I am capable of doing ... [and] allowed me to take on a role that I have never had before [and] allowed me to work with so many different people ... [It] was just so exciting to see the kids learn and to see that I'm helping them learn this subject, appreciate things more, and seeing my relationship with them [develop]. One kid was telling me that he had never been to the university before, and in preparation for the dig he came to the university

and was telling me that he had never been there before ... [He] was asking me about the university and he was telling me about art, that he might want to do art in university. His teacher came by asking about him, and I was telling him that he was thinking about taking art at university, and he was like, "Oh, well, he's really good at art, but [I've] never heard him talk like that before." I thought it was really neat that I had a chance to help, that there's a different path that he could take.

In her individual interview, Natalie revealed that she understood that the archeology project was effective and energizing because "it allowed [her] to work with other people in the community," such as teachers, principals, elders, and university colleagues, and "see them in a different light." According to Natalie, leadership was interactive collaboration with stakeholders, a leadership understanding common to participants' leadership experiences.

Dawn focused on trust as a big issue, explaining that being "in that trust-respect position [enabled me] to garner respect [from] the people that I worked with ... [and] as time went on [we] were able to see that we could work side by side." As Dawn reflected on her story, it became apparent that a collaborative relationship among employees, cultivated in the process of achieving the vision, was acknowledged as a fundamental leadership behavior. Similarly, Jack spoke of a respected leader and those behaviors that constituted leadership:

[H]e was humble, he wasn't afraid to make mistakes, and let you know he made mistakes. ... [H]e was very respectful [and] I never heard him actually raise his voice. ... [T]ypically [he was] very calm and collected.

As revealed in successive focus groups, students explained that effective, energizing leadership included consistent interpersonal behaviors and skills. In the later sessions, students in the focus groups agreed with the terms "integrity," "congruence," "civility," "chemistry," "cohesiveness," and "catalytics" (i.e., supporting) to describe these behaviors and skills. The students in the focus groups established that they

understood leadership was the relationship and included an influencing process, vision, and accomplishment.

Leadership is working with people. Alex stated that “the best kind of leadership is ... working with people,” and further explained effective and energizing leadership as

an interactive process ... [with] everyone working together ... everyone’s opinions count. [When] we are working as a group, and everyone is viewed as an equal, we should be able to reconcile differences and come to an agreement, or vision everyone can agree with.

Jack agreed that effective and energizing leadership

is based on collaboration ... [because] effective leadership isn’t one person in charge, it is a group of professionals willing to do what they have to, and instead of one person going out and finding people to do what needs to be done, it’s willing people volunteering for these positions without being forced. Once you force [people] then it becomes positional leadership, [which is] not necessarily [about] the process of... looking at the goals, doing the best to achieve those goals and not letting personal aspects get in the way of cooperation and team work.

Kara reflected on a conversation that she had with her husband, where

we decided that with leadership, it’s not always about ego and about being leader. It’s about having a great idea and having the sense to make it work, and believing that it can happen. [Leadership is] about being passionate and so “caught up” in it that other people want to join you.

Kara’s point that leadership is about great ideas, passion, and using skills to energize others and work together to achieve the great idea is quite telling.

According to participant stories in follow-up focus group sessions, collaboration, interaction, and the actions of individuals working collectively to effect positive change captured the *effective* and *energizing* dimensions of leadership. In addition, through exploration of participant leadership experiences in the focus group sessions and individual interviews, caring, nurturing, and respect emerged as *effective* and *energizing* leadership behaviors.

Participants did not consider aggressive behavior, bullying, and intimidation to be leadership because they understood that the intentions or motives for aggressive, bullying, and intimidating behavior were a “power-trip” for advancing a personal agenda rather than acting and interacting in order to advance the group’s vision. Mike made this point in his interview by relating a workplace story before he enrolled in the College of Education:

[T]he leadership style was very overbearing and unreasonable, and just not much person to person management, [which] created a very distrustful and inefficient work environment. ... [N]o one really felt like they needed to do work for this person because they didn’t really care for this person, because this person didn’t really seem to care for them [and] created a time-wasting, uncaring work environment.

Within school contexts, this type of “overbearing and unreasonable” behavior communicated a message that “Your input is unnecessary because I am the boss,” a message that conflicted with students’ understanding that effective and energizing leadership was an interactive and collaborative relationship.

Kara explained that “one huge factor of bad leader[ship] is that people aren’t working together,” and she described effective leadership as “collegial and collaborative,” where “everything comes down to respect, bottom line.” In her individual interview, Kara stressed that “recognition” of relationships was an essential attribute of “good” leadership behaviors. Furthermore, students in focus group and individual conversations about relationships reflected a “you catch more flies with honey than vinegar” motif, the underlying theme of effective and energizing leadership.

The following focus group excerpt illustrates this theme:

F: ... building relationships between staff and students, making people feel comfortable so they have a relationship with a student, or staff

M1: Relationship building is a quality of leadership ... is [that] what you're saying?

M2: I think so and it kind of [shows] people respond if they think that you care.

M3: ... leadership is being able to form that relationship and to go that extra mile.

In this way, students understood effective and energizing leadership to be relationship building, and included recognition, support, and empathy.

A female student in a focus group described her experience “[in] high school, elementary, and middle schools ... [I] saw people demonstrate power in terms of process.” This observation was echoed by another female student, who noted that leadership was a “process in terms of leading by example ... and leading through people.” A female student in another focus group conversation shared a similar view that “motivation, inspiration, guidance [and] perseverance” were behaviors that constituted effective and energizing leadership. Students understood that the leadership process was building relationships and “going the extra mile” by making connections, accomplishing goals associated with the vision, and improving conditions and situations.

Vision says, “This is what we can do.” Kara suggested that leadership “is not always [about] people following you. ... [I]t’s about having a great idea, the sense to make it work ... and being so passionate [that] other people join you.” In this way, the great idea or vision was understood as an organizer and energizer for leadership and, as Kara identified, collaborative behaviors were considered leadership qualities, regardless of who initiated the vision and activated individual and group processes necessary to advancing the vision toward a positive and meaningful outcome.

Reflecting on her practicum, a female focus group member observed that

“the principal ... was not only committed to the school, but he joined every board in town” because “he saw the opportunities,” and

[w]hen I think of [him], I think of vision. ... [He] didn't have those horse things [blinders] on... [H]e had vision, and that was huge in leadership in that it got people motivated.

Students referred to vision as an agenda and as an energizing factor in effective and energizing leadership. As revealed in subsequent focus group conversations, students shared the view that “vision” and “doing something” were relational dimensions of leadership that distinguished it from “managing,” “dominating,” or similar hierarchical behaviors.

Mike explained, “[I]f you have a vision, you are able to say that this is what it looks like in practical terms, this is what we can do.” In this way, vision was understood as providing direction and a sense of what was important for the individual and the group. According to participants, behavior was not considered effective or energizing leadership unless “you [were] out there doing things,” that Ann emphasized, “[had] an interest in other people ... helping them reach their goals.” Furthermore, she explained that vision-oriented leadership with “your staff, or your community helped people find ways to better their situation.” In this way, collaboration and accomplishment were understood as behaviors integral to effective and energizing leadership.

The back-and-forth relationship of working together. Interestingly, the concept of power emerged in student conversations about the nature of relationships that they perceived as inherent in their leadership experiences. In describing leadership, Dawn saw the “reality of leadership” as the following:

[L]eadership is hierarchical [and] people who are in power tend to take their power for granted [as they] influence other people, [which] is not always with the best intentions in mind. [This] comes back to the idea of leader and follower

roles not being exchanged [and] the leader says, “Okay, I’m in control and this is what’s going to be done.” I don’t have respect for those leaders because they’re not allowing me or anyone else any room to move within the leadership role, exchange roles, or learn anything from the [experience]. . . [In] my ideal leadership . . . the idea [is] that you don’t have to be at the head, [or] visibly seen as “the leader.” People can acknowledge you as the leader but you don’t have to become a dictator in telling others what to do.

I found Dawn’s conceptualization of the leadership “reality” and “ideal” leadership striking in the way that she presented the differentiation of power in terms of a hierarchical-relational dichotomy.

Dawn recalled experiencing power as “influence” and “control” within hierarchically organized schools, and outlined her concept of “ideal” leadership as featuring processes where “people [were] willing to . . . give up power and make it a group effort.” She envisioned ideal leadership as people “sharing power . . . [and] refraining from establishing one leader” because “everyone [has] a leadership role [and] a follower role, and [is] able to interchange them without consequences.” Furthermore, complementary to Dawn’s conception of “ideal leadership,” students often revealed leadership experiences where power was differentiated relationally. I subsequently suggested the label “power-through,” which, students agreed, accurately represented their understanding of power.

From dialogue between female students in one of the focus groups, I noticed that the experience that students had with one of their professors represented relational application of power.

F1: . . . isn’t it interesting when you think a professor wants to know about you and your values and your thoughts . . . I always find myself with their point of view on the topic if they’re willing to accept and not judge me. I’m more willing or enthusiastic about . . . what they have to say and learn from them.

And later in the conversation,

F2: ... [the professor] saw each one of us as an individual, [who] ... wanted each one of us to succeed, [and] I felt ... [the professor] never worried about [us]succeeding.

F3: ... a good leader does whatever it takes to help people succeed, [giving that] extra little bit and ... let[ting] people know you care about them and are willing to go that extra mile.

In a subsequent focus group conversation, students discussed education classes where they experienced a relational differentiation of power. A male student stated that their “cohort show[ed] great leadership,” which prompted a female student to explain that

as a group we worked really well and ... there wasn't just one [person] dictating what happened. We collectively worked well together and I think that shows leadership in each of us

Further in the conversation about their experiences with a *power-through* application of power, a female student contributed her view that

if a leader cannot back away from their leadership role and join a group as a collaborator, as a follower, then they [likely] won't be an effective leader [because] they're not working for the good of the group and group goal. ... [T]he goal maybe isn't the most important, it's their own agenda.

This student illustrated her view that a *power-over* differentiation of power implied selfishness, a stark contrast to the *power-through* differentiation of power and its more communitarian connotation. This *power through* dimension identified in student leadership experiences often featured the collective pronoun we, “and focused on making “connections” and building “relationships.” In this way, power was understood as an influencing process through others.

In contrast, individual interviews revealed their characterization of *power-over* as essentially ordering people around. Peter described a boss who “shouted me out of the room” after asking a simple question about a recent change to employee supervision

practices. Similarly, Jack disclosed a personal revelation about power differentiated hierarchically, and spoke about reflection and critique of his own leadership:

I was not paying attention to other people's emotions, I didn't really care if people got upset with me or not. I was kind of in that position where I didn't really care what other people thought. I was right and this was the argument. [It] was a huge eye opener [when I realized], "Wow! There [were] two people or two sides to this. ... [I]f [I] want to get [my] message across ... do it in such a way that [I'm] not going to offend others in the group."

Jack regarded this revelation as a "defining moment" because he realized that effective leadership required sensitivity to the emotional well-being of others, as well as the value and growth that interaction and personal reflection brought to leadership. Erin recalled an experience when a co-worker was ill at work and how she came to understand the influence that emotion has on relationships:

[M]y supervisor, not my boss, didn't care. He said, "Get to your [place] and stay there," [and] this person shouldn't have been in public. Eventually this person just went insane and started throwing chairs. ... I went over and talked to her, [and] she was on her way home ... The [supervisor] couldn't deal with it, and I calmed [my co-worker] down. ... The difference was I was able to calm her, because I wasn't condescending, I wasn't arrogant, and I wasn't rude. ... Arrogance and condescension [are] the two qualities that are so negative. ... [I]f someone's being condescending to you, you shut off.

Erin's story focused on condescension, arrogance, and rudeness. She regarded *power over* behaviors as communicating the message that "you are beneath me," and resulted only in people shutting off. From Erin's perspective, harnessing the abilities of colleagues and rallying around each other and a goal not only brought a measure of equity to leadership, but also respected peoples' emotional well-being, an important leadership understanding.

In the focus groups conversations, students provided descriptions of leadership experiences that featured instances of power applied hierarchically. For example, a male student referred to an "in charge" teacher known for "taking control" of situations and

initiatives. In another focus group session, a female student described the administrator in her practicum school as a “facilitator principal,” who influenced colleagues to adopt his ideas. In discussing their experiences with *power-over* relationships, students recalled “Professor B,” who they perceived as very self-centered and memorable because “what Professor B wanted was what Professor B got.” Students related their experiences with this professor, who openly resisted “new ideas and anything that conflicted with what [Professor B] wanted, and that instantly set up a barrier ... to trust.” Another female student explained,

[W]e’ve had other profs who tried to open up the floor [and] be very open [within] an open and sharing environment, but [we] got shot down the minute [we would] say anything that [Professor B] didn’t absolutely agree with.

Put-downs, intimidation, and bullying were common sentiments inferred from student stories about their *power-over* experiences. Students in both the focus groups and individual interviews portrayed their understanding of *power-through* types of interaction as celebrating the contributions of everyone involved and augmenting their sense of empowerment, validation, and positive self-esteem.

Participants reported that “anyone can lead,” and that effective, energizing leadership cultivated relationships between context-specific conditions and the talents that people brought into a context in order to “make things happen.” Dawn shared an experience in her interview about a high school job that illustrated combined talents and their relationship to accomplishment.

[T]his job that I had when I was in high school relates to education because of the leadership role that I took on. ... I was involved in training other people who were my age and younger, and even some [co-workers who] were older than me. I loved that leadership role, being able to train people, the whole sense of power in that context, [and] the sense of trust that my employer placed in me. Basically, he hired students who he knew were capable of taking on that role. ... I was willing to listen to [co-workers] and see what they had to say about ways

to improve the [business]. ... [I]t was very much a sharing process and collaborative.

Dawn explained that her retail experience with training co-workers compared well with her relationship to students in her practicum:

[W]ith students ... they're asking for help from me, but at the same time I [was] learning something from them, so there [was] transference [from] the "back and forth" relationship [of] working together.

Students in focus group and individual conversations understood that behaviors associated with relational power, inclusion, interaction, and vision constituted leadership behavior.

In addition, students believed that people accomplished more when they were working together for a common goal, and understood that leadership was less about the coercive use of power and more about collaboration and relationships. From their view, collaborative relationships respected their emotional well-being and enabled everyone to feel empowered, validated, and valued for their contributions. In this way, students understood leadership was "building relationships and going that extra mile" in working towards accomplishing goals and vision.

Having Goals and Working Together

[L]eadership happened when teachers and principals worked together and demonstrated leadership for their students (Chris, a female participant).

As their stories of leadership experiences unfolded, participants in focus group conversations revealed their understanding that leadership was an ongoing process. A female student explained that leadership occurred whenever a "situation arises that needs ... a decision that best suits a group of people" within a specific context. In the process of disclosing their leadership experiences, students in focus groups and

individual interviews revealed events and happenings that delineated their understandings of *when* effective and energizing leadership occurred.

Trust made me want to reciprocate. Mike shared two stories of “events” in a non-educational context that illustrated contrasting views of reciprocity and the leadership relationship. The first story, “Shouted Out,” is excerpted as follows:

[O]ne [experience] sticks out, when there was a new process brought in for another job ... that would basically keep track of our efficiency. We were working on machines and it tracked our efficiency and checked up on how hard we were working. So I asked the manager, I said, ‘I was just wondering, I am a little bit concerned about this and how it will be used.’ I was basically shouted out of the room and told to ‘just bloody well work and you won’t have to worry about it’ sort of thing. I was literally shouted out of the room, and I thought, ‘I’ve learned something today. I will never ask this boss anything again.’ I heard that the following year a lady went on stress leave, so it really didn’t surprise me to hear that.

This event highlighted Mike’s understanding that dominance and fear controlled and manipulated workers, and deterred interaction and inclusion of employees in decision making. As described by Mike, leadership action did not happen when this type of *power-over* differentiation dominated and controlled others because the linear power structure discouraged collaboration and other reciprocal behaviors associated with the leadership relationship. Mike contrasted this experience with a “flip-side” story that featured his engagement with relational leadership within another non-educational context.

The second story, “Day Off,” is excerpted as follows:

I asked for a sort of special circumstance [once when] I needed some time off work, and it wasn’t questioned. [I] was [told] ‘You do good work here and I’m never going to call into question your commitment and your devotion to this job. Just take this day off and don’t worry about it.’ I mean, it just made me want to work harder for this person because a certain amount of trust had been shown and given to me, so it made me want to reciprocate.

By juxtaposing these stories, Mike conveyed his understanding that leadership occurred when, as in “Day Off,” people felt valued for their contributions, were given voice, and provided with a sense of importance and satisfaction. On the other hand, effective and energizing leadership did not occur when, as in “Shouted Out,” people were silenced and dominated by linear power structures used to control and intimidate. These experiences revealed a basic psychological facet of the relationship between power structures and extent of reciprocation in the leadership relationship. Once again leadership experiences articulated in the focus groups and individual interviews emphasized the considerable emotional dimension that students associated with effective and energizing leadership.

In a subsequent focus group conversation, students related experiences dealing with traffic police, and the concept of coercion, which they regarded as “power-tripping.” In the following excerpt, the students equated power with leadership that I have represented as a perceived downside of power-over relationships:

M1: . . . I know one particular gentleman that was picked on in school, he was older than me but I knew him. [He] became a [police] officer and I got pulled over by him one time and, holy cow, [when] he found out who I was, this guy was, you know, ‘If you’re not sitting up straight and that seat belt isn’t within a quarter inch of your shoulder and your neck where it’s supposed to be, I’ll cite you for improper wear.’ He was unreal [and] crazy. So [I realized], it’s not necessarily dominant people that get . . . into leadership . . . It can be a person pulling the strings and making things happen the way they want.

M2: . . . yeah, manipulation . . . [in] getting the group to do what you want. . . . I think you have to have a certain amount of [coercion], although that can be called something different than manipulation [because] most people associate that pretty negatively.

F1: I think a lot of police officers are like that.

F2: I can think of a couple myself.

M3: I had one guy, I slowed, went around a corner, like I was in first gear, I just didn't want to come to a full stop because I'm in a standard . . . [he] lectured me for thirty-five minutes before he wrote me a ticket and I was, you know, 'I'm really sorry, I was wrong. I don't care, give me the ticket. You're giving me the ticket anyways, so I don't want to hear your lecture. I get it. I was wrong.' But he felt he was in the position to [belittle] me.

F3: 'I'm sorry you were picked on as a child.'

M1: Yeah, exactly, that's just it. That's why I [told] that back story about the guy I knew [who] was [picked on]. [I] always wonder where these people are coming from and why they feel they have to be that way when they get into positions of power.

I observed a similarity between the focus group dialogue about traffic police experiences and “Shouted Out” because in both situations people were intimidated, silenced, and dominated. This dialogue illustrated that students understood when the collaborative and respectful relationship was absent, effective and energizing leadership did not occur. The most telling feature of these experiences was that students did not acknowledge manipulation and “power-tripping” as leadership. Rather, students emphasized the central role of relationships and investment in the emotional dimension as fundamental attributes of their leadership understandings.

It's more of a community thing: Leadership and the practicum. Ann told a story about a time during her internship when she experienced effective and energizing leadership. As a member of the school-and-home Connections Committee (my pseudonym), their goal was to establish and sustain connections with families, largely by “getting families into the school and getting them comfortable and that kind of thing.”

I got involved in [Connections] to help get families into schools. . . . [W]e worked with the parents and had open discussions about anything that was worrying to them about school. Most [parents] didn't have positive school experiences, [but] the principal was very good at getting families involved. At first I was more of a facilitator . . . getting things organized, planning and setting

things up. I didn't work on my own, I worked with everyone else. ... It wasn't a structured program ... [but] it was amazing having [parents] come and talk and be very open and non-judgmental. That was kind of the goal of it, having the families—whole families, brothers, sisters, cousins—come [to school]. ... [It] showed parents we were interested in making a connection. ... It really was more of a community thing.

In this experience, Ann determined that leadership happened because the Connections Committee operated in an interactive and relational (rather than hierarchical) fashion, where members of this group alternated between participant and facilitator roles. In this way they advanced the vision and improved conditions necessary to establish and maintain the connection between home and school. The energizing feature was created by openness and collaboration within the group, which enabled them to initiate and cultivate relationships among members of the school team, students, and their families. Similar to Ann's experience, Fran explained in her interview that "[we] always have some type of goal ... as a group, as a community. I think [we] always have to be working on something."

Students agreed that education was about building relationships, which was also understood as an overarching theme of their leadership understandings. Within the context of practicum schools, students acknowledged that leadership happened when the relationship among educational stakeholders led to the accomplishment of goals, enhanced a situation, and strengthened personal leadership capacity. In the focus groups and individual interviews, students emphasized the view that leadership was a continuous, ongoing process rather than a specific set of conditions, criteria, or circumstances.

Working for students: Leadership and the College. Participant stories of leadership divided along two categories regarding *when* leadership occurred within the

College of Education context. In the first view, participants shared experiences of classes where students were essentially passive participants in an environment controlled by the instructor. In one of the focus group sessions, a female participant related an experience where the instructor required students to attend, sit, and listen, which she interpreted as,

‘You sit here and I’ll tell you what I know because it’s what matters, it’s what is important [and] ... you don’t know, so you sit there and I’ll tell you what’s wrong with you and how you should think. I know what is good for you, I exercise complete control.’ She had her own agenda right from the get-go.

There was consensus that in situations such as this, leadership did not occur because this type of hierarchical control was considered disrespectful and demeaning. Another female student stated, “I don’t know if there was a person in that class that [shared] the same values as [Professor B], but there was something about [Professor B] that brought people to anger.” This power-over experience conflicted with participants’ understanding of leadership as a vision-oriented collaborative relationship.

