TRADITIONAL AND NONTRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP IN HIGHER EDUCATION:

A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY

by

Jihna Jenkins

_____

Dissertation

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

_____

Liberty University, School of Business

May 2021

Abstract

Higher education is experiencing unprecedented challenges in a rapidly changing educational landscape. Leaders are charged with transforming their institutions to demonstrate their formidability by successfully responding to change. It is integral that leaders understand the happenings within the external environment as they guide their institutions. Institutions are adopting business postures and there is an increase in nontraditional leaders in administrative roles. The increase in nontraditional leaders is providing an opportunity for institutions to implement contemporary approaches to leadership. This study identified the predominant changes impacting liberal arts institutions in the Midwest, leadership behaviors contributing to successful change adaptation, and existent cultural elements. Twenty-three institutional leaders at liberal arts institutions within the Midwest were interviewed. This study named transformational leadership as the contemporary approach best suited for the current landscape. Overall, research participants perceived leadership cultivation as essential for traditional leaders. They perceived leadership behaviors that contribute to successful change adaption include a collaborative posture, communication, curiosity, and the ability to recognize change. This study is for leaders tasked with successfully adapting to changing enrollment and revenue considerations, prioritizing student satisfaction, and a changing generational perception of a liberal arts education.

Keywords: traditional, nontraditional, leadership style, higher education, change adaptation

TRADITIONAL AND NONTRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP IN HIGHER EDUCATION:

A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY

by

Jihna Jenkins

Dissertation

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Liberty University, School of Business

May 2021

Approvals

_____   _____

Jihna Jenkins, Doctoral Candidate   Date

_____   _____

Dr. Betty Ahmed, Dissertation Chair   Date

_____   _____

Dr. Alexander Averin, Committee Member   Date

_____   _____

Edward M. Moore Ph.D, Director of Doctoral Programs   Date

Dedication

This study is dedicated to the people in my life that have supported me from my childhood and throughout my womanhood. You have been steadfast in your love and supported me throughout my personal and professional pursuits. I am forever grateful for the role you have played in my life. I will carry you in my heart always.

This study is also dedicated to my children, Harrison, Tahj, and Tahtiana. You three are my motivation and it is my earnest prayer that you believe, wholeheartedly, you can accomplish the desires of your heart with God's help. Thank you for teaching me life's most important lessons. You are my greatest accomplishments.

To all the women of color seeking to invest your lives toward an academic pursuit of this magnitude, this dissertation evidences its possibility. You are worthy and capable of such a distinction. Your futures are as bountiful as the lofty heavens.

Acknowledgments

This study is a manifestation of God's love for me through the jewels He has given me throughout my life. I thank my mother for her consistent example of love, grace, and grit. She is a blessing to anyone she encounters, and I am especially favored to call her mom. She has made tremendous sacrifices for myself and my siblings that we simply cannot repay. This accomplishment is as much hers as it is mine. I hope to be the woman, mother, and friend she has been to me and so many. I thank my son for his prayers and encouragement throughout this process. I thank my daughters for their belief in "doctor mommy," which they affectionately named me when I began this process. I am grateful for my mentor who became my family when we moved to a place far from home. How blessed I am to have the support of my sisters who love me through all seasons of my life. To my sister who was recently promoted to her heavenly assignment, I miss you and I love you.

To the educators in my life from childhood to adulthood, you have inspired me more than you know. Your belief in me through your words and by your deeds set me on the path of service to others. Thank you to my colleagues who supported me throughout this academic pursuit by lending advice and perspective from your academic journeys. Many thanks to my dissertation chair, committee chair, administrative chair, and program director for your roles in helping me realize this dream. I appreciate your contribution in realizing this part of God's plan for my life. It has enabled me to join the growing ranks of women of color with terminal degrees in higher education. I will wear this distinction with honor and will effect positive change in the spaces I have the opportunity to serve. Although this study focused on adaptation to change, I am so grateful for a God that changes not. All glory, honor, and praise are due to God.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Section 1: Foundation of the Study

There is a crisis amidst the educational landscape posing a significant threat to survival of institutions of higher learning according to Guetterman and Mitchell (2016). Such dynamic changes are requiring educational institutions to adapt to and respond to such impediments. A necessary component of this navigation will require alignment among institutional leaders and the external environment, while prioritizing institutional mission. The changes occurring in the 21st century are impacting the external landscapes institutions are having to reassert themselves in as they attempt to remain formidable.

This crisis can serve as an opportunity for liberal arts colleges to reassess their educational products, as there is demand for quality educational products and an educational landscape with a foundation of cultural competence according to Lee (2016). He noted massive changes in technology and evolving perspectives of educational utility as factors to consider as leadership decisions are implemented. This can be accomplished through the coupling of fundamental priorities of liberal arts institutions and the new landscape where value is redefined, and social implications have changed. Although this redefinition is possible, it will require the infusion of contemporary approaches to leadership to foster innovation as the liberal arts respond to a changing dynamic. Baker et al. (2016) reiterated the importance of institutional leadership considering technological improvisation and new learning methodologies. In addition to prioritizing the changing needs of organizational participants, liberal arts institutions must also prioritize their institutional mission.

Such changes impacting liberal arts college include unconventional forms of leadership, as nontraditional leadership is on the rise according to Ekman (2014) and Collins (2014). They noted leaders in higher education are failing to adapt to change in the current educational

environment resulting in a decrease in enrollment and revenue. Liberal arts colleges and universities are deemed pedagogical pioneers and uniquely positioned to respond to institutional challenges in respect to enrollment, revenue, diversity, technology, and changing educational products. Institutional leadership can respond to such changes through inspiring commitment, passion, and loyalty while successfully adapting to the dynamic educational business environment and properly aligning innovative and occupational organizational capabilities. The purpose of this qualitative study was to understand the leadership capabilities essential to fostering successful adaption to change through examination of contemporary approaches to leadership to include transformational, transactional, and adaptive leadership. This was accomplished by interviewing 23 institutional leaders in the Midwest to learn how they are adapting to the current challenges impacting liberal arts institutions. Their contributions helped to identify the predominant changes impacting the liberal arts, leadership behaviors contributing to successful change adaptation, and existent cultural elements within the liberal arts institutions.

Background of the Problem

The predominant challenges impeding successful adaptation to the current educational landscape are requiring institutions to assert themselves formidable as extinction is an inevitable result. Dima et al. (2019) believed institutions of higher learning must demonstrate agility in response to the vastly changing business landscape to remain formidable. There is a massive cultural shift within academic cultures forcing institutions to exchange their bureaucratic approaches to institutional resolve with innovative, responsive, and results oriented characteristics. Black (2015) found expectations have changed from traditional inward-looking collegial approaches to outward-facing student focused approaches, resulting in a shift from an administrative approach to a pervading management culture. Institutional leaders must adopt new

mindsets and be willing to establish new leadership capabilities to foster the managerial

competence necessary to effect change. Ghasemy et al. (2017) found role-specific competency

and change-oriented capability as major areas of institutional improvement and integral to

organizational success. The ability to adapt to the happenings occurring within the external

environment must be characteristic of private liberal arts institutions.