In contrast, participants in initial and subsequent focus groups shared experiences about an instructor in the College whose class was mainly about relationships. Students considered this instructor to be “welcoming” and demonstrated a genuine interest in students by facilitating learning in each class that was relevant, meaningful, and of practical application. Participants routinely commented that this instructor said to the class, “How can this material be beneficial to you and what you need?”

This instructor was well known for incorporating student input to ensure that the class maintained relevance and benefit to students. For example, a female student in one focus group remarked that for the “final assignment” in this class, “we basically had

complete freedom to choose something with respect to education, research it, and present it to the class.” In conversations with focus group members they revealed, “[We] weren’t sitting there discussing questions that [Professor A] made you discuss, [we] were sitting down discussing questions that [we related] to and that made [us] engage way more.” In successive focus groups and individual conversations, participants emphasized that *modeling* was a fundamental dimension of effective and energizing leadership. As represented by Professor A, students identified that modeling needed to be a regular and recurring dimension of education courses in the College.

According to participants, leadership was demonstrated when events in non-educational, practicum, or College contexts were relational, inclusive, collaborative, vision-focused, and led to a betterment of conditions. Students in focus group and individual conversations shared stories where empathy and emotional investment were priorities, and thus had a significant impact on their leadership understandings. For example, in a journal entry, Natalie remarked, “[M]any of the top business people lack the ability to feel empathy [and] I think this is the exact opposite of a leader in education, because if [I] don’t have empathy, how can [I] work for students and do [my] job?”

Students agreed that within the College context, collaboration, student centered teaching approaches, and instructor modeling represented effective and energizing leadership. In conversations with students, the emotional dimension emerged as an overarching theme of student leadership understandings, particularly in instances where attention to the emotional dimension of the relationship strengthened self-esteem and leadership capacity, and enhanced the relationship accordingly.

Knowing What We Want and Working Hard

[O]nce we got into it and started trusting each other, the process went smoothly ... because[we] had the qualities that would work here [with our]social group (Male focus group member).

Participants mentioned non-educational, practicum, and College of Education contexts as specific areas where they experienced leadership taking place. From stories about past and current leadership experiences, students in the focus groups and in individual conversations described their views of effective, energizing leadership as being socially constructed, and in their stories identified a range of conditions that brought about “good” leadership. Chief among the influencing conditions was their understanding that anyone could become involved in leadership at any time. Students understood that leadership happened anywhere that people had a goal to achieve.

Making a difference: Leadership and the community. Jack told a story in his interview about moving to a new city and teaching Sunday School. He began with “two kids, and after four years the enrolment had gone up to twenty [children].” With the expansion of the youth group, Jack realized that he needed help, and so “four people [stepped] in and I [became] the supervisor of the [youth group] committee.” Jack pointed out that this leadership experience at his church created “that feeling of ‘Wow! You know, I kind of made a difference’, I had this idea and made it work.” In this case, Jack had a goal, developed a plan (i.e., vision) to achieve the goal, interacted with church officials, parents, and youth, and successfully carried out the program.

A female student from one of the focus groups spoke of a rural community in which she lived and explained that

when I was living there we didn’t have a dance club in our town, but we had one in the neighboring town, so we had to drive . . . I’d get really frustrated [in the neighboring town] because they didn’t treat [our girls] the same as they treated

their own girls. So I took the initiative and I started a dance club in [our town]. I did everything from the ground up and I got this dance club running. The town really took to it, [and at] our first recital we had over three hundred people attend . . . I believe in a small town sometimes recognition isn't the best way to go about things, so I kind of just took the initiative and kind of gave the leader role to my friend [who] was just behind the scenes and did most of the work . . . I really felt it was something . . . and people really appreciated [that] because that dance club is still thriving.

In her experience of establishing the dance club, this student recognized a need for a local dance club, rallied the community, and “took the initiative” in order to get “this dance club running.” Similar to Jack’s experience, this student revealed that leadership occurred in her home community when a need was identified, a plan was developed to organize people and resources, and collaboration ensued to achieve the goal. The community desired their own local dance club, which brought the community together and improved the local dance instruction. Experiences of people working in collaborative relationships and responding to needs by identifying goals, developing plans, and improving situations was thus revealed as an underlying leadership understanding.

In an individual conversation, Kara told about a service job that she held while attending university:

I had this one boss and, oh, she was the worst leader in the world. . . . It was a bar and I think that being in a professional relations sort of thing, where you have customers and a lot of the clientele is repeat clientele, you want them to come back and you want them to come back more often [I]t’s just that marketing mentality that I think a good leader should have—especially in the business sense. [My manager] sometimes wouldn’t appreciate [regulars’] business, and would look at it like, ‘Oh, you’re here and this is what I have to deal with.’ If [one of the regulars] got a burger that didn’t taste good, I would say, ‘I’m sorry, what could I get you that would taste better?’ [My manager] would say, ‘Oh, suck it up you whiner.’ [For me] it was like, ‘No, they’re here [and] why not make them want to come back?’ That was the end result, that [they] walk out the door happy, tell their friends, and come back.

Kara illustrated her ability to be welcoming when she connected with clientele and developed a relationship. In this example, leadership happened when staff and clientele worked together to reach the goal of repeat business. This experience highlighted Kara's view that leadership happened in her workplace when co-workers saw a need to connect with clientele and establish a relationship that would keep them coming back to this establishment; reciprocation was the influencing factor in this experience.

Doing what is best: Leadership and the practicum. In her interview, Erin revisited a cooperative project with grade eight students that she framed around the theme of "social activism."

[T]he question was, "Can youth be activists for a cause?" We took the opportunity to talk to the grade eights and we decided to do the activism for cancer . . . [We] talked [with students] about causes and how we could be leaders within our communities, and they took that step and they developed all of these roles . . . [A]nd so we educated the community on what we were doing and why. We developed ideas for fundraising, and we followed through [with] a huge carnival . . . [We chose] to donate all of the money to the cancer foundation. The kids just loved it [and] were astonished at the leadership that came out of this [project]. These students had something . . . they knew what they wanted to do and worked really hard. Every one of those twenty-seven students gave everything to the cause. I wasn't telling them what to do—they came up with the ideas [and] did everything themselves . . . and they [knew] they [had] made a difference, especially in their community.

Erin's grade eight social activism story identified leadership happening in practicum schools. Knowledge of this grade eight activist project was not exclusive to Erin's practicum; I was not surprised to learn that this project was well known among students in other cohorts and was mentioned by students in other focus-group and individual conversations. Erin's story illustrated the students' understanding that leadership in schools happened with anyone, and was not limited to only administrators and teachers.

I found myself sharing in Jill's excitement as she told me about her practicum and the opportunities to use "more unconventional things like learning centers" in her middle years classroom. Jill recognized that her curriculum initiative was a leadership experience from her practicum:

F: Underground to Canada was the theme. It was a thematic novel study, so [I] had literature circles, as well as literacy centers that I did with them ... I had five different centers ... [that] gave the students an opportunity to go through the material without me having to plan a lesson around the book and the kit ... [S]o they were kind of in charge of their own learning. I knew that some groups really excelled at their centers and other groups weren't as open and willing to work with their own groups [and] didn't do as well ... [S]ome groups were a little more social and did not really stay on-task as much. I had groups where none of the students were friends and so they basically didn't really have anything to talk about outside of what they were doing, so they focused on it. Seeing the students' reaction to [the thematic unit] ... it worked out just about as well as it looked. It is one [unit] that I am proud to share with people, and my cooperating teacher even asked for a copy of it [and] some people wanted to try it on their own. ... I managed to hit upon a lot of objectives within the language arts curriculum. ... [E]verything I picked out matched perfectly with the curriculum objectives, so that was good to see.

I: What do you think [students] got out of this?

F: Children feeling comfortable enough to talk to me about their learning [and] their feelings on what kind of activity we're doing, or my teaching. I'm thinking along the lines of middle years students [feeling] empowered and [that] what they said mattered and [was taken] into consideration and even applied somewhere. I think they [were] even more apt to contribute [in the future].

In this story, Jill recounted the details of the curriculum initiative that she designed and implemented to address a perceived need for middle years students to have greater access to opportunities for interaction, cooperation, and contribution to their own learning activities. Jill's experience illustrated that leadership can happen with middle years students in a public school, and it revealed that leadership can happen where there are people, a goal, and a plan to achieve that goal.

Similar to Jill's story of leadership within the practicum context, Natalie shared her leadership experience in implementing an Aboriginal culture unit. She told me about building leadership capacity from a project that taught

students about Aboriginal culture and perspectives. [T]he kids who were participating came to the park . . . and did a round dance [and later] I had to help some students set up the teepee with the elder [where we] heard oral tradition passed down from the elder. It happened so naturally [and] so differently from how we teach in school. It opened my eyes so much, [and] gave me confidence in [promoting] Aboriginal perspectives. I believed I [was] a leader during my internship, as I [did] lessons with Aboriginal perspectives. My [cooperating] teacher kept saying, 'Oh, I need to do more of that,' [and] think more about what's best for [those whom] they [were] leading.

In this way, Natalie's perceived need for including culturally relevant themes in the curriculum influenced her decision to implement Aboriginal perspectives in her teaching, which developed into leadership action during her practicum. This leadership experience underscored risk-taking supported by the inclusion and collaboration of stakeholders, and it developed student and teacher confidence for accepting future leadership opportunities and their inherent risks. In sharing this experience from her practicum, Natalie referred to leadership as "people doing what is best for [those] whom they are leading."

Giving up control and giving up power: Leadership in the College. Students who participated in the focus group and individual conversations related stories of leadership that they experienced in courses required for completion of their education degrees. Interestingly, as stories of these experiences unfolded in focus groups and individual interviews, students mentioned that instructors in the College regularly stressed the importance of "democratic and participatory classrooms," although students often used "hierarchy" to describe the leadership reality in their courses.

In my conversations with students, they voiced concern that, as pre-service teachers in the education program, there was a “disconnect” between the “democratic and participatory classroom” rhetoric of their instructors and the decidedly linear action that they experienced in many of their classes. Courses and instructional strategies in the College were commonly referred to as “hierarchical,” and few professors “practiced what they preached” about democratic and participatory classrooms, and this inconsistency between leadership rhetoric and action raised questions about instructor credibility.

Students did not dispute that leadership was demonstrated in the College; rather, they emphasized a larger concern that leadership behavior varied greatly among instructors in the College. Participants in the focus groups and individual interviews expressed a view that most education classes were hierarchical, with only a few classes where “[p]rofs were trying” to model behavior consistent with practices associated with democratic and participatory classrooms. In conversations with students, I realized that they were passionate about instructors modeling effective and energizing leadership, and I recognized that this passion stemmed from students taking cues from their professors’ own leadership behavior, which they added to their repertoire in preparation for taking charge of their own classrooms.

In the focus groups, students shared stories of leadership experiences drawn from their time in the College. Conversations often featured Professor A, an education professor who demonstrated effective and energizing leadership. Professor A was characterized as “an amazing person” who “genuinely cared,” “made you think that you mattered,” and made students feel that “she felt privileged to be with us.” Not surprisingly, students consistently identified this professor as “inspiring,” “caring and

gentle,” “respectful,” and devoted to ensuring that “[we get] what we should have out of the [class].”

These relational, interpersonal descriptors represented influencing conditions that cultivated an environment where “the [p]rof was willing to kind of give up control, give up power, and have the confidence to do so.” Students fondly recalled learner-centered approaches, such as organization of the large class into small groups, which were provided readings and a topic for discussion and critique that connected the curriculum to participants’ needs in the real world of teaching. One female focus group member said that Professor A “was focused on us and what we could come up with for ourselves.”

Student experiences with relational and student-centered characteristics (as represented by Professor A) demonstrated how to influence conditions associated with the vision category, which has been previously presented as a “framework that says, “This is what [we] believe in [and] everyone is on board with,” [and provides] people [with the] flexibility and confidence [to] see the vision through.” In this way, students understood leadership as an action influenced by vision, as a flexible “framework.”

A female student stated in her focus group that “a sense of cohesiveness developed” among students. Another female student in a follow-up session described chemistry and cohesiveness to her focus group:

[We] would not have a problem entering another social dynamic and [feeling] comfortable and welcome. ... [We] can gravitate towards certain people ... but when we enter our classroom as a cohesive group, personal friendships fade away and what became important was working as a cohort.

In sharing their stories, students were unequivocal: effective and energizing leadership happened within the College context; moreover, Professor A set the standard

by consistently demonstrating integrity, congruence, and civility. Social networking and cooperation among students, combined with Professor A's knowledge and skills, provided sustainable supports for students as they worked together to advance the vision and maintain the leadership established in this class. Not surprisingly, through their stories of past and current leadership experiences, participants understood that relational and interpersonal attributes were influencing conditions associated with effective and energizing leadership in the College.

As students conveyed stories about leadership experiences in non-educational, practicum, and College contexts, they revealed an understanding that collaborative relationships and concomitant emotional aspects were major dimensions of leadership. Although mostly implied, students regarded preserving the emotional well-being of others as highly as the action and accomplishment dimensions of effective and energizing leadership.

Taking Part Opened My Eyes to Making Leadership Happen

[G]ive people the flexibility and the confidence and everything else to believe in them[selves] and they'll see the vision through (Male focus group member).

Three central factors emerged in the data that represented how people acted, interacted, and reacted in effective and energizing leadership situations. Conversations I had with students in the focus groups and in individual sessions revealed motivating factors (such as individual, social, and situational factors), influencing factors (goals and vision), and accomplishment, the ultimate goal of leadership. Participants consistently reported a need to feel a part of something bigger than themselves, and their stories of past and current leadership experiences emphasized how involvement led to positive change in non-educational, practicum, and the College contexts.

I had this idea and had to make it work. Although the stories of individual motivating factors were numerous in focus groups, I selected Jack from the individual interviews as representative of both the individual motivating factors and the beneficial effects of the experience.

[A]t a very young age, I stepped in. I coached—nobody wanted to coach the junior boys’ badminton, but I stepped in. I played a lot of badminton and I guess I knew all the drills so [I stepped up]. Similarly with the junior boys’ volleyball, there [were] two teams and nobody wanted to coach the B-team, so I stepped in, the other teacher supervised, and I ran the team.

One of the biggest [projects] was our [community] fundraiser. I was the only teenager to be part of the organizing committee and I organized the mud volleyball tournament. I went into the community to make it happen, [and] went to a couple of farmers and asked for their water truck, roto-tiller, and post hole digger. We put holes in at the right height for the net and got a net donated from the school, and you know, going out and taking part in that opened my eyes to what was there to make it happen. The hardest part was having people say, ‘Okay, this is my idea, then you do it,’ and, well, we didn’t think it could work. [B]oth times I just had this idea and I had to make it work.

Somewhat predictably, Jack emphasized his attraction to coaching badminton and organizing the mud volleyball fundraiser because he was able to: (a) address a perceived need; (b) enhance his own skill development; and (c) facilitate opportunities to be recognized for his accomplishments. At several points in our conversations, Jack used the phrase, “taking charge” when making reference to experiences where meaningful and positive change resulted from planning, effort, and follow-through. This type of opportunity for an individual to “take charge,” accomplish something, and receive recognition was understood as an individual factor that motivated leadership.

Enjoying the process of working together. Dawn’s experience served as an exemplar of social and situational factors as motivating leadership.

I admired my cooperating teacher for creating a very safe environment for students [where] everyone’s opinion was valued. I think that made her a great leader because she took on the leadership role without really coming off as a

typical leader . . . I saw her as a leader, but at the same time she took a step back and I think that was what makes a really successful leader: when you know that you can step away from a project that you are on and everything will still go okay because you have trained the people around you to take on leadership roles themselves [and] be responsible for their actions.

I am willing to listen and see what [others have] to say because leadership is very much a sharing process and collaborative . . . where everyone is on the same page. I think [leadership] is easier if you provide a framework as a point you are leading to . . . [and] I believe it is important for individuals to contribute to the framework. I think you want everyone to have the same ideas in mind, which is why I see people working together—that is so key to me—sharing, having open communication, enjoying the process of working together and realizing the benefit of . . . sharing power, [and] refraining from establishing one leader. I see everyone taking on a leadership role . . . [and perhaps] I'm expecting a lot out of the people to recognize what their role is in making such-and-such happen.

As Dawn revealed in this story, leadership was not just about position, power, or unilateral decision making; from her view, leadership was collaborative, oriented towards relationship building, and focused on vision as a “framework [and the] point you are leading to.”

In the focus groups, students shared stories where leadership rhetoric was consistent with leadership action, “power [was] through others,” the process was framed around “teamwork and collaboration,” and communication was ongoing and effective. From these discussions students revealed collaboration, “relationship building,” vision, “bigger than one” initiatives, accomplishment, and the attendant emotional dimension as social and situational factors that typically transcended individuals and motivated leadership.

Seeing the vision through: The ultimate goal of leadership. The following two excerpts of focus group dialogue represented the view that the ultimate goal of leadership was the “realization of vision,” with an accompanying accomplishment.

- M1: You have to have vision.
 F1: What you are saying is that everyone has a vision?
 M1: I'm saying it doesn't have to be this huge thing, but I think it is a quality. I do think that vision is part of leadership, you need to know where you're going. If you don't know where you are going, how can people follow you?
 M2: Exactly! How do they know where they're supposed to go if [they] don't even know ... where we'd like to go (Focus group one excerpt).
- F2: Anyone can have vision, but maybe something about leadership is that [we] actually take more steps to see that [our] vision comes to life.
 F3: Hmm, the ambition to see it through.
 F4: The ability to motivate people to help.
 F2: You want to find [your] own qualities that [will] help the project or whatever the vision you have.
 M3: For me I think what it comes down to is [we] have to have vision. It's there [as] the model, or the framework [we] want people to fit into. [We] say, 'This is our framework. ... [I]s everyone on board with it?' [A]nd if [we] aren't [we] can talk to people and find out what they are disagreeing with and work it out. That way if [we] have that framework in place, [we] give people the flexibility and the confidence and everything else to believe in them [and] they'll see the vision through (Focus group two excerpt).

These focus group excerpts revealed participants' understanding that vision answers questions such as: What do we want to be? What is the best we can be? and What is our ideal future? Vision, in the participants' view, provided a challenge, was achievable, and was considered reflective of agreed upon values. Thus, vision provided inspiration, motivation, energy, and direction to individuals and groups in a variety of contexts.

A recurring theme that emerged from student stories was *accomplishment*, and that leadership "[did] something" that led to the betterment of situations and/or conditions for individuals or communities. In the focus groups and interviews, students understood leadership to be a process focused on and energized by a collaboratively advancing vision. The following two participant stories featured accomplishment and stressed a view that realization of vision was the ultimate goal of leadership.

“Fran’s Story” surfaced in an individual interview as an example of a student project during her practicum that reflected engaged, energized leadership, and realization of vision.

During Advent, every classroom did a service project, and as an intern I was involved in doing that. I was involved in the planning—[who] we were going to donate our money to, how my students were going to go about fundraising, how I [was] going to get them motivated, and how I [was] going to include them so they [had] ownership of what [was] happening. I think it was energizing finding the opportunity for them to be in charge, for them to have it be their own . . . My coop[erating] teacher had already told me that she wanted them to fundraise because she connected it to some things. I had the task of trying to invite students to take this on as their own. Once they started rallying and throwing ideas out, it was like, ‘Oh, great, I never thought of that, so let’s include that,’ and they definitely picked it up and did a tremendous job . . . I think they raised the most money. They were so excited. What made this relevant to them, I think, was giving them reminders on what their goal was. I took them on a tour of the Ronald McDonald House—that was the charity they voted on—and I think that really invigorated them. The Ronald McDonald House was spectacular. They were so great to us, but I think seeing it also motivated them [because] having that tangible experience acted like a reinforcement, [a] ‘good job pat-on-the-back,’ [and provided] an opportunity to meet the people [and give] them the money. I think those are active reinforcements.

Characterized by high levels of student engagement in all phases of the service project, Fran’s Story represented effective and energizing leadership in a project where vision was the driver. Fran’s Story emphasized the idea that leadership was created through the interaction of students in a collaborative relationship with teachers and community, where raising and donating money for the betterment of the Ronald McDonald House was the overarching goal.

In this second example, Peter mentioned the story of a twelve year old boy

who raised money to dig a well in Africa. People went crazy and they raised a lot of money. I’m sure the students were engaged and they were probably excited because they saw what [the boy] accomplished, and in that case, probably felt quite important, not because of what happened to him but because of what he did. Maybe that’s what’s different. Maybe these kids felt important because of what they did, not because of what happened . . . and maybe they’ll remember

[this] in the future, [perhaps] whenever they're in a situation where they could take an unselfish, more collective road.

As represented in Peter's story, accomplishment of vision is the ultimate goal of leadership. In the stories of leadership experiences, "[doing] something" that led to the betterment of a situation emerged as a central concept underlying the importance of interaction and collaboration, despite participant reports that the linear structure of non-educational workplaces, schools, and the College was, at times, a deterrent to vision oriented leadership and betterment of a situation.

As implied in their stories, students understood leadership as action that facilitated accomplishment of goals, and success was measured by recognition, appreciation, and respect. Why did leadership happen? According to students, leadership happened because people collaborated, "saw the vision through," and "[did] something" to facilitate accomplishment of their goals.

Finding What Works: Knowing Leadership is Happening

... like we were saying about our staff, if we can excite and inspire them, people will be like "Hey, what can I do?" (female focus group participant)

A range of outcomes related to participant understandings of effective and energizing leadership emerged from the focus groups, individual interviews, and journal analysis. Upon initial analysis of the data, I found that most participants equated leadership with "the leader," a definite position of power. One male focus group member explained,

the positional leader, that's where the power relationship comes in, [and] I think if you are a positional leader you are in a place of power and get to dictate what happens . . . I worked for CP Rail, and their foremen were always promoted . . . [without] any formal training. So, you know, the guy you worked with five minutes ago gets promoted to foreman, and all of a sudden everyone hates that guy because he is telling you what to do. It was interesting to me how this guy can go from [my] coffee buddy to the biggest prick in the world in a matter of

two weeks . . . It comes down to caring about people who are under you. I was in a derailment [and] I broke my arm, and my boss freaked out on me because I had to put in a claim to Workers Compensation, and this ruined his [safety] record and he [lost] his bonus. He [told] me ‘just show up at work and we won’t make you do anything,’ you know. I [knew] people that did come to work and not file a claim. You know, forget it, I couldn’t care less about your stupid safety report. When [people] don’t care or when the work [was] done but the stress levels [rose,] the satisfaction for the people under [the boss] were definitely not there. I think that [was attributed] to ‘do you care about yourself or do you care about others?’ [If] you care more about yourself, you [won’t] have the motivation to collaborate with other people.

Subsequent individual interviews and focus group sessions produced descriptions of leadership that moved away from linear, hierarchical power-oriented perspectives to those that were more relational, collaborative, and inductive. A female focus group member shared the story of

my cooperating teacher . . . creat[ed] a very safe environment for the students [where] everyone’s opinion was valued. I think that made her a great leader because she took on the leadership role without really coming off as a typical leader. . . . [I] saw her as a leader, but at the same time she took a step back, and I think this is what makes a really successful leader. [She] could step away from a project and everything [would] still go okay because [she] had trained the people around [her] to take on leadership roles themselves [and] be responsible for their actions.

In the second story, power was differentiated *through* people rather than *over* people, which implied leadership was more of a collaborative relationship that brought the talents of the group together and was not limited by any sort of individual agenda.

As observed by participants in their practicum schools, there were positional leaders whose style was understood as “participatory” and “collaborative,” and functioned as initiators, organizers, and facilitators. Ann explained in her interview that

I had always thought that leadership was a position, and to me that had a kind of negative connotation . . . because, this person [was] in this position and it’s almost like they [were] kind of higher than [us]. After thinking about it, leadership [is] a process, [and] I really believe in this collaboration kind of thing. [We] don’t know everything, and [we] can’t do everything ourselves. Sure it is

important to have somebody at the core, but to know that there are other people working with [us], I just really like that.

Ann's experience was representative of focus group and individual conversations where students stressed process and collaboration as integral dimensions of leadership.

At this point in the data collection and analysis I noted that when it came to positional or processual leadership, the participant view was not an "either-or" classification. Rather, the underlying theme of *leadership as a continuum* emerged from students' leadership understandings. In her interview, Erin told me a story about her experience working with a group of "challenging" youth in a rural community, which I have selected as representative of the leadership continuum theme.

I [was] definitely a leader in that job in Easterntown, and it [was] very frustrating because [the youth group] didn't respond well to positive reinforcement [and] I struggled in dealing with that. They [were] very suspicious. I'm not a negative teacher, never have been, and don't think I every will be. I [used] positive reinforcement, because [I found] thirteen and fourteen year olds respond to positive reinforcement. Nobody likes to be yelled at, and [when] I raised my voice in my internship, [my students] knew I was not happy. With my group in Easterntown, [positive reinforcement] was not working. In fact, they [were] quite offended, they [thought] I [was] "blowing hot air up their butt" and I [was] not. I [thought] that they [were thinking] I'm condescending when I [was] using positive reinforcement and I was not, but they [were] taking it that way, so I struggled. [This group] definitely taught me that [we] needed to find something as a group that would work for that specific situation. They needed me to be at their level, to see life through their eyes, and [show] how this program could benefit them. I [found] that very challenging, because I [was] challenged with how to be a good leader for them. I struggled [with finding] a way to energize and engage them because what I [was doing] was not working. ... I definitely had to find a way where everyone [was] included, [and] no one was thought to be less than the next person. [T]hat's very important in any leadership.

As presented in this story, different situations required different approaches to leadership. Erin's experience represented leadership as a continuum, and spotlighted her moving between positional and processual leadership approaches as circumstances warranted.

Participant stories of leadership experiences embraced the view that, depending upon the situation, leadership involved either individual leaders exercising power in a linear fashion or involved an inductive, interactive, group, or some variation of the *power-through* leadership approach. Peter commented in his interview that with “[a] democratic style in a leader, interaction seemed to be desirable; [there was] less intimidation and [action was] about the people.” He further clarified that “everyone [shared] their ideas, [and] everyone [listened] to other people’s ideas, too.” Sentiments complementary to Peter’s view arose in additional focus group and individual conversations, and further emphasized that students understood leadership as collaborative and process-oriented.

I was surprised by the passion of students as they related their reaction to a mass email received by all post-practicum education students, which read as follows:

People who have not bought tickets to [event deleted] are not allowed to come to [event deleted] at all. Please do no [*sic*] invite extra friends or family, there is no room for extras. Buy a ticket and come, or don't buy a ticket and don't come. If you have friends who wish to come, tell them to meet you. DON'T INVITE EXTRA PEOPLE!!!!

In the focus group sessions, as participants discussed this email they emphasized that the message’s tone fueled their sense of resentment and hurt feelings. One female focus group member stated that she felt “personally insulted by that [email]” that “I just wanted to scratch [the sender’s] eyeballs out.” Of particular issue with participants was the fact that the email, according to their perspective, represented “a horrendous abuse of [the position].” Another female focus group member concurred:

[The sender] should’ve been accountable for [these] actions after that email was sent out because it was rude, it was insulting . . . [I]t was very unthoughtful [*sic*] . . . [and] wasn’t for the whole good of the group. [This individual’s] agenda took advantage of this position.

The topic of this email came up frequently in successive focus group and individual conversations, and participants used the term “condescending” in reference to the tone of the message. Participants explained that condescension conflicted with their understanding of effective and energizing leadership as “caring, respectful, and engaged.” Students were emotional as they discussed this event, which highlighted the considerable attention that they directed toward the emotional dimension of leadership. I was fascinated by the passion and emotion that students brought to the focus group discussion about the mass email experience, which suggested to me that their psychological contract held considerable sway in the formation of their leadership understandings and attendant leadership practices.

I found it notable in the focus groups and interviews that students considered the mass email experience to be representative of what leadership *was not*, and was followed by their stories of Professor B, who was cited as an exemplar of ineffective leadership at the College. In a follow-up focus group session, one female member who attended one of Professor B’s classes shared that

we really didn’t respect [Professor B], [we] didn’t care about the class or anything like that. There were times [Professor B] made us feel afraid to speak in class. [Professor B] would yell at us and so we didn’t care, [and] didn’t put in the effort that we did in other classes. ... [W]e didn’t feel appreciated and we didn’t appreciate [Professor B]. [This] relationship [showed that] how you wanted to be treated [is how] you treat others.

By comparing Professor A with Professor B, a male focus group member said,

Prof[essor] A was inspiring, [but] Prof[essor] B was uninspiring; Prof[essor] A was caring and gentle, [while] Prof[essor] B was harsh and cold; Prof[essor] A was respectful, [but] Prof B was disrespectful.

This Professor A-Professor B comparison encouraged another female focus group member to describe these instructors in another way:

The difference between Prof[essor] A and Prof[essor] B was that Prof[essor] B was really self-focused . . . ‘[Y]ou sit here and I’ll tell you what I know because it’s what matters, its what’s important and you don’t know, so you sit there and I’ll tell you what’s wrong with you and how you should think.’

Participants believed that leaders who were “self-focused” were too preoccupied with their own “leader” status and were essentially incapable of meaningful collaboration.

To further demonstrate how Professor B’s class was not consistent with their own understandings of effective and energizing leadership, another female focus group participant related her observation that

[Professor B] didn’t deserve my respect because Clarke [another student in this class] was very vocal in class, and [Professor B] actually silenced him . . . I don’t think he said ten words in [this class] . . . [H]e just gave up like [Professor B] was not worth [the] effort.

Another male focus group member believed that Professor B

had an agenda right from the get-go, which I suppose every leader needs, any good leader should have some sort of agenda. However, a democratic leader would be open to [input from others].

Gleaned from a later focus group session, a female student added that with “Professor B, the purpose of [the] agenda was to enhance [his/her] own opinion, [and] beliefs.” This view of Professor B’s agenda surfaced in another focus group conversation, where a female student explained,

[Professor B] only let people talk that backed up [Professor B’s] opinion. If someone went against [that, they were] literally slammed. The one thing about that class [was] that, I don’t know if there was a person that [shared] the same values [as Professor B] had, but there was something about that class that brought anger to people.

Over the course of successive focus group and individual conversations about Professor B, the matter of trust surfaced and a female member commented that

Professor B at first wanted all of us to trust, but displayed an [unwillingness] to new ideas and anything that conflicted with what [Professor B] wanted, so that

instantly set up a barrier for [us, and we were] not going to try and trust [Professor B], and just said, 'To heck with this.'

Professor B, was perceived by participants to be a “weak professor” whose class was known for its hierarchical structure and *power-over* relationship with others. Participants, many of whom were former students of this instructor, related their stories of Professor B’s class that emphasized “negative leadership,” characterized by the instructor’s use of condescension, put-downs, control, dominance, and having “things done to [us] rather than with [us].”

In the individual interviews and succeeding focus group conversations, participants’ stories of Professor B consistently focused on an environment where students were regularly denigrated, especially when their views conflicted with those of the instructor. From the data collected, most participants provided their perspectives of Professor B’s leadership and explained how the organization, activities, and assessments in this class were disconnected from their understanding of effective and energizing leadership. In contrast, students regarded Professor A’s class as an exemplar of effective and energizing leadership in the College because of its relevance, inclusion, interaction, and “doing something real.”

Participants consistently mentioned that leadership was “more than technical skills,” but rather “people skills” were the foundation of effective and energizing leadership. In this way, communicating, interacting, and collaborating with others who embraced the vision let other people know that leadership was happening.

Adapting to the abilities of our team. A male student explained his understanding that “leadership [was] more effective and people respond[ed] in a more positive way” when effective and energizing leadership was established

“through process and through example, communication, and showing you care.” A female student reflected on the “great leadership” experienced in her cohort and reasoned “that as a group we worked really well . . . [T]here wasn’t just one [person] dictating what happened; we collectively worked together.” As the conversation developed, another female student pointed out that “as a cohesive group . . . what became more important was working as a cohort,” and a male student added that he equated “effective leadership with . . . [having] accomplished something.”

Alex emphasized in an email correspondence that “truth and trust are key to great leadership” because “without trust . . . leadership will not be effective and [may] fall apart quickly.” In an email from Dawn, she stressed, “we must be accepting of the differences” and “adapt to the abilities of our team or students” in the process of establishing effective and energizing leadership. In her view, “never assume . . . [that] vision will hold for everyone.” In response to an earlier email from me, Chris stated, “leadership is more of a collaborative process” where people were “engaged and empowered.” During one of the later focus group conversations, a male student understood that “effective and energizing leadership” was, in effect, “democratic and participatory leadership.” Peter expressed a complementary view in an email, stating that “[l]eadership [had] to be collaborative to be democratic and must be democratic to be effective.”

I was impressed by stories of past and current leadership experiences that students told in the focus group and individual conversations. As each student spoke, I heard leadership concepts, dimensions, and characteristics considered to be of great importance and value to effective and energizing leadership. I was struck by the

magnitude of the emotional dimension and the impact that positive and negative leadership experience played in shaping their leadership understandings.

Principles for establishing effective and energizing leadership. Emerging from the data, participants identified a range of intellectual, social, emotional, and communication dimensions that they understood as essential to accomplishment or leadership that “does something” positive and relevant. From focus group and individual conversations, as well as email correspondence, student-derived leadership concepts emerged, and through collaborative processes were labeled as integrity, congruence, civility, chemistry, cohesiveness, and catalytics. These labels are explained more fully in the storyline, a grounded theory principle consistent with the Strauss and Corbin (1998) approach, presented in Chapter Five.

I was surprised that students understood effective and energizing *leadership as a continuum* between position and process endpoints. Erin commented in an email that “there are so many levels of leadership. ... [A] situation [may be] best suited [to] a person in the role of leader,” whereas from Jill’s perspective another situation may require “a group of people working together to make a change.” It was interesting that, at times, students accepted the individual leader as an initiator or catalyst necessary for advancing a vision, but that this view did not conflict with their conception of effective and energizing leadership as “a group of people working together to make change.” In the view of leadership as continuum, vision had a double duty. First, it served as a factor that influenced the type of leadership appropriate to a situation. Second, it acted as an energizing force and scaffold deemed by students as essential to establishing effective and energizing leadership.

Students understood that *leadership rhetoric must parallel leadership action*. In her journal, Natalie wrote about strategy meetings with the principal at her practicum school, which, in her view, illustrated leadership rhetoric conflicting with leadership action.

During my internship, the principal [had] these meetings and we'd talk about things, but for some topics there would just be talk and talk . . . and [we would] leave the meeting not knowing what was going on. I was completely at a loss with the discipline policy.

In this story (and comparable other stories), students placed considerable value on *congruence* between leadership rhetoric and action, and regarded integrity and reliability as key to their leadership understandings.

In her interview, Kara spoke of a practicum experience with her cooperating teacher:

I didn't appreciate that [my cooperating teacher] expected greatness, [and] didn't motivate [me] to achieve it. [S]ometimes . . . [she] seemed to get competitive, that she was so great. I [thought that] when in this role, [she] should say, 'This is what I expect from you, and this is how we are going to get there because I'm in a role [where] I'm supposed to be guiding you and helping you through this.' I felt sort of out on my own [because] the expectation she set out was either sink or swim, and I was lucky that I swam.

As Kara spoke about the incongruence in her cooperating teacher's rhetoric and action, I was drawn to what she implied about the mismatch between leadership rhetoric and leadership action, and the negative effect that it had on trust, support, and the overall leadership relationship. It was common for students to describe how "good" leadership "felt right," and I was not surprised that the emotional dimension of leadership resonated in conversations about establishing effective and energizing leadership.

During an individual conversation that I had with Peter, the dialogue moved onto his practicum and his experience with the principal, which he perceived as “genuine” leadership because

the principal at the school where I did my internship was more [about a] ‘hands-on’ type of leadership. He was always at school and more. He didn’t deliver huge captivating speeches, but when it came time, he stepped up [and] he did it. He was respected, was approachable, [and] like I said, he walked the walk [and] what he said made sense, so essentially he did talk the talk.

According to Peter, this principal represented effective leadership because he was visible, accessible, connected with those around him, did things that illustrated that he “walked the walk” and “talk[ed] the talk,” and he had colleagues’ respect. In this example, that the principals’ leadership rhetoric harmonized with his leadership action resonated with Peter as being essential to establishing effective and energizing leadership.

In a conversation about leadership experienced at the College, Fran offered the following two perspectives about professors “showing us how to be effective leaders” by

modeling leader[ship] behavior and letting us experience [effective and energizing leadership]. It [was] great that we experienced it in the College, [but] as we were experiencing it, we were also pushed down and told . . . that we were not good enough [and] that it [was] not our place.

Further in the dialogue, Fran qualified this view with a second perspective on leadership rhetoric and action within the College.

[W]hat [was] their motivation behind their leadership role? [Was] it ego and to dictate what they have learned, and ‘You should be a carbon copy of me?’ Or [was] it ‘This is what I know, you’re here now, [and] let’s see what you can get to?’

Fran’s comments represented a wider student perspective contained in the data, that for some professors their intellectual superiority was responsible for incongruence between

leadership rhetoric and action, and underscored the value of congruence in student leadership understandings.

Students in a follow-up focus group discussed leadership as negotiation. One female student described the principal at her practicum school as “willing to negotiate every possible thing.” Even though everyone was included in the leadership process, this student noted a disconnect between the principal’s leadership rhetoric and action:

[A]t staff meetings . . . he [was] leading the thing, but never really got to say his opinion. There was a person who believed just because she had thirty years experience teaching at the school, she [would dominate] the meeting. I think in some ways [we needed to] be negotiable, but [also] stick to our goals.

In this story, inclusion and valuing the perspectives of the staff were deemed the principal’s rhetoric. However, in practice, a dominant personality frequently monopolized staff meetings, which motivated this student to question whether “all person’s opinions [were] heard” or just “one person’s opinion [was heard] . . . to [keep] that person happy.”

As the conversation in a focus group was winding down, a male student stated rather bluntly that “there [were] two ways of getting things done: raising hell or kissing ass.” This student explained his perspective that in most contexts

there [was] conflict, [it was] fight versus flight. [I knew this boss] constantly gave into people, [which meant] that people who [took] the flight perspective . . . ended up the brunt of one person constantly dominating, and this “leader” giving into a few of these people, to the detriment of the group [who were] just subdued into not providing [their] opinions.

A female student echoed this position and added,

[People who lead] have to realize that these people [were] vulnerable coming to them asking for certain things. . . . I think it’s both ways. [Leaders and followers] have to be trusted in order to have that [leadership] relationship.

As revealed by students, dissonance between leadership rhetoric and action, directed focus away from vision as (a) the scaffold for establishing and sustaining effective and energizing leadership, and (b) as a mechanism for resolving conflict with civility. Resonating in this conversation was the substantial importance that students attached to the *congruence between rhetoric and action* in establishing effective and energizing leadership, and was regarded as another fundamental leadership quality.

As revealed by participants in their stories about past and current leadership experiences in non-educational, practicum school, and College contexts, students agreed with Jill's comment that leadership was "much more than technical skills." Student experiences consistently featured "people skills," often described as highly valued and desired effective interpersonal relationships. Students understood that these people skills included: (a) effective communication that was informative, validating, and sensitive to students' emotional well-being; (b) trusting and respectful interpersonal relationships; (c) collaboration; and (d) accomplishment.

Students did not explain leadership in exclusively positional or processual terms. Rather, they described leadership as a continuum where vision determined whether a positional or processual leadership approach was selected for a particular situation or if the most appropriate leadership approach was at a point between position and process. Energized by vision and containing a highly respected and influential emotional dimension, the student-derived leadership continuum reflected an overarching theme of equity in establishing effective and energizing leadership. Equity from the students' perspective embraced a supportive (or catalytic) element, manifesting itself in people "receiving what they need rather than everyone obtaining the same." Students implied that equity was fundamental to their leadership understandings.

Throughout the conversations in focus groups and interviews, student stories regularly highlighted *collaborative relationships* and consideration of the *attendant emotional dimension* as core aspects of their leadership experiences. Students' past and current leadership experiences illustrated their expectation of *integrity* and *credibility*, that leadership "does what it says it will do," and once again stressed the importance that they placed on congruence in leadership rhetoric and action and the relationship to *credibility*, a key leadership understanding. As I reflected on participants' past and current leadership experiences, it became apparent to me that attention to students' psychological contract—the expectations about fairness, equity, and justice that guided their behavior—was a core assumption implied in students' leadership understandings.

Concluding Reflections: Students' Leadership Understandings

I recognized that leadership as conceptualized and understood by participants was limited by the experiences and perspectives specific to this select group of undergraduate education students. Two broad findings emerged that reflected (a) leadership meant different things to different people depending upon the situation or context, and (b) the importance of the interactive and collaborative process by which students articulated their leadership concepts and understandings. This section explores the initial research question and follow-up questions that emerged during the data collection and analysis that were addressed within the synthesis of participants' understandings of effective and energizing leadership.

This group of pre-service teachers shared a variety of stories about their various leadership experiences, and, most of them described their involvement in activities such as leading instructional initiatives, home and school initiatives, and class or cohort oriented initiatives within the College. In most of these activities, participation was

regarded as “co-leadership,” with the responsibilities associated with the initiative having definite beginning and end points.

In the case of co-leader involvement, as participants built upon their successes, leadership was often transitional, where they accepted the risk and engaged in classroom, school, and community initiatives, which they understood as demonstrating leadership. For example, from the student point of view, organizing grade eight students as social activists, using archeology to teach acceptance for others, or implementing a community dance school in a rural community were all examples of shared “opportunity to take risks” that brought “together talents of everyone” and enabled “reflection” on initiatives. From their view, these initiatives fostered refinement and enhancement of vision and leadership.

In the process of exploring these interpersonal dimensions of leadership, students highlighted reliability (i.e., effective communication, trust, empathy, respect, and caring) and they agreed that the concept of integrity provided an accurate description of the interpersonal dimension of leadership. Students also agreed that the concept of congruence accurately represented leadership rhetoric that matched leadership action. The combination of integrity and congruence reflected credibility, and was revealed as a foundational dimension of effective and energizing leadership.

Students in the focus groups and individual interviews believed that conflict can occur whenever people work together in a group, and they acknowledged that effective interpersonal skills, including focusing on vision, using open communication and exploring the conflict with respect, could be applied to resolving conflict. For example, participants understood that using questions about expectations, goals, and skills helped to keep them focused on goals. Students agreed that the concept of civility accurately

represented their understanding of the interpersonal dimension of effective and energizing leadership. According to participants, leadership behaviors associated with integrity, congruence, and civility kept the focus on vision, and provided an alternative to attacking personal or dispositional characteristics of members.

Participants decided that the concept of chemistry correctly reflected their understanding that effective leadership was positive, inspirational, and characterized by transparent relationships between and among people. Charisma or, receptiveness to others, feeling valued, and synergy related a sense of belonging. This sense of belonging in individuals fostered their feeling “welcomed” and valued for their skills as they worked towards advancing a vision. Influence through members was vital to enacting vision in the same way rapport or chemistry among musicians was essential to the success of a rock and roll band.

This rapport or chemistry was as much about people who mesh as it was about (a) weaving integrity through the leadership group; (b) maintaining focus on vision; and (c) resolving conflict with civility. Furthermore, rapport or chemistry and collaboration were accepted as unifying factors in building relationships that attended to and validated emotional dimensions. From the student perspective, collaborative relationships were paramount to leadership. Moreover, collaborative relationships that attended to the emotional dimension, a process identified as collective interaction, was regarded as essential to effective and energizing leadership.