Problem Statement

The general problem to be addressed was the failure of traditional leaders in higher

education to adapt to change in the current educational climate resulting in a decrease in

enrollment and revenue. Black (2015) believed the climate of change in higher education is

requiring institutions to consider how to develop their leaders and define appropriate leadership

behavior to adapt to new circumstances as conventional leadership roles in academia are yielding

decreases in student enrollment impacting revenue. Dima et al. (2019) highlighted the

importance of improving processes and developing techniques to accelerate productivity through

the connection between universities and the business environment, as doing so will allow

institutions of higher learning to adapt to the pace of the current landscape by denouncing

bureaucratic structures and academics' traditional autonomous roles in hopes to offer creative

solutions to increasing student enrollment and revenue. Ghasemy et al. (2017) discussed the

essentiality of leadership capabilities such as role-specific competency and change orientation as

institutions of higher learning seek to address main components of institutional operations such

as revenue, student enrollment, and infrastructure in the vastly changing educational landscape.

The specific problem addressed was the failure of traditional leaders in higher education to adapt

to change in the current educational climate, within liberal arts institutions in the Midwest,

resulting in a decrease in enrollment and revenue. Through aligning the problem statement with

the proposed research questions, the focus of the research sought to examine the factors impeding organizational enrollment and revenue.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative single-case study was to add to the body of knowledge by exploring the reasons behind traditional leaders in higher education's failure to adapt to change in the current educational climate, which is impeding organizational enrollment and revenue. According to Black (2015) institutions were failing to adapt to changes in the current educational climate. This concept invoked an exploration into the predominant changes occurring and how these changes impact a leader's adaptation. As a result of such changes, vulnerable institutions assume less risk and have welcomed the idea of nontraditional leadership. Leadership supply experienced significant decline in the number of tenure-track professors. The leadership role had changed and required leaders to serve in external capacities. Guetterman and Mitchell (2016) added that institutions of higher learning have increased public scrutiny and demands for institutional accountability, improved student learning, and the establishment of a culture of assessment with a premium on better management to foster successful adaption to the changing educational landscape. This exploration was a methodological approach that included theoretical concepts such as transformational, transactional, and adaptive leadership styles as influencers to successful adaptation, as such styles were appropriate for dynamic business environments. The conventional modes of practice in higher education were examined for effectiveness among institutional actors through better understanding increasing interests of private liberal arts institutions to use nontraditional leaders for institutional viability versus traditional leaders.

Research Questions

Kezar et al. (2018) presented the literature on the transformative posture institutions must adopt to foster innovative spaces and embody a new paradigm of practice. Ghasemy et al. (2017) analyzed the extent to which leadership capabilities and managerial competencies explain leadership performance. Korejan and Shahbazi (2016) emphasized the importance of organizational leadership in a fast-changing world, as it is considered a critical success factor. The proposed research questions informed the specific problem statement. The specific problem statement addressed the failure of traditional leaders to adapt to changes in the current educational climate and examine the way in which traditional leaders affect enrollment and revenue within the scope of liberal arts institutions in the Midwest. The sub questions for Research Question 1 are intended to analyze factors contributing to the success and failure of adaptation among traditional leaders. The sub question offered for Research Question 2 is intended to explore how changes in the current educational climate impact a leader's adaptation. Whereas, Research Question 3 is intended to explore what characteristics of an organization's culture promote adaption to change.

RQ1: Why do traditional leaders fail to adapt to changes in the current educational climate at liberal arts institutions in the Midwest?

RQ1a: What leadership behaviors contribute to a failure to adapt to the current educational climate?

RQ1b: What leadership behaviors promote successful adaptation to the current educational climate?

RQ2: What are the predominant changes occurring within the current educational climate at liberal arts institutions in the Midwest?

RQ2a: How do these changes impact a leader's adaption to the current educational

climate?

RQ3: What cultural elements exist within liberal arts institutions in the Midwest that

foster successful adaptation to the current educational climate?

Nature of the Study

This study was conducted with a qualitative case study because the study sought to examine the data in an equitable manner through the utilization of appropriate methods in real world context in business and education constructs (Yin, 2018). A quantitative approach was not appropriate for this study because quantitative approaches are descriptive, correlational, and examine cause and effect relationships while utilizing numerical analysis. Creswell and Poth (2018) discussed data collection activities to categorize components of qualitative research, as there are no independent and dependent variables for analysis. Their approach to qualitative data inquiry noted sample participants, sample strategies, and sample size to be of utmost consideration.

The current educational landscape considered were more than 1,500 institutions of higher learning, of which 59% are private and 49% are public. There are around 200 private liberal arts colleges in North America. Private institutions of higher learning categorically include 21% as large master's schools, 22% as baccalaureate colleges, 10% as medium master's schools, 26% as other, with 21% being private liberal arts colleges (Liberal Arts Colleges: The Complete Guide to Liberal Arts Colleges, 2020). Liao and Hitchcock (2018) offered a research synthesis on the credibility of evaluative qualitative methods in higher education. Their synthesis included the six leading higher education evaluation journals and found that the majority of them use qualitative

methods in their exploration. They suggested the use of qualitative design details and the development of strategies demonstrating such.

Discussion of Research Paradigms

Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) discussed the elusive context of research paradigms and the difficulty in aligning them with research. Their definition of a paradigm is a philosophical way of thinking. They name epistemology, ontology, methodology, and axiology as essential elements of a paradigm. Epistemology is used to describe how something becomes known. Ontology is used to describe the assumptions we make to make sense of something. Methodology is a broadly used term that includes the design, methods, approaches, and procedures for investigation. Axiology are the ethical considerations a researcher makes when constructing a research proposal. The four research paradigms are postpositivism, critical theory, positivism, and constructivism. This qualitative case study best aligned with the postpositivism research paradigm.

Mittwede (2012) described postpositivism as an improvisation to positivism, due to its consideration for the inherent limitations associated with obtaining knowledge. These limitations are largely a result of flawed human mechanisms and the very nature of a phenomenon. Postpositivism accounts for the unpredictability and fallibility of research, as does a biblical worldview. This research paradigm considers the contingencies associated with a life of faith. It is important to note, positivism, a purely propositional or cognitive approach, is not consistent with a biblical worldview. Thus, the findings of this qualitative study, which named the transformational leadership style as essential, also align with the transformational intent of Christian theology.

Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) characterized the critical theory as situated in social justice with a focus on political, social, and economic issues. The critical theory paradigm is rooted in the deliberate efforts of the researcher to promote human rights, the application of action research, and the respect for cultural norms. A researcher employs ethnomethodology to examine how social order and social interaction situate knowledge. Research of this type has an ontology of historical realism and dialogic methodology. Critical theory examines the condition of individuals based on their position in society to better understand the consequences of privilege versus the reality. This qualitative case study did not align with the critical theory paradigm because my intent was not to address a social issue.

Although commonly associated with research in educational constructs, positivism assumes context is not important, results on inquiry can be quantified, and the application of the scientific method. Positivism did not align with this qualitative case study because it did not use the scientific method. The positivist paradigm applies internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity. This quantitative research paradigm is rooted in positivism with a primary objective to discover one truth (Farrelly, 2013; Fusch et al., 2018). Researchers examine an objective reality with the intent to measure and analyze causal relationships between research variables. Such constructs often include randomization, structured protocols, questionnaires with limited predetermined responses, and sample sizes much larger than a qualitative researcher would explore. Quantitative approaches to research often recommend a course of action, project results thereof to the larger population, while testing hypotheses and examining specific relationships (Dźwigol, 2018). Quantitative approaches to research rely heavily on data in the numerical form while qualitative research is nonnumerical in narrative form. The experimental

and surveying designs are deemed fixed when the researcher determines what and how the study will be conducted prior to data collection.

Although qualitative research is rooted in constructivism, it did not align with this qualitative case study. Qualitative researchers believe multiple truths can exist based on an individual's construction of reality (Gaya & Smith, 2016; Robson & McCartan, 2016). Reality, a social construct, constantly changes, and from an epistemological standpoint there is no access to the idea of reality independent of the mind. In qualitative research methodology, the researcher and the research object interact in such a way that research outcomes are mutually created with context that shapes the inquiry. This approach to research ultimately suggests that reality does not exist prior to such investigations, as it prioritizes process and meaning. Unlike its complement, quantitative research, qualitative research conducts exploration through techniques such as focus group interview and participant observation (Sutton & Austin, 2015).

Discussion of Design

Creswell and Poth (2018) presented the five qualitative approaches to qualitative inquiry as narrative, phenomenological, grounded theory, case study, and ethnographic research. To accurately identify the experience, they glean information in context, which lends itself to successfully answering research questions. They noted narrative research design can vary and is often applicable in the social sciences and humanities areas of study. Such research often starts with the lived experience of individuals through storytelling chronologically. However, this case study focused on business and educational constructs.

According to Bobrowsky (2018) a phenomenological approach to research intends to examine an individual's experience scientifically. He importantly noted the removal of objective components when using such design although characteristic of philosophical context. Although

the elimination of bias and the promotion of objectivity is important in conducting research, this case study included the natural world with a larger breadth than an individual's lived experience with a focus on real world context.

Creswell and Poth (2018) described grounded theory research as intending to provide an explanation based in theory. They noted the evolution of grounded theory underscores a vast amount of participant experiences systematically gleaned and examining behaviors useful to generating theory. They suggested merging constructivist and interpretive viewpoints which typically includes interviews until saturation is achieved and emergent themes cease to be identified. It was important to understand sample populations are theoretically considered and analyzed by using comparative methodologies. Although interviews are a common data collection method, the intent of this study was not to offer new theory.

According to Creswell and Poth (2018) research participants in ethnography should be close to one another in proximity and have comparable cultural characteristics as this research design seeks to examine shared behaviors in cultural contexts. They noted data is collected by observation and immersion by the researcher to the lives of the research participants as the intent is to accurately depict communal patterns to include language and interactions within group culture. In ethnography both mental and meaningful activities help researchers better understand cultural happenings. Differing from grounded theory design, ethnography does not intend to create theory whereas their research foundation begins in theory and patterns are identified through conventional data collection methods to include interviewing, symbolism, and work in the field according to McKnight and O'Mara (2017). Although the intent of this study was to best determine why leaders fail to adapt to changes in the educational landscape, communal behaviors, language, such elements of a group's culture outside of the context of the educational

environment were not considered. Additionally, this case study did not begin with a theory as the goal was to explore.

Dhukaram et al. (2018) added that case studies offer a systems-thinking approach to understanding the complexities of higher education. They noted cases using systems thinking approaches related to applied organizational change and cognitive work analysis can capture conceptual models of the education system. Their research noted case studies capture interactions and relationships among organizational participants, which can lead to a better understanding as new standards and models seek to address the changes in the educational landscape. According to Yin (2018) in case research design there are various research contributors that assist in the formulation of assertions, but they do not always conduct the actual research. He noted it is imperative to conduct research with integrity and responsibly, as this is especially important to new researchers as they develop their research capabilities, while warning veteran researchers to not be impacted by the unforeseen events associated with research.

Discussion of Method

According to Robson and McCartan (2016) when conducting social research, a researcher must determine between the two conventional modes of research, either qualitative or quantitative in approach. They described the qualitative approach to research as characteristic of the research path of researchers within the realm of natural sciences such as physics, chemistry, and biology. Ultimately, qualitative researchers contended a different approach to research tasks as human beings in social situations involve human consciousness, language, and interaction. In qualitative research, accounts and findings are presented verbally or in nonnumerical form, situations are described from the perspective of those involved, and context is valued.

Conversely, quantitative researchers contended scientific approaches to research were the only manner in which serious research could be conducted. They characterized quantitative research to include measurements, quantifications, deductive logic, and objectivity with a heavy emphasis on reliability and validation. Although zealots of qualitative and quantitative research were allegiant to their preferred mode of research methodology, an interchange of both methodologies laid the foundation for the third type of research methodology, which is mixed method research. They described mixed method research as research where qualitative and quantitative approaches are combined in the same study. Pragmatism considered, mixed method research granted permission for researchers to conduct research with both qualitative and quantitative elements without dire consequence, as the result can be highly compatible theoretical underpinnings. They noted the difficulty in this approach to be the lack of skill among qualitative or quantitative design of the researcher and the difficulty in integrating study findings. Due to the objective construct of quantitative design and the posed research questions of this study, a qualitative approach was used for this study. Quantitative method is often mechanistic with non-judgmental components and is not aligned with the scope of this study, as it does not seek to offer statistical analysis, further eliminating the necessity of a mixed method approach. Sutton and Austin (2015) provided the intent of qualitative research is to ultimately understand the perspectives of research participants, as its methodology examines behaviors posed to reflect on "how" and "why" events occur (Yin, 2018). Inversely, they provided quantitative research design would exact how many research participants would experience events.

Suleiman et al. (2017) noted private university education is unarguably increasing in global trend among the current educational landscape. Through the use of interviews and coding and analysis they were able to identify private university's contribution to educational sects. This

qualitative approach ultimately assisted private universities on how to better understand such a dynamic landscape leading to the creation of endeavors to adapt to such changes. Bostrom (2019) discussed the importance of themes throughout qualitative methodology, which often involve the transformation of raw data to thematic structure. He noted the common traits depicted as common craft in qualitative methodology to include data collection transcription, composition of field notes, and the reduction of such data through coding, as these steps precede the process of reorganizing data into themes to understand the results of the research process. A qualitative method can lend itself to the exploration of an organization's adaptation to change, leadership style, and cultural elements promoting or not promoting successful adaptation among private liberal arts colleges. Robson and McCartan (2016) discussed the importance of framing a research question aligned with the appropriate methodology. They noted researchers pose questions, not objectives or hypotheses in qualitative methodology. A qualitative research question is typically broad in context and asks for exploration of the concept in a study with associated sub questions, using exploratory words to convey design such as, discover, seek to understand, explore, describe, or report and usually begin with how or what, which is inconsistent with quantitative methodology.

Discussion of Triangulation

Noor (2008) suggested a case study as a strategic approach to explore processes and complex real-life experiences in great detail and the systematic approach to data collection to strengthen results. Houghton et al. (2013) reiterated the importance of rigor in qualitative case study research and how data collection sources, such as interviews, observations, and document analysis, make for a more convincing and accurate case study. Four approaches to rigor utilized in qualitative case study research include credibility, dependability, confirmability, and

transferability. Strategies to establish rigor from data collected include triangulation, reflexivity, and member checking.