While discussing social dynamics and a group’s ability to maintain their focus and accomplish their goals and vision, a female student suggested that cohesiveness accurately described this quality, something to which participants agreed.

Complementary to Matreshka nesting dolls, cohesiveness was manifest in successful

interaction, engagement, and collaboration of members. From the participant view, effective and energizing leadership was connected to support, which included descriptors such as commitment, inspiration, collaboration, and getting your hands dirty. Students concurred with the understanding that leadership was a framework or scaffold that supported people as they stretched their skill set into new areas while implementing a vision.

Student leadership experiences emphasized attention to and respect for the emotional dimension, considered inherent in relationships and foundational to effective and energizing leadership. The students made reference to Canada's Olympic hockey team and their quest for the gold medal. This reference provided an apt analogy because the vision of "going for gold" became the team's rallying cry, and their passion, dedication, and enthusiasm inspired players, coaches, and fans alike. This story was an emotionally charged event that students held as analogous to the integrity, congruence, civility, cohesiveness, and catalytics (support) that they experienced in collaborative leadership relationships.

Catalytics, or support, was understood to include reflection and deemed central to the successful implementation of vision. Reflection provided a look inside the collaborative relationships involved in implementing a specific vision and facilitated meaning-making and critique (where critique was understood to mean review, revision and re-implementation, if necessary, of a vision). Reflection tapped into human, social, capital, and/or environmental resources and connected to building the interpersonal relationships, and trust, critical conditions for effective and energizing leadership processes and outcomes.

By grouping leadership processes according to their dimensions, five patterns related to effective and energizing leadership emerged: (a) recognizing and utilizing people's unique talents; (b) doing the right things rather than doing things right; (c) trusting, respecting, and supporting people involved in advancing the vision; (d) gathering gifts rather than dwelling on deficiencies; and (e) accomplishing things or "helping people better their situation," which was the pattern closest to a social justice goal.

Participants experienced various degrees of effective and energizing leadership, and they described a variety of outcomes that were dependent upon context and impacted the manner in which involvement with leadership continued. Students not only categorized their leadership experiences as positive or negative, but the emotional impressions associated with their experiences suggested a moral dimension in their leadership understandings.

As student leadership stories unfolded, I noted that their experiences often denoted the binaries of "good" and "bad," and were typically qualified as better or worse, or positive or negative, and thus revealed a moral dimension of leadership. Positive leadership experiences encouraged, motivated, and fostered perseverance, and extended participation; for this reason, students judged these leadership initiatives as better than, negative leadership.

Conversely, negative experiences discouraged, belittled, and bullied students, and typically curtailed their participation; hence, negative leadership experiences were judged worse than positive leadership. Participants identified that knowing what leadership *was not* was a necessary condition to learning what effective and energizing leadership *was*, and students often explained that when they chose to continue their

engagement with negative leadership, they did so because this type of experience nevertheless contributed to their repertoire of desired and respected leadership skills.

A long-standing maxim in education asserts that the most difficult students teach teachers the most about teaching, and students implied a similar aphorism that challenging leadership experiences generally taught them a great deal about effective and energizing leadership. Participants experienced positive and negative leadership in everyday life, their practicum, and pre-service teacher training in the College. Notwithstanding the moral dimension of leadership, students understood that the growth of their leadership attributes, behaviors, and skills were attributed to positive and negative leadership experiences as a series of teachable moments.

When participants spoke of leadership growth, they identified the presence of risk, and their actions and interactions served as the conduit for learning about leadership. Leadership experiences and corresponding reflection and dialogue were considered essential to leadership because this building on experience described by participants conveyed their understanding of how their own leadership skills grew from critical incidents that occurred in non-educational, practicum, and College contexts. Interestingly, students implied a relationship between teachable moments and critical incidents. Specifically, the teachable moments that emerged from positive or negative leadership experiences were also accepted as critical incidents formative to students' leadership understandings.

Reflection on past and current leadership experiences contributed to students' conceptualization and development of leadership understandings because reflection on concrete leadership experiences enabled appraisal of the emotional dimension as they reviewed collaborative activities framed around mutually accepted goals or visions. In

this way, collaborative vision-oriented leadership favored interactive and collective orientations to leadership and challenged hierarchical leadership approaches especially in schools and the College.

Effective leadership was understood as a process and conceptualized as an interactive and collective effort focused on advancing vision. This collective advancement of vision included risk-taking, trust, respect, and attention to the emotional dimension by building interpersonal relationships in the leadership group and the community to which the vision was oriented.

I realized that the research question relied on students recalling their experiences, but I was surprised that students' leadership understandings were almost exclusively derived from practice. When I commenced the initial coding, I thought it was reasonable to expect representation of their intellectual or course-based leadership knowledge in their leadership understandings; however, during coding processes I noted the preponderance of lived leadership experiences, which were personally and professionally meaningful and emotionally charged.

Participant leadership experiences reflected an evolution in their leadership understandings as identified by the transition of their own interaction and collaboration with colleagues, students, parents, and the community. As educators, participants realized that sharing expertise and experience provided guidance for students, but it was imperative that this guidance included leadership approaches that motivated individuals to work together for the betterment of conditions and situations.

As derived from the focus group sessions, students' leadership understandings were identified in their leadership experiences and by unfolding these experiences students made their understandings explicit. From my point of view, the students'

articulation of leadership concepts and understandings was as important as the emergent content of their leadership concepts and understandings themselves. The process of sense-making in the focus groups was the manifestation of their leadership understandings. The focus groups brought people together who had considerable interest in the topic of leadership, and this interest was reflected in their willingness to attend and participate in the focus group and in individual interview sessions. Students indicated they understood the value of this leadership study and knew that their participation contributed to the study of undergraduate leadership.

This focus group interaction was quite stirring for me. I noted that students were engaged and motivated as they made sense of the nature of the leadership phenomenon, and as education students and pre-service teachers, they articulated leadership understandings from their professional orientation. Individuals were brought together to inform the leadership phenomenon, and by working in concert they revealed, interpreted, and represented their leadership understandings. In one of the final focus group sessions, students revealed to me that, from their perspective, their participation in the succession of focus groups was the manifestation of their leadership understandings, and that it was, in its own way, effective and energizing leadership. As they shared with me, I found myself sharing their excitement, and affirmed in my mind that my views, too, had changed over the course of the study.

The participants understood leadership as a collaborative relationship and was perceived as a scaffold or framework that unified people engaged in accomplishing a vision. This type of engagement fostered energy and empowerment, and was illustrated by *power-through* others, trust, and respect for the emotional dimension. In conversations with students in focus groups and individual interviews, they referred to

leadership of this nature as “catching more flies with honey than vinegar,” an apt metaphor for their leadership understandings.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, POINTS OF DEPARTURE, AND POSSIBILITIES

As I observed the students engaging in conversations about leadership experiences, their beliefs emerged and became more accurate through group interaction. In keeping with the emergent nature of this interpretive study, the discussion herein is organized as “bricolage,” a quiltlike representation that connects and presents the various views of leadership (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) with students’ understandings.

The term bricolage originates from the French verb, *bricoleur*, and is equivalent to the English phrase, “do it yourself.” I have used the term bricolage as an organizer that fosters learning and answers questions by trying out, testing, and playing with materials and information. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2000), the “interpretive bricoleur” (p. 6) represents one who understands research as an interactive process that is shaped by the social locations of the people involved in the research, and is similar to the a posteriori approach used in this research.

The initial research question and follow-up questions that emerged during data collection and analysis facilitated the unfolding of participants’ past and current leadership experiences and their attendant leadership understandings. In the next section, I present, in the spirit of bricolage, an array of representations or broad themes, including the focus group processes, ubiquity of relationships, importance of

emotional well-being, and the nature of the students' sensemaking, as the parts that connect with the whole of students' emergent leadership understandings.

In this chapter, the broad themes are fourfold and based upon the social dynamics, commentary, and experiences that the students shared, primarily in the focus groups, but also in individual conversations with me. First, however, I discuss the dynamics of the focus group processes and leadership themes that emerged, and I present the discussion as it relates to these four broad leadership themes. This discussion is an important first step because there is a need to expand the discussion about process, which serves as a critical foundation for understanding the content of the students' deliberations.

Going Deep: Focus Group Process

As I reflect on this study, working with this group of undergraduate education students in the focus group and individual conversations remains the most memorable aspect of this research. It was inspiring to witness the energy and commitment that the students brought to each focus group and individual interview session, and it illustrated how this research mattered to them. Additionally, through the course of our various conversations, I was motivated to think about my own leadership understandings and examine leadership in new ways.

Through successive focus group and individual interviews, electronic collaboration, and journal analysis, the students and I had approximately forty hours of contact time. The time that the students spent with each other was characterized by interaction, collaboration, and construction of meaning, which represented for me the most exciting aspect of data collection. It was not unusual for sessions to exceed

the two-hour allocation, which demonstrated the students' energy and commitment to both each other and the research project.

It was exciting to be immersed in the data and witness first-hand how students constructed meaning from the exchange and exploration of their leadership experiences. I was surprised to learn that the students in one focus group routinely continued their conversations after leaving their sessions, extending their sensemaking beyond the scheduled meeting time. Furthermore, the concepts and themes that emerged from the data provided additional depth to their conversations. The meaning constructed in these supplementary conversations provided departure points for successive conversations in the way of topic choice and direction of dialogue.

Spirited Conversations: Collective Interaction

In the initial sessions, the focus groups reflected two different experiences involving social processes and the concurrent sensemaking. Focus groups were interactive, and as students engaged one another in conversation about their personal orientations to leadership, they shared experiences, questioned each other about leadership qualities, and volunteered leadership experiences. Gradually the discussion became more about their social orientation to leadership, and as students collaborated they collectively constructed leadership meaning based on their own experiences.

The sensemaking process in the focus groups reflected what Drath and Palus (1994/2001) referred to as deep interrelatedness of individual and social meaning-making with the social systems in which the participants live, thus connecting the

individual's sense of what was important to "larger cultural frame[s]" (p. 10) within which leadership processes occur. The students understood leadership as processual, where leaders are interactive members of a social group or community. This viewpoint harmonizes with the position of Drath and Palus (1994/2001), who claimed that membership in a group partly defines individuals and commits them to play a role in the group. I found the high level of relational engagement and collaboration was fascinating, and it was exciting to witness students' interactive sensemaking in follow up sessions.

In another focus group, the students appeared apprehensive in the initial session. However, after a female student asked the group if they remembered when one of their instructors became intransigent because a classmate challenged the instructor's ideas, student engagement and interaction became quite vibrant. I noted that this experience was a tipping point for this group because the momentum for sharing stories increased noticeably, demonstrated by the transcriber's notations that indicated multiple voices and several people talking at once.

Students probed and challenged each other's ideas, and this interaction reflected argument and thesis, two features of dialectic conversation. Gradually, the conversation transitioned to collaborative sensemaking, something I found interesting to observe. As group processes developed, the students' tendency to simply list desirable leader qualities, characteristics, and behaviors evolved into a decidedly social process, where participants assigned greater value and importance to their relationship with the group. Student stories provided the impetus for successive conversations about leadership experiences.

In exploring these conversations, students revealed deeper levels of meaning about their leadership understandings, implying that interpersonal skills, relationships, and trust were essential to effective and energizing leadership. This position was similar to that put forth by Komives et al., (1998) and Astin & Astin (2000), who found that trust and interaction are important aspects of personal skills.

As the relationships in another focus group developed, participants routinely continued their conversations beyond the scheduled session and furthered the construction of their leadership understandings. This behavior captured their high level of engagement and interest in each other's experiences, and also demonstrated their commitment to the focus group, the social sensemaking process, and the emergent concepts, themes, and understandings. This focus group often spoke about leadership and group dynamics, and framed the legitimacy of these group processes with language that reflected integrity, civility, cohesiveness, congruence, chemistry, and catalytics. When there was divergence it did not become personal. Rather, differing views were explored by further clarification of leadership concepts and understandings, which kept their focus on sensemaking.

There was a dramatic increase in energy, passion, and engagement as students recalled the mass email story and their familiarity with Professor B's ineffective leadership. Students' emotions ran high, which piqued my curiosity about the considerable fervor students directed towards the mass email. The email message in question was forwarded to me, and my initial reaction was that the message seemed innocuous enough. However, after a closer look, I also reacted negatively to the terse wording, the sentence written all in uppercase letters (representing yelling

in electronic messages), and a tone that intimated that the students receiving the message were intellectually inferior to the sender.

Interestingly, this email captured the students' understanding of the momentum generated by the accumulation of seemingly small and innocuous things that had the potential for wider ramifications within a given context. I was surprised at the impact of this message and the influence that this seemingly small thing had as a tipping point for students to unburden themselves of their resentment toward the email and, indirectly, the sender. From my perspective, it was the students' perception of the sender's blatant disregard for their intelligence, self-esteem, and respect that generated a considerable level of momentum that elevated the mass email from an innocuous event to a critical incident.

In one of the later focus group conversations, students shared pleasurable experiences of working together, successfully accomplishing vision, and feeling energized and inspired to engage in further leadership action. In contrast to pleasurable leadership experiences, students devoted considerable focus to Professor B and the regular use of *verbal hits* that were regarded as belittling and dominating. Furthermore, students reasoned that the upshot of this type of denigrating behavior compelled them to disengage from this class. This collective approach to conceptualizing what leadership *is* in contrast to what it *is not* was typical of the students' sensemaking and their tendency to speak in dualities in the focus groups.

Deriving Meaning: Speaking in Dualities

The practice of defining a concept by comparing it to a counter-example was reflected in the students' tendency to speak in dualities, to describe leadership

experiences as good and bad, positive and negative, strong and weak, effective and ineffective, and individual and collective. Speaking in dualities is in part attributed to the formative stage at which these pre-service teachers were professionally; however, it did not preclude gaining depth in the conversations. While students' leadership understandings were not always fully formed, it was not perceived that their leadership understandings were superficial within the undergraduate context from which the sample was selected.

These focus group conversations were more than a forum where students shared stories, explored leadership experiences, and revealed their leadership understandings. Perhaps emboldened by the reality that everyone at the focus groups was present for the same reason—to explore leadership experiences and discuss leadership understandings—these sessions were transformed into a safe, trusting, and collaborative context where students could express their insights and feelings, and speak candidly and passionately about positive and negative leadership, and together make sense out of their experiences.

By staying true to this vision, students spoke at length about leadership and the interpersonal and social processes about which they were passionate. As conversations unfolded in the focus groups, underlying themes of trust, respect, and emotional well-being emerged. As a student of educational leadership, I found it inspiring to watch these students delve deeper into their leadership understandings and articulate their perspectives within an encouraging, safe, and trusting environment.

These discussions illustrated emergent leadership, which reminded me of Foster's (1989) vision of leadership as residing in the community itself. Foster represented the leadership community as a union of ideas where shared leadership was transferred between leaders and followers, and contributions to the leadership job were made by members of the leadership community. Drath and Palus (1994/2001) advocated a similar view and explained that effective leadership required members' participation in the process of leadership. They stressed that "to make things happen ... *we* need to make things happen and *I* need to figure out how best to participate in the process of *us* making things happen" (p. 19; emphasis in original).

Based on their research, Komives et al. (1998) found that undergraduate students' sense of effective and energizing leadership has transformative dimensions because change that occurs as a part of leadership may also initiate individual and group transcendence. It was noted that the participants experienced change as their relationship with the focus groups evolved over the course of the study and that the focus group interaction reflected consistent leadership talk and action.

Congruent Leadership Talk and Action

In the students' view, effective and energizing leadership was contingent upon congruence between leadership talk and leadership action, something worth exploring for students who regularly demonstrated that congruence in focus group sessions. From my position in this study, social construction dominated the process and articulation of leadership knowledge in the focus groups. Social construction permeated the group processes, reflecting Gergen's (2001) perspective that

the source of meaning [is] within dialogic process [and therefore] ... [the] meaning-making process [is a] social activity, [and does] not originate within the mind [to be] stored there for future use, but rather meaning is created in action and regenerated (or not). (p. 111)

In the spirit of bricolage, as the students in the focus groups talked about leadership, they interacted and constructed meaning for the leadership phenomenon from the information and resources that they had at hand. Additionally, during these sessions relationships, sensemaking, and further possibilities emerged in the form of broad leadership themes that comprised their leadership understandings.

The Emergent Themes

Emergent in the focus groups was the idea that effective and energizing leadership brought individuals' talents together, fostered working collectively, and enabled making a difference. The student view of effective and energizing leadership reflected *human agency*, a social theory concept that conveys the idea that individuals are capable of changing the social systems in which they live. From this view, human agency was represented by the students' leadership understandings, which included a betterment of conditions. They highlighted experiences where their abilities, skills, and responsibilities flourished. It was interesting that students understood that leadership was not always a responsibility bestowed upon individuals, but rather they recognized that the capacity for leadership also emerged from their actions.

Although students emphasized relationship building and the importance of modeling and mentoring, they also recognized that diverse skills were reflected in their understandings of effective and energizing leadership. Their realization that leadership oscillated between processual (relational) and positional (linear)

endpoints was symbolic of their deeper understanding that effective and energizing leadership has the flexibility to be context-specific. Furthermore, betterment of conditions is to the result of each individual contributing their most appropriate skills and qualities to accomplishing the vision. Whether their leadership experiences were positive or negative, the implication was that all leadership experience—practical, vicarious, or a combination of each—influenced their own leadership understandings, and it was reflected in the student view that relationships, like leadership, have many facets.

While reflecting on the information presented in Chapter Four, I found that four broad areas of consideration emerged, which I have discussed in the next section. These four broad themes are: the ubiquity of relationships; the importance of emotional well-being; the nature of the students' sensemaking; and leadership throw, that is, the cumulative effect of small things that have the potential for broader ramifications.

The Ubiquity of Relationships

It was evident in the students' discussions that they regarded leadership relationships as omnipresent. Initially, the students generated a list of ideal leader qualities and characteristics, but as conversations continued the students' exploration of their leadership experiences grew deeper, and it became apparent that they understood leadership as an ongoing process rather than as a specific set of conditions, criteria, or circumstances. Relationships were everything when considering leadership, and according to students, relationships conveyed compassion and empathy, trust and respect, and recognition—all motivators for

leadership involvement. Interestingly, while students were engaged in constructing meaning about the concepts *anyone can lead* and *harnessing talents*, they implied that leadership is emergent, and framed these concepts within the language of collaborative and interactive relationships. In this way, the ongoing presence of relationships was evident in the students' discussions of collaboration, power, and context.

Relationships in Discussion of Collaboration

Collaborative relationships appeared integral to the students' leadership understandings. By virtue of the students' understanding of relationships, it was implied that within interactive processes everyone is accepted as equal and conflict is resolved with civility. Further, the students were encouraged and motivated by actual and potential contributions made to leadership initiatives, and the recognition that they received for their efforts had the potential to inspire involvement with leadership initiatives, denoted as "meaning-making in a community of practice" (Drath & Palus, 1994/2001, p. 18).

Students envisioned leadership as an interactive and collaborative process, where each member is valued for her or his contributions, and is similar to the view of inclusive and transforming nature of leadership put forth by Bennis (2003), Bennis and Nanus (1997), and Foster (1989). Most students chose to share leadership experiences from their practicum and articulated their view that processual leadership brought the group together. This process, they asserted, acknowledged individuals' skills and talents, and fostered collaborative development of situation-specific goals and plans.

Bennis (2003) suggested that leadership competencies are underpinned by collaboration. Similarly, Smith (2004) and Bonous-Hammarth (2001) focused on a relational element, *common purpose*, as an influencing factor in effective leadership. The students understood that leadership is not limited to simple leader-follower relationships. Moreover, as students explored their experiences of *harnessing talents*, they consistently used the collective pronoun “we,” which signified the importance of leadership as a collective and interactive process focused on common purpose. When a group desires betterment of conditions, they bring their skills together, encourage each other, accept responsibility for achieving the vision, and are motivated to see this process through.

From the students’ view, leadership was understood as relational and included collaborative relationships often directed towards accomplishing humanitarian causes in a manner similar to “forward looking communitarianism sustaining [the] bonds of ethical community in an era of individual choice and cultural diversity” (Kymlicka, 2002, p. 272). Thus, harnessing talents reflected the students’ view that collaboration is a captivating, encouraging, and transforming experience, and is similar to the communitarian principles of “inclusion ... shared values ... affirmation, reciprocity” (Kymlicka, pp. 209-222) while in pursuit of “leadership for a common good and common life” (Guttman & Thompson, as cited in Smith, 2004, ¶ 1).

Students believed that leadership happens by mutual negotiation of visions and ideas within collaborative and interactive relationships, a precept that parallels that of Bennis (2003), who stated that purpose determines structure, and when

organizations (or groups) are acknowledged as a means and not an end, they function as communities and provide members autonomy, opportunity, and rewards. Similarly, the concept *anyone can lead* reflected students' understanding that leadership is emergent, interactive, and collaborative, and emphasizes trust as an underlying property of their leadership understandings.

The students implied that trust, respect, and caring were the dispositional characteristics most often associated with leaders whom they admired. In successive conversations, students explored leadership experiences and revealed their perspective that in collaborative relationships everyone has skills and talents, contributes to the initiative, and receives individual and group recognition for their accomplishments. Throughout the process of leadership and working with people for betterment of conditions, students understood that effective and energizing leadership included the relational element of *giving up control and power*, which made it possible to develop confidence and trust in themselves and the collaborative relationship. Trust and being trusted mediates the relationship between power structures and the extent of interaction, collaboration, and reciprocity in their everyday lives, practicum, and college contexts.

In relating stories of practicum leadership experiences, students implied that in collaborative classrooms there is an assumption of trust with teachers and students as they gather together their unique perspectives and talents to make valuable contributions to the issue or project at hand. In leadership experiences at the college level, the students asserted that trust is inherent in courses where instructors are “decentered” and students can work collectively, interactively, or autonomously.

Furthermore, students gained affirmation from those instructors who regarded collaborative and interactive processes in their classrooms as necessary, valuable, and integral to a relevant and proper education. In contrast, the students also told of experiences at the college level that highlighted mixed messages they received about participatory and democratic classrooms in courses that they identified as hierarchically structured. This type of incongruence negatively impacted the trust between instructor and the students, who often felt silenced in hierarchically structured courses, and tended to disengage or, what one student described as, “shutting down.”

Astin (1993) identified that collaboration and self-development were essential first steps toward enhanced group interactions, a perspective that is upheld by this study’s participants, who viewed effective and energizing leadership as necessarily involving collaboration, interaction, and trust. According to research by Bonous-Hammarth (2001), collaborative approaches emphasized trust, listening, service, and working together for the common good, which was a leadership perspective supported by the students in this study.

In contributing to the conversation about interpersonal skills (or *people skills*), the students explained the importance of honor and trust in working together, defining this dimension of relational leadership as *integrity*. Further, students recognized that leadership talk has to be consistent with leadership action, and they agreed that the term *congruence* represented this aspect of interactive and collaborative relationships.

The students shared the perspective that whenever people work together in groups, disagreements are inevitable. However, they understood that leadership encouraged a solution-based approach to conflict, and that it included using people skills and vision-oriented questions to redirect focus positively. In this way, students resolved differences constructively and personal attacks were minimized. The students agreed that the term *civility* accurately represented the idea of resolving conflict in a responsible, courteous, and relational manner.

Students' conversations about collaborative relationships highlighted the *gathering gifts* motif as the influencing process that energized vision and encouraged working together for the betterment of conditions for communities of students, teachers, parents, or undergraduate education students. As revealed by the students' comments, collaborative relationships enable an activation of skill sets specific to particular contexts for working towards the betterment of conditions.

Relationships in Discussion of Context

Subsumed in students' leadership understandings was an implicit sense that leadership occurs within particular contexts. In their view, effective and energizing leadership occurs within an open, interactive, and collaborative setting, where students felt valued, energized, and encouraged for their leadership participation. This type of common context is labeled the "third culture" (Komives et al., 1998, p. 157), and has its own language, jargon, vision, and understandings that fosters a coalescence of individuals from diverse contexts. Furthermore, "people are good, honest and trustworthy ... [have] purpose [and have] a unique contribution to make" (p. 158). The third culture, comparable to the participants' view of interactive and

collaborative relationships, represents a “me *and* you orientation rather than a me *or* you orientation” (p. 158; emphasis in original) to constructing local solutions to complex issues.

While students were engaged in constructing meaning about the concepts *anyone can lead* and *harnessing talents*, they implied that leadership is emergent, and framed these concepts within the language of collaborative and interactive relationships. Connaughton, Lawrence, and Ruben (2003), reported that ordinary people are capable of accomplishing extraordinary things, denoting a view of *emergent leadership* consistent with the students’ perspective.

Harnessing talents and emergent leadership are context specific, and require group interaction to determine the specific skills and actions required for betterment of conditions within a certain context. For instance, students mentioned practicum experiences that reflected cooperative and collaborative learning where teacher and students collectively explored their goals and roles, generated plans, and then committed themselves to an action that resulted in making a difference. This understanding is similar to that expressed by Connaughton et al. (2003), who found that contextual leadership occurred in a particular sector, such as education, and was adapted to the mission, values role, culture, and people involved in leadership.

The students implied that leadership is situation-specific, where ongoing and frequent changes to decision-making and action is the norm and requires what Bennis (2003) referred to as “adaptability” (p. xxiii), or acting and evaluating results while on the run. In this way, collaboration is integral to the relationship and successfully making a difference within a specific context. This student

understanding is consistent with the view identified by Astin and Astin (2000) that every individual has the inherent potential and power to be an initiator and agent of change.

Relationships in Discussion of Power

As revealed in the students' leadership understandings, effective and energizing leadership requires that power be differentiated relationally. I noted that as students constructed meaning for relational leadership they framed their discussion using *power-through* and *power-over*, two concepts first pioneered by Mary Parker Follett in the 1920s. Students commented that a *power-through* differentiation involves *leading through people* and includes caring and working for the good of the group. According to the students' assessment, the group naturally performs many of the functions of its own leadership and management, which compares with a similar theme found in Follett's work. In addition, the student concept of *leading through others* is an extension of their belief in *we-orientation*, an intrinsic principle of communitarianism.

According to the students, leading through others is a manifestation of the power-through differentiation and stands in contrast to the hierarchical power-over structures that they often experienced in everyday life, as well as in practicum and college contexts. For instance, while discussing hierarchical power, Jack responded that the power-over differentiation disregards emotions and self-esteem. Furthermore, students in the focus groups reflected on power-over practices, such as those experienced in Professor B's class, and deduced that hierarchical power embraces an elitism and self-centeredness that almost immediately sets up barriers to

trust. Students also stated that, in their experiences, a power-over differentiation was characterized by condescending and intimidating language, which they regarded as invective and counterproductive to establishing effective and energizing leadership relationships.

As the students constructed meaning about collaborative leadership relationships, they determined that relational power is essential to effective and energizing leadership. They viewed leadership as *leading through others*, a process that involves individuals applying their unique talents to context-specific conditions in order to accomplish their goals. According to the students', this leading through others process fostered strengthening of the relationship because power is differentiated relationally and individuals are flexible, adaptable, and confident in seeing vision through. When asked about power and leadership, the students responded that relational power facilitates cohesiveness, which in turn enhances the group's effectiveness and ability for accomplishment. The influencing process, described as *leading through others*, fostered accomplishment while preserving individuals' self-esteem and the reaching of one's full potential.

In making sense of their conceptualization of power, students constructed a bimodal description that was divided along relational and hierarchical differentiations. In this case, the duality of students' words indicated a flip-flop technique, which was invoked as part of a process of conceptualizing and articulating *power-through* as the influencing process required for effective and energizing leadership. In the focus group and individual interviews, students related everyday life, practicum, and college level experiences that underscored *leading*

through others, a relational element, in juxtaposition to *power-over* others, a hierarchical element. The students' flip-flop technique created a space between relational and hierarchical power elements where students constructed a meaning for power that was congruent with their understanding of effective and energizing leadership.

The student perspective of *leading through others* reflects perspectives held by Mary Parker Follett (1926), who recommended eighty years ago that depersonalizing power enabled a context where everyone could be involved in decision-making about an issue at a particular moment and within a specific situation. The students' concept of *leading through others* minimizes the propensity for personal attacks. Such a view is similar to Parker Follett's contention that people take their cues from the situation, which removes dominance and control from the relationship.

Students believed that a *power-through* differentiation is demonstrated in participatory leadership, which includes power sharing, leader-follower exchange, and reciprocity of leader-follower roles. Students regularly mentioned working together, caring, and "going the extra mile" in their conversations of power-through relationships experienced in practicum and college contexts. In their stories, students implied that effective and energizing leadership requires individuals who are able to work collaboratively for the good of the group and the group's goal.

The *power-through* differentiation is underscored by a communitarian perspective and draws attention to an influencing process incumbent upon making connections, building relationships, and reciprocal leader-follower role exchange. In

the process of making meaning about power, the concept of harnessing talents surfaced and framed the students' view that rallying around each other and their goals encourages equity and enhancement of their individual emotional well-being. The dominant view of power expressed by the students reflects relational elements of self-esteem and self-actualization. This relational view of power includes the concepts of celebrating contributions, empowerment, and validation realized from their involvement with relational leadership, accomplishment, and the attendant boost to individuals' self esteem.

For instance, as the students explored relationship-building, they contrasted examples with counter-examples and constructed meanings that included caring, support, empathy, and recognition as essential elements. This perspective paralleled that of Bennis and Nanus (1997), who claimed that leadership is causative and capable of creating institutions that are "purposeful and capable of empowering employees" (p. 202). The overarching message was that effective and energizing leadership initiated and sustained two-way relationships, and thus upheld the view of Bennis and Nanus (1997), who positioned transformative leadership as a collective, symbiotic relationship of leaders and followers engaged in the interplay between needs and wants, and in possession of the capacity to understand these goals.

Relationships in Discussion of Vision

The students not only articulated their understandings of vision verbally, but also demonstrated their understanding of vision by their actions and the social processes evident in the focus groups. I observed students give up individual power and control in favor of interacting through storytelling and dialogue. Collectively,

students constructed *this is what it looks like, this is what we can do* as their concept of vision, a perspective that incorporated a goal-orientation (organizer) and action-orientation (energizer), which also implied trust as an underlying theme. This view was comparable to that of Bennis and Nanus (1997), who envisioned trust as “the emotional glue that binds followers and leaders together,” and “measure[s] ... the legitimacy of leadership” (p. 142).

Foster (1989) determined that leadership occurred via a negotiation of visions and ideas, as well as a realization that leadership cannot occur without interaction and reciprocal leader-follower roles. As the students explored their interactive relationship experiences, they mentioned *going the extra mile*, a maxim that implied a view that relationship building included negotiation, reciprocity, and trust. Furthermore, the students believed that interactive and collaborative relationships incorporated making connections as they accomplished a betterment of conditions. This perspective is similar to that of Komives et al. (1998), who found that “leaders and followers raise each other to higher ethical aspirations and conduct” (p. 43). This standpoint is not lost on the Millennial generation, who have a proclivity for embracing and accomplishing challenges (Bibby, 2001; Howe & Strauss, 2000).

Over the course of their conversations, the students deduced that leadership involved social networking, where vision was both an organizer and energizer for leadership. For instance, when asked about vision, Kara responded that leadership was not always about people following, but was more often about people enjoying the unifying effect of great ideas and passion. The students explored practicum and

community-oriented leadership experiences that identified vision as a combination of helping others reach their goals and effecting betterment of conditions within specific contexts. Also implied in these conversations was a perspective that vision highlighted opportunity and possibility, while simultaneously communicating that trust was held by people working together, accomplishing goals, and achieving vision. According to the students, effective and energizing leadership included collective interaction of individuals framed around a vision that organizes, energizes, and embraces diversity as individuals work together on humanitarian causes.

In conversations about relationships, the students' understanding evolved from an initial and superficial understanding of group work to a more complex view that included leader-follower role exchange, relational power, collaboration, and trust. It was important to the students to be positioned within the relationship because of the high priority that they placed on maintaining emotional well-being.

The Importance of Emotional Well-being

Emotion was a vehicle for the students to process and express their leadership understandings and reflected the importance that they attached to feelings of self-worth. For instance, students spoke highly of Professor A's courses because they were given autonomy and were trusted to select topics of interest and relevance to what the students needed from their teacher education program. As students spoke of this autonomy, they recalled feeling empowered by cooperative and collaborative group learning that connected this teacher education course to their real world of teaching in public schools. Students appreciated the boost to their self-esteem that they gained from engaging their skills, abilities, and knowledge within collaborative

groups, which validated their contributions to the course. In the ensuing discussion of relationships, the students implied the importance that they attached to the affective domain and the importance that they placed on enhancing self-esteem and self-actualization from working together.

When asked about the collaborative and collegial learning in Professor A's classes, students responded that they felt recognized and validated by the contributions they made to the class. The students suggested that the motif, *you catch more flies with honey than with vinegar*, aptly represented their sense of the importance of positive emotion in relationships. Students implied that attending to their emotional well-being in their everyday life and practicum and college contexts built their confidence and self-esteem, and contributed to their self-actualization.

In a related conversation, the students mentioned the concept of cohesiveness. As they spoke of their experiences with social situations at the college level, they revealed that they felt the most comfortable, welcomed, and empowered when working as a cohort. The relationship cultivated by working as a cohort is of primary importance, and by focusing on assets rather than deficits, the students claimed that they were able to circumvent the tendency to belittle each other.

From the students' view, cohesiveness fosters civility and a how-do-we-fix-this?" orientation, which is similar to relational leadership findings by Liscinsky, Chambers, and Foley (2001). In the Liscinsky et al. research, group members were "encourage[d] to share opinions honestly [when working] through conflicts" (p. 173). Similarly, the non-hierarchical approach observed in the focus groups reflected Bennis' (2003) position, that leadership competence includes talking through

problems rather than resorting to personal attacks. In the students' view, talking through problems contributed to individual and group self-esteem and self-actualization, and is understood as more productive than resorting to invective.

Getting Slammed: The Negative Impact of Abusive Words and Tone

When discussing power and strategies to avoid personal attacks in collaborative relationships, the students regarded language and communication, including listening and respect, as important to their emotional well-being. For instance, a boss shouting Peter out of the room, the mass email and its condescending tone, and Professor B's yelling and denigrating language, which silenced students, all reflected *getting slammed*, a concept that conflicts with students' sense of treating others the way they want to be treated.

According to the students, effective and energizing leadership requires communication that is welcoming, respectful, and empathic, and represents the contraposition of invective and getting slammed. Incongruence between leadership words and action, such as getting slammed, impacts negatively on emotional well-being and the overall relationship. Given the emphasis that the students placed on their emotional well-being, it is not coincidental that congruence between words and action is regarded as essential to effective and energizing leadership.

The process and articulation of the students' leadership understandings reflect that of Gergen (2001), who believed that what we talk about and the manner in which we talk impacts how the words will be received. As students talked about power and relationships, I noted a difference in their relationship to each other and the social processes. For instance, the students' exploration of counter-examples of

leadership seemed to foster a sense of safe place communicated by students' leaning in to each other and maintaining eye contact, which enhanced the trust and cohesiveness of the group. Trust and cohesiveness were exhibited in the students taking cues from the stories and supporting each other by sharing related experiences as part of their sensemaking process. The students' articulation of their leadership understandings illustrated a practice of explaining what they meant after they had the opportunity to speak their thoughts. This practice reflected the students' articulation leadership understandings using language and framing devices to convey the importance that they attached to trust and respect.

Looking back on students' leadership experiences, I noted that *trust* emerged as an underlying property of effective and energizing leadership. Students commonly recalled leadership experiences where they were included, given voice, and celebrated for their contributions, and in this way attended to their emotional well-being. Furthermore, this type of *going the extra mile* enhanced their sense of self-worth, and portrayed the maxim that people who feel looked after are more willing to work harder while enjoying the process of working together. Trust is implied as a fundamental psychological dimension embedded in the relationship between power structures and individuals' interaction within collaborative leadership relationships. This position is comparable to undergraduates' disposition towards relationships, dynamic interplay, collaboration, and creativity (Allen & Cherrey, 2001), and their investment in other people as realized within those relationships.

In the students' view, membership in a community of leaders provides for tangible leadership experiences, and recognition for contributions the students made to initiatives they regarded as *bigger than themselves*. Students reflected on their leadership experiences and remarked that participation within a community of leaders is motivating, and enhances their sense of value and appreciation for their contributions. This student view of making a difference by investing in people complemented findings by Woodard et al. (2000), who reported that the "individual's capacity for leadership must be developed [because] effective individuals are self empowered [and] practice new ways of relating, influencing change, learning and leading" (p. 87). In this way, Woodard et al. contended that twenty-first century organizations such as institutions of higher education need to invest in students in order to develop, reward, and celebrate their diverse talents and be in a position to meet present and future leadership challenges.

The students implied that effective and energizing leadership is learned through hands-on and vicarious experience. Leadership, according to the students, is experiential and includes risk-taking, trust, accomplishment, and recognition, and it represents capacity building and an *investment* in people and communities. For instance, students' capacity-building experiences reflected goal identification, planning, knowledge, and an activation of abilities (talents) required for facilitating a betterment of conditions such as described by their experience working on humanitarian causes.

This participant view of investment in people by building leadership capacity reflected recent work by Alphonso (2006) whose study found an increase in the

number of students in Canadian colleges and universities who elected to stay in their communities over spring break and continue their involvement in service learning projects rather than travel south in pursuit of recreational activities in warmer climates. Eisenkraft (2006) established that these types of additional volunteer, study, and civic-oriented internships are likely to boost civic engagement. Bolman and Deal (2002) wrote, “the dual connotations of importance and meaningfulness ... build shared meaning and mutual respect ... [and] potentially holds [a community] together [through] faith and commitment to common purpose” (Leadership Gifts section, ¶ 8). Respect, commitment, and common purpose reflects a capacity- or strength-based orientation with respect to emotional well-being and the students’ view of relationships as integral to their leadership understandings.

Berg (2003) found that “releasing potential was the development of capacity in other individuals involved in the leadership process,” and included “individual strength and contributions ... made to the team” (p. 205). Students in this study consistently mentioned strengths and contributions when sharing their leadership experiences. For instance, Erin’s collaborative experience with a student-directed service learning project and Jill’s middle years cooperative thematic learning centers illustrated that these projects’ success depended on their own and their students’ strengths. There was give-and-take in the relationship, which, from the student view of capacity building, allowed everyone to learn from each other, and equated this development with stretching their leadership capacities.

Capacity building is “other-oriented” (Connaughton et al., 2003, p. 47) and is directed towards a betterment of conditions within a specific context. In this way, for

these students capacity building meant that as each individual makes investments in him or herself and the collaborative leadership relationship, contributions are also made to betterment in everyday life, or practicum and/or college communities.

Capacity building and its other-orientation compares with the *gathering gifts* motif that emerged as an underlying property of effective and energizing leadership. This property of capacity building includes the motivation from working together and making a difference, and supports a research finding of Connaughton et al. (2003), who reported that “at times, ordinary [people] may be prompted to do extraordinary things” (pp. 47-48). Similarly, Berg (2003) found that the vision for the betterment of others motivated involvement in leadership. Participants in this study consistently mentioned that working together, making a difference, and doing what is best are the primary factors that influence their leadership involvement. Such a view is similar to that expressed by Howe and Strauss (2000), who advocated that Millennials put community ahead of self-interest and willingly step up to fill the civic vacuum left by their parents’ generation

Experiences, either directly or vicariously through modeling, were considered essential supports (scaffolds) for the experiential property of leadership. By collectively sharing expertise the students attended to self-esteem and self-actualization needs and fortified their repertoire of leadership skills and abilities. As the students worked towards reaching their full potential as individuals and in groups, they implied that personal and collective reflection, including critique and assessment of personal and collective values, is important to investing in their personal and leadership capacities. I found this view interesting because of its

emphasis on the magnitude and importance of emotional well-being within the students' relationships, and their practice of framing capacity with language that conveyed legitimacy, truth, and believability.

Students' Sensemaking: Constructing Leadership Understandings

Sensemaking and the students' construction of leadership understandings was the third broad theme noted in the students' discussions of leadership. Karl Weick (1987) wrote that "people talk in order to discover what themes they're thinking" (p. 583). If we want to understand our positions on various topics, we "first have to talk about these topics to someone (possibly [our]selves) in order to see what [we] have to say about them" (p. 583). Weick's premise was that words have a principal role in people's making sense of leadership, and in order to be influential, leaders need to be sensitive to their own words.

In recounting the story of Avis' Robert Townsend and his implementation of the motto, "We try harder" (p. 584), Weick revealed that this simple motto galvanized Avis employees, who deduced from consistently hearing and saying the slogan that they were Number Two. Accordingly, they continued working towards the number one spot even though the company had already reached that goal. In this way, Weick claimed, Avis employees demonstrated that words did the leading. Similarly, Martin Luther King's oratorical power was in his ability not only to dream, but to describe the dream and make it accessible to millions of people. King had the capacity to "go public with sensemaking [and] involve[d] putting some very profound ideas into language that is concrete and specific rather than abstract" (p. 584).

I began this study interested in finding and making explicit the *what* aspects inherent in the students' leadership understandings. However, as the study unfolded, I found that *how* they spoke about leadership was as telling as the content that they related about leadership. In the next section, I discuss the students' language, framing, and conferring of meaning in relation to articulation of their leadership understandings.

Language and Framing

Participants' tendency to speak in dualities illustrated their capacity of going public with sensemaking, which was aided by their use of concrete language as they processed and articulated their leadership understandings. In particular, the students' sensemaking was developed through social construction and symbolic interaction within their collective, collaborative, and interactive processes. Students tended to draw on past experiences in their process of sensemaking, which illustrated the principle that adults' most productive learning is based on searching past experiences for connections to current problems, identifying, and narrowing ideas through "convergent and sequential cognitive processes" (Mackeracher, 1996, pp. 37-39).

Students verbalized their leadership experiences, understandings, and concepts, often juxtaposing leadership examples with counter-examples. By thinking out loud, they articulated their meaning-making and used language that was meaningful to larger numbers of people. In this way, students' process and articulation of leadership understandings reflected a dual capacity of language. Weick explained that the richness of detail found in organizations and social

movements was “crucial to survival because it contain[ed] options,” and enabled descriptions using “precise words to capture nuances” (p. 584). This was similar to the students choosing language that conveyed nuance and precision as they explored, framed, and articulated believability and truth in their leadership understandings.

Fairhurst and Sarr (1996) reported that “how believable we are is linked to what [we] frame, how [we] frame, and how others frame [us]” (p. 171). In this way, others evaluate our believability “from the competence [we] display in what [we] frame ... through the concepts of perspective, problem solving, vision and personal framing” (p. 171). Framing fosters a clearer understanding of problems and solutions and enhances a person’s believability. Furthermore, Fairhurst and Sarr reported that framing from a vision achieves believability and illustrates credibility from “talking about themes or issues that few others are talking about” (p. 173). Even when not the originators of a vision “[w]e can be the improvisers who make novel applications” (p. 174) of an existing skill set appropriate to betterment of local conditions.

Fairhurst and Sarr claimed that one’s speaking style illustrates competence and further impacts the believability and credibility in one’s framing. The consistent use of “hedges, intensifiers, hesitations, and questioning ... show a lack of self-confidence, powerlessness, or lack of conviction, all of which detract from our credibility” (pp. 176-177). From this view, *what* is said matters little if *how* the speaker articulates meaning is not believed. However, a person can be more believable by “effectively framing our frames” (p. 177) and using “metaphors, contrast and spin” (p. 178) to convey believability. By building upon premises or

essential propositions, the students conveyed believability by folding truthfulness, objectivity, reality, and legitimacy into their frames.