These reassessments and reiterations refer to the multiple methods a qualitative researcher uses to collect and analyze data through a process called triangulation. Triangulation is a qualitative research strategy to strengthen reliability and validity through converging information using various sources (Hales, 2010; Saunders et al., 2018). There are four types of triangulation. Data triangulation uses multiple sources of data in a research study. Investigator triangulation uses multiple researchers throughout the data collection and analysis process. Theory triangulation uses multiple theories or hypotheses throughout the data collection and analysis process. Methods triangulation uses multiple methods to collect and analyze data. I will use semi-structured interviews (see Appendix C), questionnaires (see Appendix D), and fieldnotes (see Appendix E) to demonstrate triangulation and increase validity of the research findings. Thus, I used methods triangulation to strengthen research findings.

For this single-case study, I used personal interviews (see Appendix C) as the primary method of data collection, as interviews provide a depth of understanding in qualitative research (Barrett & Twycross, 2018; Wheeldon & Faubert, 2009). I used a questionnaire (see Appendix D) and field notes (see Appendix E) as secondary data collection methods, to substantiate the data collected from the interview and triangulation. Data collected using various data collection methods will add rigor to the case study. To ensure validity and reliability in the data collected, I followed up with research participants for accuracy in the interview transcripts. I maintained consistency in the interview questions. The following section addressed the process of data collection I used to include the instruments, data collection techniques, and data organization techniques.

Summary of the Nature of the Study

Case studies are applicable to qualitative research when the intent is to respond to comprehensive research questions to better understand real-world perspective according to Yin (2018). He characterized real-world experiences to include daily lived experiences and communal behavior in professional or educational processes. In such instances case studies allow researchers to examine contemporary issues and their practical implications. Thus, the categorical variables are offered to answer posed research questions for this case study as the aforementioned is consistent in qualitative methods, among case studies.

Ghasemy et al. (2017) utilized a qualitative method to determine the extent to which leadership capabilities and managerial competence explain leadership performance, as he collected data from academic leaders in 25 institutions. They named role-specific competency and change-oriented capability as major areas to consider when addressing leadership activities. Additionally, they explored low-current-tenure and high-current-tenure leader models to better understand leader effectiveness. Their use of the qualitative method successfully captured the unique challenge of rethinking liberal arts as they must financially stay afloat while ideally staying true to their institutional mission, which is the goal of many private liberal arts institutions, thus, a worthwhile endeavor.

Dima et al. (2019) discussed the importance of process improvement and efficiency within the educational landscape, as institutions of higher learning must demonstrate agility in response the vastly changing business landscape in order to remain formidable, which can be examined through the use of case studies. Creswell and Poth (2018) described a case study as a bounded system encompassing processes, activities, events, programs, or multiple individuals through extensive forms such as documents and records, interviews, observations, and even

physical artifacts for one to four cases. They reiterated the five approaches to qualitative research inquiry as phenomenological, narrative ethnographic, grounded theory, and case study research as they emphasize the importance of organizational and structure to the research process. Robson and McCartan (2016) added there are considerations to be made while offering qualitative assessment in capturing data as doing so properly can successfully answer research questions with deliberation and perspective in efforts to accurately depict the research. As quantitative and qualitative methods were considered, in addition to a plethora of design approaches, a case study best aligns with the nature of the study.

Conceptual Framework

The findings of this qualitative case study documented the experiences of 23 institutional actors in the liberal arts. The combined purviews of traditional and nontraditional leaders resulted in a thorough exploration of the changes impacting liberal arts institutions. Leadership behaviors contributing to successful change adaptation were identified based on the conceptual framework provided, which included leadership failure to adapt, a concept of competence, and the leadership style trifecta of transformational, transactional, and adaptive theories. The findings suggested that the transformational leadership model is the aspirational model, whereas the conceptual model presented included the transformational, adaptive, and transactional leadership models. However, as a result of the pandemic, leaders named the adaptive leadership style has noteworthy and the transactional leadership model being an impediment to long lasting change. As leaders avoid impediments to successful change adaptation, they must be mindful of the impact the lack of collaboration, effective communication, curiosity, and the ability to recognize change has on institutional outcomes. Leaders must understand the complexities associated with leadership and the contemporary approaches best suited for a rapidly changing educational

climate. A climate that is beginning to welcome nontraditional leaders equipped with credentials and professional experiences suitable for successful change adaption. The study determined traditional leaders must become learned in contemporary approaches to leadership, as conventional modalities are proving ineffective.

Green (2014) defined theory to include organized and systematic sets of interrelated statements or concepts that specify the nature of relationships intended to better understand a problem. She reiterated it is a matter of interpretation as to when such concepts become organized and interrelated enough to be deemed theories, which is why both terms are used interchangeably when referring to frameworks. Ultimately, she concluded such distinctions are far less important than considering how theory is being used as foundational to a study. The conceptual framework for this study included transformational leadership, adaptive leadership, and transactional leadership theories. Korejan and Shahbazi (2016) offered transformational leadership is essential to organizations mobilizing members to make fundamental changes to prepare and gain access to capabilities essential to change direction and reach ideal performance peaks, necessary for the current climate of higher education. DeRue (2011) described leadership as involving a socially complex and adaptive process birthed from social and dynamic conceptions of leading-following processes, as the current educational climate is vastly changing requiring more colorful aspects of leadership and giant leaps from conventional scientific process. Xu and Wang (2019) provided that organizational innovation begins with creative thinking and initiative at the individual level, whereas transactional leadership, which yields more efficient business results for individualists versus collectivists, as human assets rely on leadership. Accordingly, successful adaption to change is directly related to transformational, adaptive, and transactional leadership theories, as components of each influence successful

adaption to change in vastly changing climates. Organizations invest in capable leaders with the intent of enacting effective leadership and organizational sustainability.

Concepts

The conceptual framework within this qualitative case study included two concepts:

- the concept of failure to adapt to change

- the concept of culture of competence

Both concepts were consistent with the conceptual framework originally presented. The first concept undertook leaders' failure to adapt to change. This concept led me to explore leadership behaviors contributing to successful change adaptation. The second concept undertook the impact cultural competence had on a leaders' ability to adapt. This concept led me to explore the cultural happenings that shape a leader's behavior as they respond to a vastly changing educational landscape. The professional and academic literature underscored the essentiality of contemporary leadership theories to adequately respond to vastly changing landscapes. The conceptual framework included the implementation of transformative, transactional, and adaptive leadership as the trifecta for traditional and nontraditional leaders at private liberal arts institutions in the Midwest.

Collins (2014) discussed how traditional leaders in higher education are failing to adapt to change in the current educational environment resulting in a decrease in enrollment and revenue. This concept is common among private industry where executive boards often respond to such organizational failures by seeking nontraditional leaders with a different skillset and the ability to offer innovative resolve. Kezar et al. (2018) presented the literature on the transformative posture institutions must adopt to foster innovative spaces and embody a new paradigm of practice. Their research reiterated the changes challenging higher education such as

increasing diversity, technological improvisation, and new approaches to teaching and learning. The concept of organizational leadership failure to adapt to change in higher education is relevant to this study as it can aid in the exploration of leadership behaviors contributing to failure or successful adaptation as Beardsley (2018) underscored the challenges facing institutions occurring in the external environment, technological improvisation, and changing job roles which has universities considering nontraditional leaders to successfully navigate such changes. This concept allows for the research to explore why traditional leaders fail to adapt to change and if business leaders are better suited to lead liberal arts institutions.

According to Ekman (2014) the sedate and predictable culture of liberal arts institutions in the Midwest has been impeded by vastly changing demographic, economic, social, and political factors. This concept underscored the increase of nontraditional leaders in higher education constructs as business executives are well equipped to respond to unanticipated changes in the market, external threats, and the ability to take advantage of strategic opportunities. Ghasemy et al. (2017) analyzed the extent to which leadership capabilities and managerial competencies explain leadership performance. Their research suggested generic and role-specific competencies are important as they foster cultures characteristic of learning and teaching, listening and effective communication, with the ability to accurately diagnose organizational issues, and offer strategy aligned with the institutional mission. The concept of cultural competence in higher education is relevant to this study as it intends to explore why traditional leaders fail to adapt to changes in the current educational climate at liberal arts institutions in the Midwest. As long tenures in the academic landscape yield traditional leaders accustomed to operating in environments where change occurs slowly, business executives, deemed nontraditional leaders, are well equipped to respond to unexpected changes in the

business landscape, competition, and competence to capitalize on strategic opportunities (Brown, 2016). This concept allowed me to better understand leadership behaviors contributing to and promoting successful adaptation.

Theories

The conceptual framework within this qualitative case study included three theories:

- transformational leadership theory

- adaptative leadership theory

- transactional theory

There was one deviation from the conceptual framework to the findings of this qualitative study in respect to the leadership theories. The conceptual framework originally included the transformational, adaptative, and transactional leadership theories as a trifecta. However, the findings suggested the transformational leadership style as the aspirational model. This is largely due to the long-term orientation necessary to reimagine the liberal arts. It was important to note the findings suggested leaders demonstrated components of adaptive leadership amid the pandemic, while avoiding transactional leadership approaches all together. The findings aligned with the purview of Korejan and Shahbazi (2016) who emphasized the importance of organizational leadership in a fast-changing world, as it is considered a critical success factor. They characterized transformational leaders as those seeking to foster innovation and new perspective to promote organizational growth and prosperity within their prospective organizations. Their analysis described transformational leaders as those who inspire commitment, passion, and loyal among organizational participants as they seek to implement fundamental changes essential to move their organizations in new directions and reach optimal performance peaks. Transformational leadership theory is an appropriate framework for this

study because it is well suited for leaders in a fast-changing educational landscape with leaders

seeking to create ideas and new perspectives to create a new path toward growth and

sustainability. This approach to leadership develops commitment, passion, and loyalty within

organizational cultures seeking to make fundamental changes, as is the current plight of private

liberal arts institutions (Korejan & Shahbazi, 2016). Transformational leadership theory allows

for the research to explore how leaders can improve organizational culture through genuine

collaboration among organizational participants.

DeRue (2011) presented adaptive leadership as the ability of organizational leaders and

followers to adapt within dynamic contexts. He described this style of leadership as fluid and

variable in characteristic with the ability to result in positive feedback and increased demand for

more fluid leader-follower exchanges. He believed a series of leading-following actions

redefines previously stagnant organizational identities. His research asserted adaptive leadership

is a practical framework for organizations to use to enact meaningful change. Adaptive

leadership theory is an appropriate framework for this study because higher education

institutions operate in complex environments influenced by external factors such as new

technologies, globalization, and changing demographics that require successful adaptation to

such changes, as the contrary is a leader's failure to adapt to change. Adaptive leaders effect

change and are also capable of assessing the external environment to direct organizations as they

implement change according to Khan (2017). Adaptive leadership theory allows for the research

to identify cultural elements that exist among leader-member exchanges within liberal arts

institutions to foster successful adaptation to change.

Xu and Wang (2019) discussed the importance of dynamic capability in innovation

management, as occupational capabilities occur at the substantive level and innovation

capabilities at the dynamic level. They described transactional leaders as task oriented prioritizing efficiency and coordination among existing capabilities using contingent reward and management by exception. They importantly noted organizations facing shifting, unpredictable economic climates cannot maintain competitive advantage without the appropriate resources and processes. Transactional leadership theory is an appropriate framework for this study because transactional leadership theory is widely used in educational institutions as demonstrated through leader-follower relationships between instructors and students (Khan, 2017). The impact of this exchange can allow the research to better understand the predominant changes occurring within the current educational climate.

Actors

The actors within this qualitative case study were traditional and nontraditional leaders from liberal arts institutions in the Midwest. I selected institutions from the Associated Colleges of Illinois, Independent Colleges of Indiana, Iowa Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, Kansas Independent College Association, Michigan Independent Colleges and Universities, Minnesota Private College Council, Independent Colleges and Universities of Missouri, Council of Independent Nebraska Colleges Foundation, best liberal arts institutions in North Dakota listing, Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Ohio, and Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities. I did not recruit any prospective research participants having any close relationship. I established a rapport through communicating the qualitative case study's purpose as a recruiting tool.

The Associated Colleges of Illinois members were possible research participants. The members included Augustana College, Aurora University, Benedictine University, Blackburn College, Concordia University Chicago, Dominican University, Elmhurst University, Eureka

College, Illinois College, Illinois Wesleyan University, Judson University, Knox College. Lewis University, McKendree University, Milikin University, Monmouth College, North Central College, North Park University, Olivet Nazarene University, Principia College, Quincy University, Rockford University, Saint Xavier University, Trinity Christian College, University of St. Francis, and Wheaton College.

The Independent Colleges of Indiana members were possible research participants. The members included Ancilla College, Anderson University, Bethel University, Butler University, Calumet College of St. Joseph, DePauw University, Earlham College, Franklin College, Goshen College, Grace College, Hanover College, Holy Cross College, Huntington University, Indiana Institute of Technology, Indiana Wesleyan University, Manchester University, Marian University, Martin University, Oakland City University, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College, Saint Mary's College, Taylor University, Trine University, University of Evansville, University of Indianapolis, University of St. Francis, Valparaiso University, and Wabash College.

The Iowa Association of Independent Colleges and Universities members were possible research participants and their gatekeepers assisted me in the establishment of qualitative research relationships with participants (Marland & Esselment, 2019). The Iowa Association of Independent Colleges and Universities included Allen College UnityPoint Health, Briar Cliff University, Buena Vista University, Central College, Clarke University, Coe College, Cornell College, Dordt College, Drake University, Graceland University, Grand View University, Grinnell University, Iowa Wesleyan University, Loras College, Luther College, Mercy College of Health Sciences, Morningside College, Mount Mercy University, Northwestern College, Simpson College, St. Ambrose University, St. Luke's College UnityPoint Health, University of

Dubuque, Wartburg College, and William Penn University (Iowa Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, n.d.).