Based upon the Fairhurst and Sarr (1996) model for framing, students processed and articulated their leadership understandings with framing practices that communicated truthfulness and reality, as presented in the following excerpt:

Speaker	Dialogue	Premise/Frame of the Frame	Explanation
M1:	What was it about that email that set you off?	Premise	
F1:	The overwhelming tone that came from the email.	Premise	framing fact
F2:	Yes! As I read it, I could just hear the voice.	Frame of the frame	framing truth
F3:	Yeah! [<i>laughing</i>] Nails on the chalk board. And I think the tone came from the vocabulary used, that it was so abrupt. There was no welcoming, not that you want fluffy...	Frame of the frame Premise	frame what is real framing lack of Legitimacy
F1:	Yeah, we do [want fluffy].	Frame of the Frame	frame reality
F3:	It would have been appreciated, and there were my expectations of how the email should be composed.	Premise	frame what is real, what is truth

F4:	I felt belittled. I felt like a child.	Frame of the Frame	framing lack of legitimacy
F2:	Spoken down to. Yeah.		
F1:	I remember reading it and being really, really hurt.	Frame of the frame	frames legitimacy (appeals to principle)

As this excerpt demonstrates, each student's individual moral compass directed their use of reality frames, both when they believed strongly in a frame or when they knew it to be false, and in this way they maintained credibility and competence. The students' believed that they were clear about themselves and their beliefs, and their frames and speaking style conveyed credibility, competence, and believability. This view paralleled that of Fairhurst and Sarr:

Others frame us based upon our patterns of behavior over time, drawing conclusions about who we are and what we stand for, whether our words and actions are consistent with one another, and how much of what we bring to the table matches [our] interests. (p. 193)

As students unfolded their leadership concepts, it was noteworthy that within their processes of interactive sensemaking, language and framing emerged as properties integral to their leadership understandings.

Weick (1987) reported that people know themselves and their environment better and are more apt to see more options with nuanced and differentiated language, and they tend to assume a position of adaptability in complex and ever changing situations. It was interesting to see that students' tendency to speak in dualities was, in large part, a revelation about language and framing, and it supported my intuition that all individuals have the capability to lead effectively with our use of language. I came into this study looking for the content of students'

leadership understandings, but gained knowledge and an appreciation for the students' language and framing in their sensemaking, articulation, and subsequent conferring of meaning on leadership understandings.

Conferring Meaning

As students shared their stories, a dialectic process was noted in which students discussed equal but varying positions as they collectively explored leadership experiences and conferred meaning on the emergent concepts, such as *anyone can lead, leading through others, and making a difference*. This process of conferring meaning was reminiscent of Crotty (2003), who reasoned, "Language is pivotal to, and shapes, the situations in which we find ourselves enmeshed, the events that befall us, the practices we carry out and, in and through all this, the understandings we [were] able to reach" (p. 87). Crotty's perspective on the shaping properties of language was apparent in students' processing and articulation of leadership understandings and in their framing of leadership sensemaking in the language of their leadership experiences and intrinsic to everyday life and practicum and college contexts.

Patterns of experiences emerged in the course of the students' leadership sensemaking, no matter how disordered their experiences initially appeared. As leadership concepts were conceptualized, students established "knowledge [as an] experiential process" (p. 21), which was reflected in their stories of practices, lived realities, and construction of understanding derived from their interaction with various people and contexts. I was not surprised that students' sensemaking was rooted in symbolic interactionism, similar to a position held by Berger and Luckman

(1990), who reported that in society everyday life “originates in [our] thoughts and actions and is maintained as real by [us]” (p. 19-20).

The process and articulation of students’ leadership understanding are further reflective of Locke’s (2001) conception of symbolic interactionism, and it supports the notion that students’ leadership understandings have some authenticity. From my experience as a teacher and principal, I grappled with this notion of authenticity because of my own uncertainty about the depth of the pre-service teacher experiential basis and leadership understandings. From my view as a professional and an educational leadership student, I realized that inquiry and validation processes inherent in social construction and symbolic interaction were, in fact, grounded in the field. It was for this reason that I accepted the students’ leadership understandings as authentic, although perhaps limiting in matters to their specific context.

There was little dispute of the student view of effective and energizing leadership as experiential and represented directly by hands-on interaction, collaboration, and relationship experience, or vicariously in role-playing, modeling, and mentoring experiences. As students’ spirited discussions transpired, the content and tone in the conversations reflected congruence between students’ leadership talk and action. Reflecting on students’ conversations and their dialectic approach of speaking in dualities, it became apparent that comparing leadership examples with counter-examples connected leadership as an abstraction with concrete leadership experiences related to their educational practice and lived reality.

The practice of speaking in dualities made tangible their leadership conceptualization and knowledge, and disentangled the sensemaking process. It was also noted that students looked forward to these focus group meetings, which was evident in the liveliness of their conversations and their commitment to, and reward from, working together. In addition to students commonly speaking about interaction, collaboration, and relationships, these social processes shaped the students' sensemaking and construction of leadership understandings.

Reflecting on the social processes involved in meaning-making, Biggiero's (2001) "relational complexity" (p. 8) explained how interaction between two or more individuals modifies the behavior of both, regardless of intentions and learning effect. My observations of students' interactive processes were consistent with Biggiero's claim. The students encouraged their colleagues to contribute to the conversations by asking questions, responding to their respective points-of-view, and commenting on similar experiences. Thus their interaction with each other influenced their own messages and action. None of us appeared to have left this study unchanged.

During the initial conversations, it was curious to see how students from the quiet culture would engage in the discussion and found, in my role as moderator, that paraphrasing student responses served as invitational cues that engaged quiet students. In turn, their responses fostered further interaction and collaboration. To their credit, students adopted a similar role and offered into the conversation leadership issues with which the cohort was familiar, such as the mass email

incident, Professor B's verbal and non-verbal invective, and experiences from their everyday lives and practicum and college level contexts.

Students spoke regularly about effective and energizing leadership as capacity building that also contributed to their emotional well-being. They also discussed its ability to motivate and inspire, drawing from humanitarian initiatives and the sense of accomplishment received from achieving vision. This aspect of focus group process and articulation was especially apparent to me in the closing sessions, when students disclosed their realization that participation in this leadership study was, from their perspective, a manifestation of their growing understanding of effective and energizing leadership. I wondered why students chose to reveal this realization only at the end of the closing focus group session following a conversation about the mass email and the momentum that they associated with small events and their ramifications.

Leadership Throw: Small Things with Big Ramifications

Small incidents that were understood by the students as containing potential for ramifications was the fourth broad theme that I noted from their discussion of leadership understandings. Throughout this study, I was interested in the energy that students devoted to sharing and exploring their leadership experiences, as well as their use of dialectic processes as they sorted out and conceptualized leadership. In articulating leadership experiences and the resultant leadership understandings, I noted that seemingly innocuous events, such as Professor A using small group techniques or the mass email incident, tended to have wider reaching ramifications for students' assessment of and engagement with leadership in everyday life and

practicum and college level contexts. Moreover, I required a metaphor to represent this aspect of students' leadership understandings.

In this section, I discuss the process of developing a metaphor to represent the students' concept of small incidents and their potential ramifications. This journey to develop the metaphor included exploration of Heidegger's concept of thrownness and study of Gibson's affordances (his adaptation of thrownness), culminating in the idea of leadership throw.

Developing the Metaphor

As an emergent theme, I initially classified this phenomenon of *small things, big ramifications* as a ripple or butterfly effect. However, upon further reflection and discussion with my advisor, I concluded that neither metaphor conveyed the students' perspective of small incidents and their relationship to potential ramifications with respect to leadership understandings and actions. By analogy, an individual snow flake on its own is not much of a danger, but the cumulative weight of snow flakes on a roof during a blizzard can potentially bring down a roof.

To assist me in developing a metaphor, I conducted an Internet search using a variety of keywords to uncover literature related to butterfly and ripple effects. In the process, I found information about toxic leadership and the ecological footprint metaphor, two areas worthy of exploration.

Initially, the idea of *footprinting* as a metaphor for the impression projected by insignificant incidents leading to significant ramifications seemed an accurate representation. However, as I investigated footprinting within environmental, informational technology, and business sectors, the footprinting metaphor generally

related to measurement and management of resources, and sustainability of lifestyles, organizations, industry sectors, and goods and services. I needed a metaphor that accurately represented the impact and larger effect of small, seemingly innocuous events much in the same way as the genuine princess in the story, *The Princess and the Pea*, felt a pea through twenty mattresses and twenty feather beds. At this point, I set aside the footprinting metaphor.

I explored the concept of *toxic leadership* as a potential metaphor and found it intriguing that students' impressions of small things that became magnified and dissuaded people complemented key elements of toxic leadership. These elements included lack of concern for others' well-being, interpersonal techniques that negatively affect climate, and the appearance of self-interest as the leadership motivator (Reed, 2004). The students' perception of negative leadership in these terms is not disputed.

However, I needed a metaphor that represented the wider perspective reflected in students' view that small things (positive and negative) left unresolved are amplified when projected forward. An additional investigation of footprinting located Sheridan's (2002) article and his description of four ways that humans "couple" (p.5) or interact with each other and their environment, and the effects of the relationship between individuals and environment. Combining Sheridan's explanation of "perception-action coupling" (p. 6) and Heidegger's view of thrownness, I found myself thinking about students' views of leadership and interaction in the context of Heidegger's assertion that we are all thrown into situations where action is unavoidable.

Thrownness: Heidegger's View

Sheridan (2002) and Greeno (1994) explained that thrownness is associated with pragmatism. According to Heidegger, reality is conditioned by interpretation whenever individuals encounter situations where action is unavoidable. Therefore, action is unpredictable and in constant flux. In this way, “normal ‘being’” (Greeno, p. 6) means complete involvement in a dynamic interaction, and it is only by stepping back that a person can see the interplay of specific elements.

Participants in my study, however, explained that they were able to see the cumulative effect of positive and negative seemingly innocuous events and the potential ramifications for leadership action as they understood it. Following my reading of Sheridan's article, I was uncertain whether Heidegger's view of thrownness on its own led to a fitting metaphor. And so, as the next step in developing a metaphor that represented small things with big ramifications, I consulted Sheridan's discussion of the work by psychologist J. J. Gibson.

Sheridan (2002) explained that Gibson “developed an interactionist view of perception and action that focused on information that is available in the environment” (p. 336), where people and animals are attuned to changing and unchanging information as they interact with others. Sheridan mentioned that Gibson's reasoning “involve[d] some quite general framing assumptions about activity and cognition that differed from mainstream cognitive science” (p. 337). These assumptions include his concepts of “affordances ... [which] refers to whatever is about the environment that contributes to the kind of interaction that occurs” (p. 338), and “ability [as the term] that refers to whatever is about the agent

that contributes to the kind of interaction that occurs” (p. 338). Sheridan mentioned that Gibson’s idea of affordances was developed from research, but pointed out that affordances seem to be most productive when treated as a “graded property rather than as a property that is or is not present” (p. 338).

Affordances and abilities are “inherently relational” (p. 338). For example, in the case of situation theory, “the meaning of a sentence is a relation between the sentence and conditions in the world that the sentence asserts” (p. 338), and in this way “the meaning of the sentence is a relation between situations” (p. 338). Thus, affordances and abilities are codefining and unable to make sense on their own. The interactionist view of perception and action, and the relational aspect of affordances and abilities resonated with me, and so I chose to further explore Gibson’s *affordances* construct.

Affordances: Gibson’s Adaptation of Thrownness

Greeno (1994) and Sheridan (2002) began their respective discussion of Gibson’s *affordances* by explaining that Gibson carried Heidegger’s work forward with respect to human perception and the acquisition of information that supports action, especially information that acts as a constraint on action. For instance, the students’ practicum experiences working with their students, staff, and parents in collaborative and cooperative projects illustrated how the acquisition of information that affirmed the project in which they were engaged was rewarding. This affirmation, in turn, led to a betterment of conditions, thus motivating the group, who welcomed further opportunities to work collaboratively. Similarly, students told me about instances with linear relationships when they felt that they did not matter,

and about verbal and non-verbal language that communicated intimidation, bullying, and condescension. The cumulative effect of this interpersonal information was identified in their lack of engagement, interaction, and involvement.

In Gibson's view, affordances can be explained in terms of the environment, or context, and the contributions made to interaction. According to this view, perception is the acquisition of information that supports action, especially with regard to constraints on action, a view that compares with the student view of leadership and the role of language and framing in articulating leadership understanding. Gibson claimed that actions affected environment, which, in turn, affected actions. Substituting context for environment and thinking of interaction in terms of the students' leadership understandings, human actions affect context, which, in turn, affect human action. This relationship was evident in students' leadership understandings.

The concept of affordances suggests that perceptions are true to the extent that they support action within a context and reflect a belief-into-action relationship. Complementary to Greeno's explanation of the affordance concept, students' view of small things with big ramifications is true to the extent their perceptions support their actions. For instance, when students perceived ineffective, rude, "toxic" leadership, they communicated their opposition, generated alternatives, or disengaged from the interaction.

Conversely, in situations that feature effective, respectful, trustworthy leadership, students engage, interact, and work together to achieve vision. As related by Greeno (1994), Gibson explained that interaction was mediated by constraints,

which are dependency relations similar to syllogisms in logic. For example, if civility is respectful in an interactive leadership situation, then the person being civil is respecting others and, in turn, will experience respect. The message for humans is that we are genetically programmed to respond to contexts in terms of the dependency relations that we observe and the needs that are apparent or intrinsic (Sheridan, 2002).

The attunement between constraints, according to Greeno (1994), becomes the basis for making inferences and can play an integral role in analysis of activities and actions. For example, when working to achieve vision, collaborating individuals are attuned to small and complex constraints that affect accomplishment. Thus, the actions of individuals may exert force on the group and may influence the group in the direction of the force (depending on the amount of force exerted on the group). In this way, “people who share a linguistic practice are attuned to a great many constraints includ[ing] [language] conventions of reference” (Greeno, p. 339).

To borrow from Greeno attunement, such as in language practices, is a conditional constraint because a dependency relation only holds when individuals engage in conversation and are attuned to a shared set of constraints, such as properties of language, like phonemes, connotation, and denotation, the ability to speak and understand the language, and the ability to develop the communicative practice of sorting out unfamiliar terms and making sense through interaction. In this way, the concept of affordance compares with participants in this research who are framing leadership understandings around truth and reality, thus articulating believability in their understandings.

Investigating Heidegger's thrownness concept fostered exploration of Gibson's affordances idea, as discussed by Sheridan (2002) and Greeno (1994), the latter being credited with bringing the concept of affordances into the education context. I merged thrownness, with affordances, ability, and constraints to provide an analysis of how it is that outwardly inconsequential incidents may gain momentum and lead to significant ramifications. In the spirit of bricolage and using the information and resources at hand, I arrived at the metaphor I called *leadership throw*.

The metaphor *leadership throw* includes students' leadership language and framing, affordance-ability-constraint dimensions of human interaction, and a leadership understanding that small, seemingly innocuous actions may gain momentum and become propelled into new situations by people in a context interacting with the context and each other. Gergen (2001) reported that knowledge was generated "within the ongoing process of coordinating action among persons" (p. 119), where, in Gergen's view, language is a formative element of relationship and, in this way, can be regarded as an essential element of leadership action (p. 121). This view was upheld by the students' own leadership understandings.

Although language and framing were essential to students' leadership understandings, the bricolage of findings represented here present possibilities and departure points for further reflection and research.

Reflections and Further Ponderings

Through interactive and collaborative relationships, students made explicit their leadership knowledge, skills, abilities, and talents, and focused on leadership as

the process of working together. In this way, leadership is about relationships (including self-actualization) and building leadership capacity as leadership properties considered essential for establishing and sustaining a community of leaders. Such a conception is quite similar to Millennials' notions of collegial action, support for civic institutions, and the tangible experience of doing good deeds (Howe & Strauss, 2000). This point was also reflected by research conducted by Bibby (2001), who found that Canadian Millennials place importance on relationships and recognize their potential to embrace social challenges, get organized, commit to action, and achieve great expectations.

I found the focus groups particularly memorable because of their social construction orientation for making sense of leadership. I realized that this group of pre-service teachers' collaborative relationships evolved to a point where they realized their own enhanced sense of community and strengthened capacity for greater leadership involvement. I now realize that for these students, effective and energizing leadership praxis was represented by a combination of capacity building (theory), community building (practice), and *leadership throw*.

It is also worth mentioning that in the process of paraphrasing, asking questions, and making connections about leadership directly from the students' contributions, it was normal to hear good-natured bantering and laughter. Additionally, their verbal exchanges were professional yet cordial, and contained an inspiring tone that harmonized with students' sustained eye contact, smiling, and congruent non-verbal cues, such as leaning towards speakers, matching body language, and use of welcoming hand gestures. These verbal and non-verbal frames

encouraged a safe and supportive environment where students were recognized for their contributions to the dialogue and construction of leadership understandings.

Reflecting on this study and my engagement with participants, I recognized that relationships and responsibility were implied factors that connected the various elements of capacity building with trust, respect, and self-actualization. In communicating their understandings of effective and energizing leadership, students believed that leadership involves harnessing talents and working together for a betterment of communities.

Making leadership understandings explicit raised the awareness of students as a community of leaders, and enabled the potential of their leadership synthesis to be applied to colleges and pre-service teacher preparation programs. In bringing attention to the students' sensemaking processes, they revealed the view that a strength and capacity-building orientation has the potential to enhance colleges and pre-service teacher preparation programs. A case in point is what has been learned about the integral role of framing and language in the students' meaning-making, including the importance of *leadership throw*.

A Departure Point: Some Key Findings

In the capacity building theme, I noted that effective and energizing leadership includes a solution-focused orientation that students articulated in terms of their collaborative relationships. From the perspectives of the students and in view of their solution orientation, leadership reflects:

1. Interactive processes that include collaborative, vision-oriented, and transformative dimensions.
2. A relational, process orientation where communication and trust are essential to effective and energized leadership.

3. An experiential basis where meaning is constructed from direct involvement or vicariously from modeling.
4. An emergent, context-specific process, mediated by constructed leadership meanings within specific situations.
5. Speaking in dualities, which was a dimension of students' conceptualization process and articulation practice.
6. Socially constructed meaning within an interactive and collaborative process where making meaning is derived through conversations that reflect symbolic interactionism and dialectic approaches to conceptualization.
7. Process and articulation as central properties of students' effective and energizing leadership understandings.
8. Framing and language as integral to students' leadership meaning-making.
9. Understandings that are made distinctive by experiences that highlight seemingly innocuous actions that are perceived as having wide reaching ramifications. This *leadership throw* is perceived as having a considerable impact upon individuals working in interactive and collaborative relationships, and identifies the important role of language in leadership.

I found it interesting that the students' view of leadership paralleled the discussion of emerging leadership models. In particular, from the students' sensemaking, leadership emerged as an interactive, collaborative and transformative process similar to non-hierarchical leadership and the Social Change Model as presented in Chapter Two.

Reflecting on the students' leadership understandings, five elements of transformative leadership –as discussed in Chapter Two– stood out in the students' leadership understandings. The five elements of transformative leadership that stood out included that leadership: a) was a value-based purposive process focused on fostering intentional change, b) assumed there is movement to some future place or condition, c) reflected transformation of consciousness prior to transformation of social conditions that required a collective and interactive community of leaders, d) was more about making meaning than about making decisions and influencing people, and e) contained an ongoing critique of power structures.

The students' leadership understandings and Millennial values provided another area of alignment between the literature review and the findings of this study. I was surprised at how closely the ubiquity of relationships, self-esteem, sensemaking, and social agency aligned with key Millennial values such as relationships, interpersonal traits (including honesty, forgiveness, generosity and politeness), organizing for social change and committing to action, and expectations for themselves, institutions, and society.

As represented in the summary, the key findings highlight the students' processing as they revealed their leadership understandings and concepts. As discussed in previous sections of this dissertation, students' leadership understandings were part process and part articulation. Furthermore, the language, descriptive devices, speaking style, and framing that they used to articulate their understandings also surfaced as an overarching student leadership understanding.

Departure Point: The Students' Leadership Understandings

Leadership included individuals interacting, making meaning through social construction, and symbolic interaction. From the students' perspective, effective and energizing leadership is a collaborative and interactive relationship of individuals who are organized and energized by vision that is oriented towards humanitarian causes and a betterment of conditions in specific communities.

One interesting finding was the students' tendency to speak in dualities in their process of exploring and conceptualizing leadership experiences and concepts. These students made meaning by comparing examples of leadership with counter-

examples, and constructed concepts and understandings of what leadership *is* by determining what leadership *is not*.

Students used discussion, dialectics, and speaking in dualities in both their processing and articulation of leadership understandings. Their interaction and thinking-out-loud with others seemed to foster easier comparison and contrast of examples and counter-examples, and in this fashion their abstraction of leadership became more tangible. In making leadership a tangible phenomenon, there was also the matter of the actual words, language, and frames that students used in production of their leadership understandings.

In relating their leadership experiences, students' used such language properties as metaphor, cliché, and colloquialism, and perhaps these descriptive devices enabled them to clarify and emphasize leadership motives, actions, and the attendant emotional well-being. The use of connotative language added to the representation of their experiences and focused on the interpersonal and intrapersonal dimensions of leadership. The students framed their leadership experiences with language and a speaking style that conveyed truth, reality, and believability, reflecting the inherently human and organic properties of the *relational leadership* approach that underpinned students' leadership understandings.

I came into this research looking for students' leadership understandings but came away with a clearer sense of students' language and framing and the implications associated with *leadership throw*, two leadership understandings that I consider the biggest surprises related to this study.