The Kansas Independent College Association members were possible research participants. Its members included Baker University, Barclay College, Benedictine College, Bethany College, Bethel College, Central Christian College of Kansas, Cleveland University-Kansas City, Donnelly College, Friends University, Hesston College, Kansas Wesleyan University, Manhattan Christian College, McPherson College, MidAmerica Nazarene University, Newman University, Ottawa University, Southwestern College, Sterling College, Tabor College, and University of St. Mary.

The Michigan Independent Colleges and Universities members were possible research participants. Its members included Adrian College, Albion College, Alma College, Andrews University, Aquinas College, Baker College, Calvin University, Cleary University, College of Creative Studies, Concordia University, Cornerstone University, Davenport University, University of Detroit Mercy, Finlandia University, Hope College, Kalamazoo College, Kettering University, Lawrence Tech, Madonna University, Northwood University, Olivet College, Rochester University, Siena Heights University, Spring Arbor University, and Walsh.

The Minnesota Private College Council members were possible research participants. Its members included Augsburg University, Bethany Lutheran College, Bethel University, Carleton College, College of Saint Benedict, The College of St. Scholastica, Concordia College Moorhead, Concordia University-St. Paul, Gustavus Adolphus College, Hamline University, Macalester College, Minneapolis College of Art and Design, Saint John's University, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, St. Catherine University, St. Olaf College, and University of St. Thomas.

The Independent Colleges and Universities of Missouri members were possible research participants. Its members included Drury University, Westminster College, Webster University, William Woods University, St. Louis College of Pharmacy, Southwest Baptist University, Washington University in St. Louis, Saint Louis University, Park University, Logan University, Maryville University, Lindenwood, Missouri Baptist University, Missouri Valley College, Central Methodist University, Hannibal- Lagrange University, Avila University, College of the Ozarks, Columbia College, and Culver-Stockton College.

The Council of Independent Nebraska Colleges Foundation Missouri members were possible research participants. Its members included Bellevue University, Bryan College of Health Sciences, Clarkson College, College of Saint Mary, Concordia University, Creighton University, Doane University, Hastings College, Midland University, Nebraska Methodist College, Nebraska Wesleyan University, Union College, and York College.

The best liberal arts institutions in North Dakota, according to Universities (2021), were possible research participants. Its members included Bismarck State College, North Dakota State College of Science, University of Mary, Willston State College, Lake Region State College, Dickinson State University, Dakota College at Bottineau, Cankdeska Cikana Community College, and Turtle Mountain Community College.

The Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Ohio were possible research participants. Its members included Art Academy of Cincinnati, Ashland University, Aultman College, Baldwin Wallace University, Bluffton University, Capital University, Case Western Reserve University, Cedarville University, The Christ College of Nursing, Cleveland Institute of Art, Columbus College of Art and Design, University of Dayton, Defiance College, Denison University, The University Findlay, Franciscan University of Steubenville, Franklin University,

Good Samaritan College of Nursing, Heidelberg University, Hiram College, John Carroll University, Kenyon College, Kettering College, Lake Erie College, Lourdes University, Malone University, Marietta College, Mercy College of Ohio, Mount Carmel College of Nursing, Mount St. Joseph University, University of Mount Union, Mount Vernon Nazarene University, Muskingum University, University of Northwestern Ohio, Notre Dame College, Oberlin College, Ohio Christian University, Ohio Dominican University, Ohio Northern University, Ohio Wesleyan University, Otterbein University, University of Rio Grande, Tiffin University, Union Institute and University, Ursuline College, Walsh University, Wilmington College, Wittenberg University, The College of Wooster, and Xavier University.

The Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities were possible research participants. Its members included Alverno College, Bellin College, Beloit College, Cardinal Stritch University, Carroll University, Carthage College, Concordia University Wisconsin, Edgewood College, Herzing University, Lakeland University, Lawrence University, Marian University, Marquette University, Medical College of Wisconsin, Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design, Milwaukee School of Engineering, Mount Mary University, Nashotah House Theological Seminary, Northland College, Ripon College, St. Norbert College, Viterbo University, and Wisconsin Lutheran College.

Constructs

The constructs within this qualitative case study included:

- managerial competencies

- leadership capabilities

- successful change adaptation

Institutions must create strategic plans to include perspectives of information orientation according to Park (2018). He credited precise business models and successfully implemented change management initiatives as integral to achieve sustainability. Both traditional and nontraditional leaders must demonstrate managerial competencies to successfully lead their institutions. Although there are no guarantees in organizational outcome, long term change must become institutional priority along with maintaining mutually beneficial relationships among constituents throughout operations and the overall implementation of organizational change.

This study related to the field of leadership due to the focus on leadership capabilities to foster successful adaptation to an increasingly dynamic educational landscape. It was important to intertwine leadership and management as doing so is optimal for organizations according to O'Keefe et al. (2018). Although management is functional in context, leadership involves the development of the individual as to influence organizational participants, where such assertions promote organizational hygiene and organizational citizenship behavior. Martin et al. (2019) discussed the significance of alignment and fit as leaders work toward successful attainment of organizational goals. They believed it is necessary for practitioners to be proficient and capable leaders with explorative purviews as they seek new perspectives.

As advancements in technology and decreasing dependence on human resources impact universities navigating a vastly changing landscapes, institutions are experiencing an increase in requirement of productivity with limited resources. The same threats are real in the corporate construct as threats of extinction are looming for organizations that cannot successfully adapt. Iordache-Platis (2017) asserted educational institutions must strengthen their posture through meeting demand, increasing their visibility through marketing, and efficient use of their organizational constituency. She credited decreasing resources, in part, as contributing to the

ailment in the current educational landscape as organizational leaders struggle to effect

successful change. Her reiteration described the complexity associated with innovative resolve as

they seek to craft strategies aligned with the organization amid diminishing resources. The

understanding gleaned within this study assisted liberal arts institutions in the Midwest in the

identification of leadership capabilities promoting successful change adaptation.

Leadership Style

Actors

Change Adaptation

Transformational

Organizational Leadership

Dynamic Business Landscape

Inspire Committment, Passion, and Loyalty

Transactional

Dynamic Business Landscape

Innovative Capabilities

Occupational Capabilities

Adaptive

Fluid Leadership

Leader-Follower Member Exchanges

Dynamic Business Landscape

Traditional Leaders

Nontraditional Leaders

Private Liberal Arts Institutions

Successful Change Adaptation

Leadership Capabilities

Managerial Competencies

Institutional Challenges

Decrease in Enrollment

Decrease in Revenue

Increasing Diversity

Technological Improvisation

Changing Teaching Methodology

Figure 1. Conceptual model depicting the relationship among leadership styles, institutional changes, and cultural elements and its effect on private liberal arts institutions' ability to foster successful adaption to change.

Relationships Between Concepts, Theories, Actors, and Constructs

Gedminiene and Kaminskienė (2016) discussed the transition from a leader choosing their predominant style of leadership to aligning leadership style to the characteristic of the educational climate. They noted continual change as the only constant which will require leaders to be innovative and have the skillset to effectively implement and communicate organizational change. Ultimately, they found academic leaders should motivate, inspire, and demonstrate the capability to accurately address real world problems through practical application. Korejan and Shahbazi (2016), DeRue (2011), and Xu and Wang (2019) presented transformational, adaptive, and transactional leadership as conceptual frameworks utilized in higher education when the goal is to facilitate sustainability in a rapidly changing environment. An organization's inability to adapt and establish competencies to successfully navigate such environments, when viewed from this framework, is considered to be the posture private liberal arts institutions must adopt to achieve sustainability (Collins, 2014).