I was also interested by the attention garnered by Professor A's leadership talk. There was consensus among participants that Professor A fostered effective leadership and that the students' success was due in large part to the use of cooperative strategies and interpersonal skills that engaged students, celebrated and rewarded their contributions, and enhanced self-esteem and self-actualization. Although the students mentioned leaders whose success was in part attributed to their leadership talk, Professor A represented the essence of congruent leadership talk and action, the cumulative effect of positive small elements to overall leadership success.

The story of the mass email represented a contrasting view and provided an example of negative momentum connected with *leadership throw*. Initially the mass email situation seemed innocuous enough, although as students explored and made sense of this experience, they revealed wider reaching ramifications with respect to their leadership understandings. In cases of the students' negative experiences, *leadership throw* reflected an unstable emotional tone. Conversely, students' positive experiences evoked a stable emotional tone. In both cases, speaking style, connotative language, and metaphors conveyed truth and legitimacy in the words that the students framed as they processed and articulated their leadership understandings.

Trust, respect, communication, and reconciling disagreement with civility are essential features of collaborative leadership relationships found in a *community of leaders*. For students, collaborative relationships and the respect for people were

integral to effective and energizing leadership, with trust and respect serving as underlying properties of leadership talk and action.

The students' stories and conversations were engaging, and illustrated the attention that they devoted to exploration and meaning-making within their interactive, collaborative relationships. Framed in this way, the collaborative relationship fuelled by good ideas, passion, and trust is a key factor that influences student engagement and involvement with leadership. Over the course of successive focus group meetings, I noted that students were influenced by their sense of *connectedness*, which is to say trust, empathy, sense of humor, and their relationship to fostering enhanced leadership capacity within communities. This realization forced me to think about connectedness as a manifestation of students' interaction and their process of compiling competencies and capacities from their colleagues for the purpose of binding individuals together.

It is obvious that from the students' perspective, leadership belongs to the entire group. This position is consistent with findings by Bibby (2001) and Howe and Strauss (2000), the latter of whom claimed that Millennials represent a new civic mindedness and team orientation characterized by high achievement. Furthermore, students' leadership understanding reflected elements of relational leadership, including collaborative relationships and working together. Their beliefs substantiated the work of Komives et al. (1998), who found that undergraduate students prefer relational leadership, and research by Astin and Astin (2000), who reported that undergraduate students realize that non-hierarchical, relational

leadership approaches contain a transforming capacity that enhances the potential of effecting a greater good within diverse communities.

Reflecting on the students' discussion of leadership experiences, their leadership examples and discussion of relationships seemed predominantly positive. However, there were examples and discussion of relationships that were unequivocally negative such as their experiences with bully bosses, intimidating coworkers, hierarchical college-level classes, and condescending professors. I was interested in their discussion of positive and negative leadership examples and relationships especially in view of what I had learned about the students' tendency to speak in dualities.

In the transcripts the students spoke often about relationships, which begs the question, Are all relationships leadership? On the one hand I concede that the presentation of results may provide the reader with this impression, but unfortunately the students' conversations did not specifically address the matter that all relationships are leadership. On the other hand, it was undeniable that effective and energizing leadership involved relationships from the students' view.

From their perspective, relationships such as membership in a community of leaders were inspiring and motivating, and fostered a sense of belonging. Additionally, while individuals are involved with initiatives that they understand as *bigger than one*, accomplishment strengthens leadership capacities and enhances self-esteem and self-actualization. Collaborative leadership relationships incorporate strengths and capacity building processes, ultimately contributing to enhanced

community building. In this way, leadership has a transformative dimension that encourages an enhanced leadership capacity.

The Possibilities

So, what does all of these data and conceptualizations mean? From the array of representations that connected the students' leadership experiences to their leadership understandings, it is apparent that their leadership understandings are part process and part articulation, and they occur predominantly within interactive and collaborative relationships. However, as I look back on this bricolage, I find that there are questions that illustrate a need for further study of undergraduate education students' leadership understandings as a leadership phenomenon in and of itself. What follows are possibilities derived from this study for the methodology and leadership literature, related research, and policy.

Methodological Reflections

As this qualitative inquiry unfolded, I found myself thinking of it in terms of an organic and sentient entity. I believe that I thought this way because the processes of data collection, analysis, presentation of results, and discussion were marked by an ongoing evolution. As I reflected on the methodology, I asked myself, "What would I do differently if I did this study again?" In response to this question, three broad departure points emerged—logistics, the research design, and the analysis and presentation of data—as related to further research in this area.

Looking back on the research process, I noted that the logistical elements of the study emerged as one area that I would do differently. In particular, the time of the year in which this study was conducted was problematic. For a number of

reasons beyond my control, I was not able to commence the data collection process until after 16 March, 2006. With such a late start date, I initially found that it was a challenge finding students willing to participate in the research due to competing demands on their time, such as culmination of classes, final examinations, job interviews, graduation, moving for employment, and family priorities. Rescheduling would have meant postponing the study for another full year, which, for a number of personal reasons, was unacceptable.

With these demands on their time, instead of twenty-two interested students, only eight students initially consented to participate in the study. The low number of participants was a possibility that I had anticipated, and in response I employed a snowball sampling technique, which, by 29 March, yielded fifteen students who agreed to participate in the study. Following the first meetings, one male withdrew for family reasons, and two weeks later another male withdrew because of conflicts with his work schedule. Through further snowball sampling, three students indicated an interest in participating, but once again conflicts precluded two from participating. By this point, I no longer had direct contact with the undergraduate education cohort and decided to proceed with the fourteen students who consented to participate.

I recognize that working with participants who were volunteers may impact on the findings because volunteers in this study might have had a vested interest or recent involvement in leadership. Consequently, it is reasonable to assume that volunteers may have made meaning differently from randomly selected participants. I do not know if there is a discrepancy in findings between volunteers and randomly

selected participants since I have not yet worked in this area with a random sample. I believe additional research in this area with random groups is necessary to resolve this matter.

Reflecting on this study, I thought about the sample size and geographical representation within the province, and once again I realized a greater number of participants would have been better. If I had this study to do over again, commencing in January-February would have enhanced the likelihood of engaging participation from students at another western Canadian university. This did not happen with my study because of the time of year I began, and the realization that undergraduate education students at other western Canadian universities were no less bound by school, family, and employment priorities than those at the University of Saskatchewan.

The participants in this study were homogenous by age, experience, education, and socio-economic status. In retrospect, I believe that there is a need for further study in this area that includes participation from other groups in society to more adequately reflect greater diversity in terms of culture, age, gender, socio-economic status and bring these voices more fully into the leadership conversation.

The methodology and research design surfaced as a second departure point. In general, the multiple methods design succeeded in generating a considerable volume of data, especially with respect to the focus group and individual conversations. I was satisfied with the principles of grounded theory, including immersion in the data, systematic analysis, and open and axial coding. Furthermore, as a neophyte qualitative researcher, I found that it was advantageous to be close to

the data rather than an external orientation.

The writing of Chapters Four and Five was at times daunting because I found myself slipping into a positivist perspective and distancing myself from a study to which I was so very close. As a researcher situated in the study, the principles of grounded theory that I employed fostered closeness to the data that helped me write from an insider's view rather than from an outsider's view and in this way I was able to maintain consistency with the emergent nature of the research design. In the end, I did not harbor any negative impressions of the principles of grounded theory that were used in the research design.

The journals, the third component of the research design, were submitted at the end of the data collection. As I identified in Chapter Three, the criteria for usable data included reflection, memoing, diagramming, and extending ideas and themes explored in the focus groups and individual interviews. After comparison of the journals to the criteria for usable data, only four journals met the criteria and were included in the analysis.

Perhaps the students were unable to engage with the journals because of the time commitment required to reflect, respond, and write. Were I to conduct this study again, I would explore finding a means of providing participants inexpensive recording devices and hire a transcriber to transform these recordings into a text format. Would this approach to participant reflection be any better than the journals? I would like to think so, but securing adequate funding for this approach would not be an insignificant concern.

I was satisfied with the students' electronic collaboration, and found that asynchronous email was a successful tool for deriving follow up comments with relative immediacy. It is exciting to think of utilizing webcams as another option for electronic collaboration, but expense likely works against this idea. I also thought of an online community (chat room) as an option, but realized that this option also required considerable participant time and commitment. Overall, I remained unconvinced that the students would have embraced webcams, chat rooms, or telephones any more readily than the journals that I provided. If I had it to do over again, I would continue using asynchronous email as the forum for electronic collaboration because of immediate access to the students, and the succinct and relatively frequent and reciprocal feedback.

As an emergent study, there was so much data contained in the focus group and individual interview transcripts that I had difficulty knowing where to start. The analytical questions drawn from Strauss and Corbin (1998) provided a much-needed starting point, and in the process of asking the analytical question of the data, a large number of themes emerged. As I look back on the process, I realize that if a researcher is looking for a study with a more limited scope, an emergent methodology is not the route to follow.

The emergent process in the data collection and analysis was just one dimension of the inquiry. That the study was emergent for me, too, was the one area that impacted me most as both a professional and a student of leadership. Going into the study, I was careful to attempt to bracket my own leadership experiences and understandings so as to minimize the potential for leading the participants. As the

study unfolded, however, I found that the students' leadership views were emerging, evolving, and were reflected in their talk and action in the focus groups.

I did not realize the full magnitude of the transformation of my own leadership understandings until I was fully engaged in presenting the results in Chapter Four and writing the discussion section of Chapter Five. I did not have my "a-ha" moment until I more fully grasped the integral role language and framing practices had in the students' leadership concepts and understandings. I had an intuition about the idea of leading through language, but I had not really explored or thought deeply about it until process and articulation emerged as key themes in the students' leadership understandings. I found a connection between language, framing, leadership, and what eventually developed into the leadership throw metaphor. The exciting part for me was being drawn into the discussion of toxic culture, footprinting, and the affordance, abilities and constraints constructs from perception-action theory. I remain interested in future research that explores more of the cognitive properties of leadership understanding and the relationship to principles of adult learning.

Crotty (2003) contended that language has a pivotal role in shaping situations in which we find ourselves, the events and practices we engage in, and the understanding that we reach. This claim was substantiated by what I learned about toxic culture, throwness, and affordances as I developed the leadership throw metaphor. I am not convinced that this type of exploration and discussion would have been initiated from survey research alone. While it is true that at times the volume of data was cumbersome, the iterative approach to data collection and

analysis nevertheless yielded what I regard as two surprises from the research—the students' language of framing leadership and the implications associated with leadership throw.

As I conclude my methodological reflections, there are, indeed, logistical elements that I would change were it possible. Regarding the overall multiple methods research design, however, I would make only minor modifications to enable greater transferability of the findings.

A Possibility for Leadership Literature

According to the students, leadership is the responsibility of all individuals who gather together to create a community of leaders. As an interactive process, the community has considerable importance for sensemaking and activating context-specific leadership qualities and behaviors.

Leadership includes achieving vision, which necessarily requires self-development as leaders and individuals embrace the change. Effective and energizing leadership has a transformative quality for individuals involved with bettering conditions within a community. Leadership is emergent and engages group-members in collaborative processes that collect capacities, that is, harnesses talents while working together to accomplish vision.

The synthesis of students' leadership understandings represented both their leadership understandings and the process and articulation associated with their sensemaking in the focus groups and individual interviews. Leadership was construction and it brought together students' experiences, emotions, framing, and language in the process of conceptualizing leadership understandings. Moreover,

leadership was articulation and included their words and images, rhetoric, non-verbal cues, metaphor, connotative language, and *leadership throw*. Students were involved in leadership, and so it was important to recognize the language conventions and descriptive words and metaphors that they used not only narrate and energize their leadership understandings, but also preserved and conveyed the emotional well-being inherent in meanings they conferred on leadership concepts. This use of language is, I believe, a powerful argument for nurturing student voice at all levels.

Leadership involved the conceptualizing process that the students used in making sense of their leadership experiences and related leadership concepts. In articulating their leadership experiences, students tended to speak in dualities and used dialectic analysis as they distinguished examples of effective and energizing leadership from the counter-examples. Awareness of the students' cognitive processes underscores an important relationship to meaningful and empowered student engagement with pre-service teacher preparation courses at the college level. Speaking in dualities and their use of a dialectic approach afforded opportunities for rehearsing leadership in a safe and supportive environment as pre-service teachers prepare for taking on the responsibilities of a full-fledged teacher within K-12 school contexts.

A Departure Point for Related Research

Even though the research design fostered depth in the analysis rather than breadth, it would still be appropriate and valuable to replicate this study with a considerably larger group, or perhaps with groups drawn from two or more

universities to be more representative of the undergraduate education student population in Canadian universities and colleges. Further studies that involve participants drawn from a greater diversity of cultural, socio-economic, gender, age, and experience backgrounds will enable more diverse voices to be brought into the leadership conversation. Therefore, a larger sample of students could be sought as a departure point for further research of undergraduate education students' leadership understandings.

The students tended to speak in dualities, which was a property of their conceptualization and sensemaking processes, and included the role of past experience in learning, a principle of adult learning. Experience is essential to adult learning and can provide a base for new learning because it acts not only as a structure to approach new experiences, but also as a strategy to select information for further attention. Experience provides adult learners with a scaffold for determining the knowledge and skills to be used in the learning process (Mackeracher, 1996). Exploration of how students' leadership understandings converge with adult learning principles could be a next logical step for research in this area.

Contributions to Policy

Participants in this study acknowledged that leadership is a process that engages individuals who work purposively in collaborative relationships. Such a view underscored the students' perspective that everyone has leadership abilities, capacities, and potential to influence leadership practices in schools and colleges. There was a perception that courses and instruction at the college level are

hierarchical and, in some cases, hegemonic. The students identified hierarchy—perceived or actual—as a factor that contributed to their sense that the pre-service teacher program and the actual realities associated with schools are disconnected because the leadership rhetoric at the college level was not always consistent with the leadership action. The students advised that colleges need to listen to their students and develop initiatives that eliminate inconsistencies between mission statements that emphasize collaboration, yet allow hierarchically structured teacher education courses to continue.

According to the students, faculty, staff, and stakeholders need to be convinced that pre-service teacher preparation for leadership in schools is a priority. Students suggested a pragmatic approach to leadership preparation and encouraged college instructors to consider regular inclusion of leadership experience in their programs of study, such as through instructor modeling and restructured field-based experience. Students identified a preference for experiential learning that included university and school-based classroom-based activities, such as cooperative learning, role-play and simulation, and problem-based learning. Service learning also promoted leadership experience in contexts external to colleges, and students entertained the possibilities associated with adding volunteer and humanitarian projects to teacher education programs. The students recognized that service learning facilitates modeling. They believed that mentoring of faculty and community leaders in support of leadership learning in off-campus projects, organized around collaborative leadership relationships would make a difference.

From the students' view, colleges have an opportunity to influence students for leadership involvement, but with that opportunity comes a parallel responsibility. Colleges need to assume a greater awareness of students' leadership understandings and acknowledge their language and framing of leadership and implications of *leadership throw*. Colleges need to engage students in collaborative relationships with faculty and staff around the common purpose of creating and leading initiatives that more prominently integrate students' leadership understandings into teacher preparation programs.

Through exploring their own leadership experiences and as a result of their sensemaking, the students recognized that agency, or, *betterment of conditions* in a community is an ultimate goal of leadership. Take, for example, the students' perceived disconnect between leadership rhetoric and action at the college level. The students mentioned the possibility of a joint student-faculty exploration of this disconnect and the potential for enhancing the learning community by co-constructing strategies for addressing this incongruence. It is noteworthy that in the process of making sense of leadership experiences and conferring meaning on leadership understandings, the students gained confidence and strength from working collectively, an observation that further illustrates the necessity for colleges to find ways of integrating students' leadership understandings into the program-planning process.

Epilogue

Every time the students spoke about leadership, the discussion highlighted the importance of and ubiquity of relationships that included a leader-follower role

exchange, relational power, collaboration, and trust. From the student perspective, leadership has relationships at its core, and the relational elements of collaboration, leader-follower exchange, and a *power-through* differentiation enabled them to position themselves as individuals in relation to the collaborative relationship.

Over the course of talking about leadership, the students reflected on the importance that they attached to enhancing their emotional well-being, because emotion was an important vehicle for processing and expressing leadership understandings and showcased the importance that they attached to feeling like they mattered. The students recalled feeling empowered by cooperative and collaborative group learning because it connected college level courses with their real world of teaching in schools. In this way, relationships focused on their priority of enhancing their self-esteem and self-actualization in the process of working together. From the students' view, talking through problems contributed to individual and group self-esteem and self-actualization, and was understood to be more productive than resorting to invective.

As the students spoke about leadership, they demonstrated actual leadership understandings through *how* they spoke about their leadership understandings. The students chose language that increasingly conveyed more nuance and precision as they explored, framed, and articulated believability and truth. In this way, *what* is said matters little, if *how* the speaker articulates that meaning is not believed. As a professional in the area of leadership, I recognized that their revelation supported my hunch that we can lead effectively with our talk, and this realization took me into an exploration of language and framing, which led to the development of the leadership

throw metaphor. I came into this study looking for students' leadership understandings and gained knowledge and appreciation for the students' language and framing in their sensemaking, articulation, and subsequent conferring of meaning on their leadership understandings.

Throughout their conversations of leadership understandings, the students provided evidence that seemingly insignificant incidents can result in significant consequences for individuals engaged in leadership. For example, on one hand when students perceived ineffective, rude, "toxic" leadership, they communicated their opposition, generated alternatives, or disengaged from the interaction. On the other hand, students spoke of situations that featured effective, respectful, trustworthy leadership, and in these situations, students felt empowered, encouraged, and chose to engage, interact, and work together towards accomplishing a goal. In either case, this understanding of small things with big ramifications led to the development of the leadership throw metaphor.

Looking back on this study, I recognize that students' sensemaking processes were revealed as they constructed leadership understandings and that this process was a powerful experience for all involved. Through interaction, conversation, and collaboration with the students, their use of language and framing focused on their approach to leadership, and showcased their cognitive processes and the impact of *leadership throw*.

There were times in this study that I questioned where the data collection was going, but allowed myself to let it unfold. As a professional and a leadership student, I am pleased that I did so because the leadership process and articulation

that I observed encouraged me to consider leadership in different ways. I thank the students in this research for helping me to rethink leadership as including the ubiquity of relationships; the importance of emotional well-being, sensemaking, and leadership throw; and the connection that exists to interaction, language and framing, conferring meaning, and leadership action.

An overarching purpose of educational administration research is that it contributes to effecting positive change within educational institutions and educational systems. In keeping with this mandate for educational administration research, the findings from this study have possibilities for institutions of higher education across North America currently engaged in restructuring and renewal of their teacher education programs.

Reflecting on this research, a major implication of the findings is fostering a greater awareness of the content of undergraduate education students' leadership understandings. As importantly, the possibilities from this research advance an enhanced awareness and support for the process and articulation of students' leadership understandings, particularly as a model for engaging polyphonic voices from undergraduate students who represent diverse cultural, age, gender, and socio-economic backgrounds. Bonous-Hammarth (2001) found that the SCM as a framework supports understanding different levels of interaction among individuals at individual, group and social levels. I believe that the possibilities from my study could have similar utility in fostering inclusion of alternate discourses more fully into the leadership conversation especially as teacher education programs are rethought and restructured.

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Appendix A
Interview Instrument

Leadership Understandings held by Undergraduate Education Students

Dissertation Study Individual Taped Interview Questions

Tracking number:

1. Think of your own background, as well as your past and current life experiences and tell me about a leader for whom you have tremendous respect. Why does this person have your respect? What characteristics brought this person to your mind? (In view of this person, tell me about leadership: What is it? How do you define leadership?)
2. Describe an experience, either past or present, which powerfully enhanced your leadership capacities and abilities. For example, recall a time when you were highly engaged, empowered and energized by some leadership effort (like planning a curriculum initiative in your school). Describe this leadership experience.

Should participants struggle with a 'best' leadership experience, sharing of stories that illustrate ineffective leadership is encouraged.
3. Imagine yourself five years from now and project your favorable leadership experiences forward (from Q#2). Imagine you are involved in a situation where 'the best' or most effective leadership is occurring. Describe the situation: What is going on? What are people doing? What are people saying? What are people thinking? What does it feel like?
4. What might leadership look like in the future?
Imagine yourself five years from now. You have made great progress in becoming the leader that you and the people you are working with want and respect. Describe what has brought you to this level of growth? What have you learned? How have you learned? What has been especially challenging for you, while at the same time facilitated your leadership development?
5. Describe what other people can do to encourage and build leadership among undergraduate education students. What do you see people doing?

Appendix B

Strauss and Corbin (1998) Approach to Coding Data

Open coding. To ensure openness it is advantageous not to structure data gathering too tightly (in terms of timing, type of persons or places, theoretical conceptions) because the interviewer will need to probe. “[I]t is crucial to maintain a balance between systematically gathering data that will enable development of categories and flexibility that allows events, happenings and the direction of interviews to flow openly” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 207). Grounded theorists emphasized that data analysis occur immediately following data collection. Open coding is characterized, as the name implies, by a certain openness of the sampling that occurs, the data generated, and the process of analysis. Considering the emergent, *a posteriori* nature of grounded theory research, it is understandable that the researcher avoid becoming too “penned-in” by preconceived notions about the phenomenon being studied.