The purpose of this study was to explore the leadership behaviors contributing to the success or failure to adapt amidst an educational climate where enrollment, revenue, increasing diversity, technological improvisation, and unconventional teaching methodology are institutional challenges. When viewed within the framework of transformational, adaptive, and transactional leadership theory, private liberal arts colleges in this current period of disruption are required to adapt to foreseeable declines in financial support with greater demands in educational output. The selected framework allowed the research to be guided by the concepts to facilitate successful adaptation to vastly changing educational environments, as private liberal arts institutions must establish a culture of competence through capable transformational, adaptive, and transactional leadership.

This study viewed the implementation of transformation, transactional, and adaptive leadership is the trifecta to lead private liberal arts institutions to successful change adaptation with a culture of competence to support such efforts. Both traditional and nontraditional leaders in private liberal arts institutions must establish effective managerial competencies and develop leadership capabilities suitable to successfully navigate a vastly changing educational landscape. As Ekman (2014) asserted, the predominant challenge facing leaders of colleges and universities is to accurately distinguish between trends that will determine the trajectory of colleges and universities from trends that do not apply or are ephemeral. He deemed liberal arts colleges and universities pedagogical pioneers uniquely positioned to respond to institutional challenges in respect to enrollment, revenue, diversity, technology, and changing educational products. This can be accomplished through inspiring commitment, passion, and loyalty while successfully adapting to the dynamic educational business environment and properly aligning innovative and occupational organizational capabilities.

Although conflicting with the traditional construct of higher education, Cosenz and Nato (2018) informed researchers to promote the combination of business modelling approaches and a strategic disposition, a contemporary approach to leadership in higher education. They believed the landscape is calling for a collaboration among higher education and business modality as action must be taken to mitigate the changing perspectives of organizational constituents, as these go beyond purely academic interests. They cautioned institutions seeking to understand this balance is crucial as the student experience, satisfaction of stakeholders, operational efficiency, and sustainability are equally important, thus requiring a convergence to accomplish creative visions, this will be especially important for newly established institutions eager to take advantage of this vastly changing market. Their research suggested institutions use mapping

functions, characteristic of business modelling, to identify key factors aiding to the creation of sound strategy to respond to changes in the external environment and their causes. The adoption of business modelling will aid institutions as they respond to change and create strategy informed by internal and external participants, as they seek to generate value and acquire the tools needed to successfully adapt.

Summary of the Research Framework

Private liberal arts institutions have an opportunity to transform the challenges within the current educational climate into opportunities, as Ekman (2014) believed the future favors smaller liberal arts colleges. Successful adaptation will require institutions to be fluid as they combine the ideas of established leadership theory to establish a new precedent. A progressive leadership stance coupled with a culture where ideas can be initiated and implemented is characteristic of 21st century education (Collins, 2014). Traditional models of academic leadership are characterized by personal academic achievement, authorship of scholarly works, with minimal emphasis on the development of others according to Gedminiene and Kaminskienė (2016). They importantly noted changing educational landscapes are requiring leaders to have inspiring personalities, the ability to adapt, and knowledge to effect change.

Definition of Terms

Liberal arts colleges: Liberal arts colleges are distinctively American institutions serving as a core element of the U.S. higher education sect since colonial times with historically defining attributes such as arts and science curriculum, small class sizes, close student-faculty relationships, full-time students, on campus residence, and minimal emphasis on vocational preparedness (Baker et al., 2012).

Midwestern United States: The Midwestern region of North America includes Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin (Liberal Arts Colleges: The Complete Guide to Liberal Arts Colleges, 2020).

Traditional leader: Although there is no widely accepted definition of a traditional leader, one would typically be characterized by having come through the full-time tenured or faculty track to lead an institution of higher learning according to Beardsley (2018) and Gardner (2017).

Nontraditional leader: A nontraditional leader is a business leader having not come through the full-time tenured or faculty track to lead an institution of higher learning according to Beardsley (2018) and Gardner (2017).

Transformational leadership: Transformational leaders are those who inspire commitment, passion, and loyal among organizational participants as they seek to implement fundamental changes essential to move their organizations in new directions and reach optimal performance peaks (Korejan & Shahbazi, 2016).

Adaptive leadership: Adaptive leaders respond with agility to dynamic contexts and are fluid and variable in characteristic with the ability to result in positive feedback and increased demand for more fluid leader-follower exchanges (DeRue, 2011).

Transactional leadership: Transactional leaders are task oriented and prioritize efficiency and coordination among existing capabilities using contingent reward and management by exception (Xu & Wang, 2019).

Assumptions, Limitations, Delimitations

The following sections provide a discussion of the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations associated with this qualitative case study. These sections are notable to this study and scholarly research, as these elements were essential in framing and explaining the research study. According to Simon and Goes (2013) assumptions are essential in research studies as they enable the study through communicating beliefs which cannot be proven, limitations are identified as constraints beyond a researcher's control but could possibly affect the research outcome, and delimitations often are the result of decisions made by the researcher arising from limitations in the research scope. The sections below further discuss these essential elements specific to this research study.

Assumptions

Assumptions are beliefs within a research study essential to conducting the research, however, they cannot be proven (Simon & Goes, 2013). The research factors surrounding this study gathered from the participants were assumed to be true. Thus, the first assumption of this single-case study was the research gleaned from participants is true. I can employ mitigating factors to respond to this assumption such as concealing participants' identities and preserving their confidentiality, as doing so can promote honesty in participants' responses. Additionally, individuals may have a common belief about a population yet are unable to prove it. Thus I must make their best attempt to support an assumption through deference to evidence through a source rather than mere assumption (Simon & Goes, 2013). The second assumption of this single-case study was participants have comparable definitions and understanding of traditional versus nontraditional leadership in higher education constructs. I mitigated possible deviations through

offering a thorough definition of traditional and nontraditional leaders prior to conducting participant interviews.

Limitations

According to Simon and Goes (2013) limitations within a research study are factors beyond a researcher's control directly stemming from the methodology and research design, however, they must be considered as they could potentially impact the outcome of a research study. The first limitation of this single-case study was associated with the qualitative nature of the research, as qualitative research is inherently difficult to replicate and validate due to its occurrence within a natural setting. Simon and Goes (2013) further discussed the potential natural settings have on changing over time and how this can change a participants' perspectives. Leadership is fluid in nature and can change amid dynamic environments. Such leadership perspectives associated with transformational, adaptive, and transactional contexts have the potential to change as leaders respond to rapidly changing environments. The second limitation of this single-case study was associated with a case study's inability to make causal inferences, as alternative explanations cannot be ruled out according to Robson and McCartan (2016). Due to a case study involving the behaviors of a person, group, or organization, this may or may not be enough to substantiate the behavior of similar entities (Simon & Goes, 2013). As stated previously, leadership style can change amid dynamic environments and the scope of this study is from the purview of transformational, adaptive, and transactional leadership theories. As a result, the third limitation of this single-case study was related to the application of its findings. While this single-case study may yield comparable among multiple liberal arts institutions, the results are most suitable for the researched institutions.