Axial coding. This phase follows open-coding and proceeds on the basis of theoretically relevant concepts and categories. Because the focus changes, the aim of axial coding is to look for how categories relate to their sub-categories as well as to further develop categories in terms of their properties and dimensions. In data gathering and analysis, the researcher will sample incidents and events that enable him or her to identify significant variations. In the axial coding phase, the researcher is looking for incidents that demonstrate dimensional range or variation of a concept and the relationships among concepts. There will always be something different – be it conditions, actions/interactions or consequences – that will provide the basis for making comparisons and discovering variations. If the analyst is comparing incidents and events in terms of how these give density and variation to concepts to which they relate

he or she is doing theoretical sampling, and it is through persistent sampling, differences eventually will emerge (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Selective coding. Strauss and Corbin identified the aim of selective coding as the integration of the categories along the dimensional level to form a theory. Discriminate sampling occurs when a researcher chooses the sites, persons, and documents to maximize opportunities for comparative analysis. Validation is built into each step of analysis and sampling because analysts are continually comparing the products or their analyses against actual data, making modifications and additions against incoming data; therefore, researchers are constantly validating or negating their interpretations. “Only the concepts and statements that stand up to the constant comparison process become part of the theory” (pp. 211-212) and axial coding continues until the researcher reaches saturation, the point where nothing new is generated from the data.

Theoretical saturation. The general rule when building theory is to gather data until each category is saturated, or until (a) no new or relevant data seem to emerge regarding a category, (b) the category is well developed in terms of its properties and dimensions, and (c) the relationships among categories are well established and validated. Theoretical saturation is of great importance; “[u]nless a researcher gathers data until all categories are saturated, the theory will be unevenly developed and lacking density and precision” (Strauss & Corbin, p. 212).

Memos and diagrams. At each phase of the research process, writing memos and doing diagrams are important elements of analysis as they promote conceptual density and integration and support the reconstruction of the research details (Strauss & Corbin). Memos and diagrams help the analyst move from working with data to

conceptualizing because they contain the products of coding, provide direction for theoretical sampling, and enable the analyst to sort out ideas in his or her mind. Any breaks in logic quickly become evident as thoughts, diagrams, and visual representations among concepts are documented. Memos and diagrams also provide utility when writing for publication and speaking about the research.

Appendix C

Application to (Behavioral) Ethics Review Board

Application for Approval of Research Protocol
Submitted to Behavioral Research Ethics Board on,
January 16, 2006

RESEARCHER: A.J. (Jim) Propp, B.Ed., M.Ed., Doctoral Candidate,
Department of Educational Administration

SUPERVISOR: Dr. Patrick J. Renihan, Professor, Department of
Educational
Administration, College of Education, University of
Saskatchewan.

DATA COLLECTION: START DATE: February 6, 2006
COMPLETION: May 30, 2006

TITLE OF STUDY: Understandings of leadership held by undergraduate
education students.

ABSTRACT: Literature regarding research into leadership understandings held by undergraduate education students in higher education is scarce, making it difficult to (a) know how undergraduate education students perceive leadership, and (b) delineate these understandings of leadership as possibilities for leadership theory. The purpose of this study is to use a grounded theory method to explore, and conceptualize leadership based on leadership understandings held by undergraduate education students. Grounded theory, an interactional and recursive method of theory building, involves making comparisons and asking questions of the data. The emerging theory is validated by grounding it in the data and if necessary, additional data is sought in order to build the theory.

To recruit participants, post internship education students enrolled in EDADM 425.3 in term two of the 2005-2006 academic year will be invited to participate in this research. A list of about 15 participants will be generated, and each participant will receive a letter from the researcher that provides a description of the study, next steps for participating in the individual taped interviews, timing and location of individual taped interviews and the consent form. If more students volunteer to participate than can be accommodated, participants will be selected randomly from the list of volunteers. I may accept participation from student referrals prior to and after the interview process has commenced.

FUNDING: Self-funded

PARTICIPANTS: Participants in the individual taped interviews for this study are post internship undergraduate education students, in their final year of study in the College of Education, who are completing their Educational Administration 425.3 course. To recruit participants for the individual taped interviews, the Dean's Office of the College of Education at the University of Saskatchewan will receive a letter of introduction requesting permission to proceed with conducting individual taped

interviews with their education students. The Dean's Office will be invited to facilitate the recruitment of participants for individual interviews by allowing the researcher to make brief announcements in various Educational Administration 425.3 classes. Students in these classes will receive printed information from the researcher that includes a description of the study, next steps to be able to participate in the individual taped interviews, timing and location of interviews, and a consent form. It is anticipated that participants' taped interview will take place in a neutral location – dependent upon participant choice. Should a participant decline participation, an alternate participant will be approached. The researcher will not have any relationship to the students who volunteer to participate in the individual taped interviews.

See Appendix A for the letter of invitation to the Dean of Education, College of Education, University of Saskatchewan.

See Appendix B for the information and invitation to participate letter, to be provided to students who are present in the classes addressed by the researcher.

CONSENT: See Appendix C for Consent Form to be included with the letter of recruitment. A copy of the consent form will be provided to each participant.

METHODS: Data will be collected using individual audio taped interviews with the participants which will be transcribed by an external transcriber. Given that these interviews are dependent upon participant responses, the conversations are “open” and will use a set of semi-structured questions. I plan to make and keep descriptive notes reflecting ideas, concepts, categories, themes, and metaphors found in the data that emerge from the situation, experiences, and conversations among the researcher and participants. These will form the data for the study. The interview protocol will be piloted prior to commencement of the data collection, which may prompt me to modify the instrument. Moreover, this data will not be included in the results and findings of the study.

See Appendix D for a copy of the individual taped interview protocol

STORAGE OF DATA: Transcriptions will be completed by an external transcriber. Transcripts will be stored on the file server of the University of Saskatchewan on the hard drive of the researcher's personal computer and on CD. A copy of the transcripts and audio recording will be stored at the Department of Educational Administration in the office of Patrick Renihan for five years following the completion of this study.

DISSEMINATION: The data that is collected is intended for use in the doctoral dissertation of the researcher. A secondary intent is to use the data and findings in conference presentations, journal articles and other scholarly works.

RISK or DECEPTION: Participants will not be deceived in the course of the study. Risk due to the limits in the ability to guarantee confidentiality is addressed in the next section.

CONFIDENTIALITY: Pseudonyms will be used in transcription and reporting of the data. However, because data will be collected using taped individual interviews drawn from a small population, the researcher's ability to ensure confidentiality and anonymity is limited. Participants will be informed that there are limits to which the researcher can ensure the confidentiality of the information derived from the individual.

DATA TRANSCRIPT RELEASE: Participants will be given the opportunity to add, delete, and change the final transcript, and will receive a copy of the transcript release form for their own records. Participants will receive a copy of their transcript with their own statements highlighted and pseudonym identified. Participants will be asked to sign a transcript release form and asked not to copy the transcript provided and to return it to the researcher. Transcripts and transcript release forms will not be stored together.

Participants will have the right to withdraw any of all of their responses.

See Appendix E for transcript release form.

DEBRIEFING and FEEDBACK: At the conclusion of each taped interview and through correspondence attached to transcripts for review, participants will be reminded of the next steps that will be taken in the study and will be invited to ask questions of the researcher. Questions or comments will be invited at any time and participants will have the necessary information to contact the researcher and the Department of Educational Administration. Participants will be alerted to the availability of the dissertation when it is complete.

SIGNATURES:

A.J. (Jim) Propp, Doctoral Candidate

Dr. Patrick J. Renihan, Supervisor

Dr. Sheila Carr-Stewart, Head

CONTACT INFORMATION:

A.J. (Jim) Propp
 c/o Department of Educational Administration
 College of Education, University of Saskatchewan



University of Saskatchewan
Behavioural Research Ethics Board (Beh-REB)

15 March 2006

Certificate of Approval with Minor Modifications

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR Patrick Renihan	DEPARTMENT Educational Administration	BEH# 06-29
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STUDENT RESEARCHER(S)
A.J. (Jim) Propp

INSTITUTION(S) WHERE RESEARCH WILL BE CONDUCTED (STUDY SITE)
University of Saskatchewan

SPONSOR
Unfunded

TITLE
Understandings of leadership held by undergraduate Education students

ORIGINAL APPROVAL DATE 10-Feb-2006	CURRENT RENEWAL DATE 1-Feb-2007
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CERTIFICATION

Thank you for submitting the above application to the Behavioural Research Ethics Board for review. The Beh REB has **approved** your research proposal on ethical grounds, **subject to the following minor modifications:**

- The consent form provides contradictory information about how the data will be reported (aggregate form and direct quotations); please clarify. Also, please indicate where the interviews will take place.
- Please revise the consent form to include:
 - A statement acknowledging that a copy of the form will be provide to the participants for their own records.
 - A statement acknowledging that the signed consent and data release forms will be stored seperately from the data.
 - A statement explaining the transcript release process.
 - A statement explaining how participants can access the results of the study.
 - A statement that acknowledges that out of town participants may call collect.

Please send one copy of your revisions to the Ethics Office for our records. **Please highlight or underline any changes made when resubmitting.**

The principal investigator has the responsibility for any other administrative or regulatory approvals that may pertain to this research project, and for ensuring that the authorized research is carried out according to the conditions outlined in the original protocol submitted for ethics review. This Certificate of Approval is valid for the above time period provided there is no change in experimental protocol or consent process or documents.

Any significant changes to your proposed method, or your consent and recruitment procedures should be reported to the Chair for Research Ethics Board consideration in advance of its implementation.

This letter serves as your Certificate of Approval, **effective as of the time that the requested modifications are received by the Ethics Office**. If you require a letter of unconditional approval, please so indicate on your reply, and one will be issued to you.

ONGOING REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

The term of this approval is five years. However, the approval must be renewed on an annual basis. In order to receive annual renewal, a status report must be submitted to the REB Chair for Board consideration within one month of the current expiry date each year the study remains open, and upon study completion. Please refer to the following website for further instructions: <http://www.usask.ca/research/ethical.shtml> .

Dr. Valerie Thompson, Chair
Behavioural Research Ethics Board
University of Saskatchewan

Dr. Michel Desautels, Chair
Biomedical Research Ethics Board
University of Saskatchewan

Appendix D
Letters of Transmittal

University of Saskatchewan
Room 3057
28 Campus Drive
Saskatoon, SK S7N 0X1
Telephone: (306) 966-7017 (Office)
(306) 966-7020 (Fax)
Email: sj.propp@sasktel.net

Dr. Cecilia Reynolds,
Dean of Education,
College of Education, University of Saskatchewan
Saskatoon, SK S7N 0X1

January 16, 2006

Dean Reynolds:

Please accept this letter as request to conduct research with post internship undergraduate education students enrolled in EDADM 425.3 classes in term two of the 2005-2006 academic year. This research is aimed at deriving understandings of leadership held by undergraduate education students in the last year of their B. Ed program. The research is scheduled to begin February 6, 2006, and the timeframe for the study is about 16 weeks, culminating in May of 2006.

A crucial component of this project involves data collection from undergraduate education students in order to explore and derive understandings of leadership they hold. Participants will be invited to engage in interviews (with the researcher) about their perspectives on leadership and describe these past and current experiences.

Results of the individual taped interviews will be reported in aggregate form only and will not be reported on an individual basis. Every effort will be taken to ensure confidentiality and anonymity of participants. Participation is strictly voluntary and participants may withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences.

A full copy of the ethics proposal for this study is enclosed for your information.

If you have any questions about the individual interviews or the research study, please contact Jim Propp (researcher) at 966-7017 or Dr. Patrick J. Renihan (Supervisor) at 966-7620, or if you prefer to respond in writing our mailing address is Department of Educational Administration, College of Education, University of Saskatchewan, 28 Campus Drive, Saskatoon, SK, S7N 0X1. Thank-you for your time, consideration and support of this research project.

Sincerely,

A.J. (Jim) Propp, Researcher
Doctoral Candidate, Department of Educational Administration,
College of Education, University of Saskatchewan
Phone: 966-7017

Dr. Patrick J. Renihan, Advisor
Professor, Department of Educational Administration,
College of Education, University of Saskatchewan
Phone: 966-7620

Information Letter to Educational Administration Department Head

Dr. Sheila Carr-Stewart,
Head, Department of Educational Administration
College of Education, University of Saskatchewan
Saskatoon, SK S7N 0X1

February 8, 2006

Dr. Carr-Stewart:

Please accept this letter as request to conduct research with post internship undergraduate education students enrolled in EDADM 425.3 classes in term two of the 2005-2006 academic year. This research is aimed at deriving leadership understandings held by undergraduate education students in the last year of their B. Ed program. The research is scheduled to begin February of 2006, and the timeframe for the study is about 16 weeks, culminating in May of 2006.

A crucial component of this project involves data collection from undergraduate education students in order to explore and derive leadership understandings they hold. Participants will be invited to engage in interviews (with the researcher) about their perspectives on leadership and describe these past and current experiences.

Results of the individual taped interviews will be reported in aggregate form only and will not be reported on an individual basis. Every effort will be taken to ensure confidentiality and anonymity of participants. Participation is strictly voluntary and participants may withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences.

A full copy of the ethics proposal for this study is enclosed for your information.

If you have any questions about the individual interviews or the research study, please contact Jim Propp (researcher) at 966-7017 or Dr. Patrick J. Renihan (Supervisor) at 966-7620. Thank-you for your time, consideration and support of this research project.

Sincerely,

A.J. (Jim) Propp
Doctoral Candidate, Department of Educational Administration,
College of Education, University of Saskatchewan
Researcher
Phone: 966-7017

Dr. Patrick J. Renihan,
Advisor
Professor, Department of Educational Administration,
College of Education, University of Saskatchewan
Phone: 966-7620

Information letter to EDADM 425.3 Instructors

Dr. _____,
 Professor, Department of Educational Administration
 College of Education, University of Saskatchewan
 Saskatoon, SK S7N 0X1

February 8, 2006

Dr _____:

Please accept this letter as request to contact post internship undergraduate education students enrolled in your section of EDADM 425.3, to invite their participation in my research during term two of the 2005-2006 academic year. This research is aimed at deriving leadership understandings held by undergraduate education students in the last year of their B. Ed program. The research is scheduled to begin February of 2006, and the timeframe for the study is about 16 weeks, culminating in May of 2006.

A crucial component of this project involves data collection from undergraduate education students in order to explore and derive leadership understandings they hold. Participants will be invited to engage in interviews (with the researcher) about their perspectives on leadership and describe these past and current experiences.

Results of the individual taped interviews will be reported in aggregate form only and will not be reported on an individual basis. Every effort will be taken to ensure confidentiality and anonymity of participants. Participation is strictly voluntary and participants may withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences.

If you have any questions about the individual interviews or the research study, please contact Jim Propp (researcher) at 966-7017 or Dr. Patrick J. Renihan (Supervisor) at 966-7620. Thank-you for your time, consideration and support of this research project.

Sincerely,

A.J. (Jim) Propp
 Doctoral Candidate, Department of Educational Administration,
 College of Education, University of Saskatchewan
 Researcher
 Phone: 966-7017
 Email: sj.propp@sasktel.net

Dr. Patrick J. Renihan,
 Advisor
 Professor, Department of Educational Administration,
 College of Education, University of Saskatchewan
 Phone: 966-7620

Information Letter and Invitation to Participate in Research

INFORMATION LETTER AND INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

Study: Understanding of Leadership held by Undergraduate Education Students

Investigators: A. J. (Jim) Propp, Doctoral Candidate, University of Saskatchewan
Dr. Patrick J. Renihan, Professor, University of Saskatchewan

We are inviting you, as a post internship undergraduate education student in EDADM 425.3 to participate in a research project involving exploration of leadership experiences and understandings held by undergraduate education students, the primary aim of the research project. If you are interested in participating, you are invited to an informational meeting at ED 2060 on Wednesday, March 29, at 5:30. This meeting will begin with free pizza and pop, followed by identification of the purpose, method, and data collection technique used in the study. Additionally, the timeline and expectations for participants in this study will be provided. It is anticipated about 15 education students will be required for the study.

The purpose of this letter is to (a) describe how we will be collecting information for the study, and (b) invite your participation in this data collection.

Program Description

We are inviting undergraduate education students completing their B.Ed degrees during term two of the 2005-2006 academic year to participate in (a) a focus group interview and (b) an individual audio-taped interview, that will take approximately 30-60 minutes to complete. The recursive dimension of grounded theory research may or may not require successive meetings with participants. An important part of this project involves data collection from undergraduate students in order to explore and derive understandings of leadership held by undergraduate students. Participants will be asked questions in the focus group and follow up individual taped interview about their past and current thoughts, and aspirations of leadership.

Privacy and Confidentiality

The individual information you give us is confidential, and this confidentiality will be protected to the extent permitted by law. Individual responses will not be linked to particular individuals. Given the nature of focus group interviews, we will do everything possible to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. All interviews will be completed anonymously and any results will be reported in aggregate (summary) form only. The information collected during this research will become part of the researcher's dissertation and this information will only be reported in aggregate form. Verbatim (word-for-word) quotes will be assigned to pseudonyms and NO information will be reported that would allow anyone to be identified individually.

Participation in the study is voluntary. You will not be required to answer any questions that make you uncomfortable. You may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions, or withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences.

Potential Benefits Associated with Participation

We believe developing understandings about leadership is a topic important to undergraduate education students. We think that you will enjoy talking about leadership as perceived and experienced by yourself and your cohort. Participation in this research may also inform leadership and gender studies.

This letter is yours to keep. After reading this information letter and having the contents of the letter explained and your questions answered, if you are comfortable with participating in the research, please attend the informational meeting on March 29, 2006 in ED 2060 at 5:30. At this time you will be asked to complete the informed consent form and leave it with the researcher. If you have any further questions about this research, please feel free to contact:

A. J. (Jim) Propp
Doctoral Candidate, Department of Educational Administration, College of
Education,
University of Saskatchewan
Researcher
Phone: 966-7017

or

Dr. Patrick J. Renihan
Professor, Department of Educational Administration, College of Education,
University of Saskatchewan
Phone: 966-.7620

If you have questions about the conduct of this study or your rights as a research subject you may contact the Office of Research Services, 966-2084 at the University of Saskatchewan.

Appendix E
Participant Consent Form

STUDENT CONSENT FORM

You are participating in a study entitled, "Understandings of Leadership held by Undergraduate Education Students." Please read this form carefully, and feel free to ask any questions you might have.

What is this study about?

We are inviting post internship undergraduate education students who are enrolled in EDADM 425.3 classes in term two of the 2005-2006 academic year to participate in a focus group interview and an individual audio taped interview, which will take approximately thirty minutes to complete. The recursive dimension of grounded theory may or may not require successive meetings. An important part of this project involves data collection from undergraduate education students in order to explore and derive understandings of leadership held by undergraduate education students. Participants will be asked questions in the individual taped interviews about their past and current experiences, thoughts, and aspirations of leadership.

Potential Benefits:

We believe developing understandings about leadership is a topic important to undergraduate education students. We think that you will enjoy talking about leadership as perceived and experienced by yourself and your cohort. Participation in this research may also inform leadership and gender studies.

Risk or Deception:

Participants will not be deceived in the course of this study. Risks due to the limits in the ability to guarantee confidentiality of participants drawn from a small population is addressed in the next section.

Your Confidentiality

Focus group and individual taped interviews will be subject to examination only by the researcher, however, because data is collected using focus groups and individual taped interviews with participants drawn from a small population, the researcher's ability to ensure confidentiality and anonymity is limited. All materials will be completed anonymously and pseudonyms will be assigned by the researcher for use in the transcription and reporting of the data. Participants will be informed that there are limits to which the researcher can ensure the confidentiality of the information derived from the individual interviews.

The level of security involves locked file cabinets, contained in a locked office (for paper files such as consent forms and interview transcripts). Files are accessible only to research staff. Computer access is by password only; computers are kept in locked offices. Backup copies of data are maintained by the researchers and contained in a locked file drawer in a locked office. The data (transcripts and audio recordings) will be stored at The Department of Educational Administration office for five years following completion of the study.

Right to Withdraw:

As a participant, you may refuse to answer individual questions and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time without consequence. Withdrawal from the study will not affect your access to, or continuation of, services provided by public agencies such as the University, hospitals, social services, schools, and in no way changes your relationship with your EDADM 425.3 course instructor. If you choose to withdraw, your data will be deleted from the study and destroyed.

Although the data from this study will be published in the researcher's doctoral dissertation and presented publicly, the data will be reported in aggregate form, so that it will not be possible to identify individuals. In addition, the consent forms will be stored separately from the materials used, so that it will not be possible to associate a name with any given set of responses. Please do not put your name or other identifying information on the materials used.

Questions:

If you have any questions concerning the study, please feel free to ask at any point; you are also free to contact the researchers at the numbers provided above if you have questions at a later time.

Consent to Participate:

I have read and understood the description provided above; I have had the opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered satisfactorily. I consent to participate in the study described above, with the understanding that I may withdraw this consent at any time, without any consequence to me. A copy of this consent form has been given to me for my records.

Feedback on Results

We are happy to share the results with you. Participants will be alerted to the availability of the dissertation when it is complete.

Ethics Approval

This study has been approved by the Behavioral Research Ethics Board at the University of Saskatchewan on February 10, 2006. Any questions can be directed to the researchers or to the Office of Research Services, 966-2084.

Researcher(s):

A.J. (Jim) Propp and Dr. Patrick J. Renihan. Phone: 966-7017

I agree to participate in the study as outlined above. I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time without giving reasons and without any consequences.

(Signature of Participant)

(Date)

(Signature of Researcher)

(Date)

Appendix F
Transcript Release Form

Leadership Understandings held by Undergraduate Education Students
Department of Educational Administration, College of Education
University of Saskatchewan

Transcript Release Form

I, _____, have reviewed the complete transcript of my individual taped interview, and have been provided with the opportunity to add, alter, and delete information from the transcript as I believe appropriate. I acknowledge that the transcript accurately reflects what I said in my individual taped interview with A.J. (Jim) Propp, researcher. I hereby authorize the release of this transcript to A.J. (Jim) Propp to be used in the manner described in the consent form. I have received a copy of this Data/Transcript Release Form for my own records.

Participant

Date

Researcher

Date