Delimitations

Delimitations, unlike limitations, are as a result of specific choices made by the researcher, which may include objective and question choice, variables of interest, concepts, research method, theoretical framework, and research participants (Simon & Goes, 2013). The delimitations are an echo of the pronouncements made in the purpose statement, in addition to what the study is not intended to explore, such reasoning is offering through considerable review of the researcher. Criteria for selecting current institutional leaders in higher education within liberal arts institutions in the Midwest is a delimitation. Past and future leaders were not selected to participate in this research study, although research findings could be useful in the future development of leaders. It was important to note the boundary of time as a delimitation due to the inapplicability of past and future leaders as it relates to the scope of this study. Geography is the final delimitation of this study as it is exploring leadership perspective from institutional leaders in the Midwestern region of the United States. It is possible similar studies in various regions could yield differing outcomes.

Significance of the Study

Institutions in the 21st century are undergoing a massive shift requiring leaders to adopt contemporary approaches to leadership according to Boje et al. (2017). These changes evidenced the increasing pressures institutions of higher learning are under as the proper identification of key success factors is essential as institutions reexamine their educational products offerings to reposition themselves in the changing business landscape. In the current educational climate institutions of higher learning are experiencing massive changes requiring competent decision making and innovative resolve in order to reassert themselves. To maintain competitive advantage institutions must reposition themselves and reassess the quality of their products for

alignment with an educational landscape characteristic of social consideration and alignment with the demands of the professional landscape.

Bial (2016) believed the current landscape provides an opportunity for educational institutions to offer alignment among their educational product offerings and student demand. A framework to better categorize such demands and improve decision-making capabilities is essential according to Amankwah-Amoah (2015) as reassessing how to employ decisions yielding desired organizational outcomes is important. Additionally, Liu et al. (2017) discussed the impediments to successful implementation of decisions to be minimal experience, time constraints, and limited proficiency. They further discussed how organizational leaders vary in knowledge scope, their prior experiences, and educational attainment, which could be limiting factors in decision making. They importantly noted decision making should occur at various levels to better understand what factors impact a leader's decision-making efficacy and how to promote effective organizational decisions.

Although unprecedented occurrences are challenging for institutions, Muluneh and Gedifew (2018) viewed such challenges as opportunities to reposition themselves as they lead institutional changes even though they may be limited in their experience to lead change initiatives. They warned against an organization's inability to accurately identify organizational problems as this can result in unsuccessful decision making. Their findings suggested successful change initiatives in higher education must include adaptive redesign. They believed to best understand how to enact successful change, organizations must better understand the purviews of organizational participants as change is sought. They noted challenges related to the offering of innovative educational products, quality of educational experience, changes in the external landscape, and professional preparation as institutional priority. As such, this study is significant

as it seeks to understand the impact successful adaption demonstrated by traditional and nontraditional leaders impacts liberal arts institutions in the Midwest. This section further discusses the significance of this study while describing the reduction in gaps, implication for biblical integration, and relationship to the field of leadership.

Reduction of Gaps in the Literature

This study sought to understand the impact traditional and nontraditional leaders have on the adaptation to change as liberal arts institutions are being required to respond to the pressures of the new educational landscape. It was important for such institutions to offer alignment among institutional mission and products inherent to a liberal arts education. To accomplish this, liberal arts institutions must forego conventional models as they will result in obsolescence as emergent themes within the professional and academic literature yield increasing institutional pressures requiring a new framework. Conventional business modelling and innovative solutions result in dynamic tools for organizational leaders to use to add to the limited purviews in how to successfully respond according to Cosenz and Noto (2018). They found traditional and nontraditional approaches are necessary in cultivating an environment conducive to the implementation of organizational decisions. The upending changes in the educational landscape, if ignored, will not result in the maintenance of competitive advantage in the 21st century educational landscape according to Woodworth (2016). He noted the increase in academic literature focusing on the need for educational institutions to promote ethical and social causes to best serve organizational stakeholders.

Implications for Biblical Integration

As leaders respond to reassertions in position and perspective it is important to remember the words reiterated in John 3:30: "He must become greater; I must become less" (New

International Version). There is a relationship between how organizational participants lead their respective organizations as they strive for alignment and personal accountability. This alignment is presented by Keller and Alsdorf (2012) as the discontentment, often a result of misalignment has rippling effects in vocational settings. All work is meaningful to God and necessary for the advancement of his kingdom as described in Matthew 5:16 where it is stated "In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (New International Version). This verse depicted the importance of developing one's capabilities as to ascribe to the ministry of competence. It is imperative Christian leaders demonstrate their belief system throughout the decision-making process amid the changes in the educational landscape. Successful navigation is required to better understand the changing landscape in which educational decisions are made and this must be coupled with the prioritization of biblical principles as God's plan is advanced in the world.

In ascribing to the belief of promoting social good, a characteristic inherent to liberal arts institutions believers must prioritize God's plan. This perspective is demonstrated in Proverbs 16:3 where believers are instructed to "Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and he will establish your plans" (New International Version). According to Keller and Alsdorf (2012), in order to accomplish this there must be a forfeiture of an individual's plan and a prioritization of God's plan, which can be achieved through cultivating one's skill, doing exceptional work, and alignment of desire with God's plan. Through spiritual prioritization God's will can be reflected through direction from Proverbs 16:3 which states "Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and he will establish your plans" (New International Version). Although seemingly difficult to achieve, such alignment is possible through proper alignment of heart with God's plan for institutions, which must be sought out and prioritized.

Benefit to Business Practice and Relationship to Cognate

Education is essential to the development of civilization according to Myszewski (2018) where she examines how culture equips people with the tools to be productive member in society. She further discussed how the emergence of technology, changing human needs, along with social and political changes have produced new institutional challenges. Education has long been characterized as dynamic in process and among leadership, especially during a time where innovation is paramount. It is especially important for institutions of the like to share in innovation as organizations seek to remain formidable as the goal is no longer to monopolize education according to Iordache-Platis (2018). With organizational mission in mind, offering exceptional educational products is now institutional priority as Alhaqbani et al. (2016) reiterated the impact commitment among all leadership levels as change initiatives are implemented. These notions were also described as imperative by Starbird and Cavanagh (2011) and Plenert (2012) as leaders seek to offer their institutions continuous improvement. The demonstration of traditional and nontraditional leaders' successful adaption to change directly impacted organizational outcomes either promoting or hindering institutional effectiveness.

Summary of the Significance of the Study

It has become imperative for institutions, as agents of globalization and humanization, to formulate a long-term oriented strategy to successfully adapt to the current landscape. As such massive changes are occurring, increased productivity is required of institutions as they seek to capture market share. Alignment among organizational participants is necessary from the perspective of Woodworth (2016) as this consideration will foster much needed innovative approaches leading to organizational resolve. Such paradigm shifts have impacted external environments facing increasing pressure according to Iordache-Platis (2018). She further

emphasized the impact technological improvisation, changes in educational delivery, and successful navigation of a changing landscape has on this new environment. Such changes in process innovation have made traditional approaches to educational delivery obsolete. In order for institutions to reassert themselves as formidable, they must accurately identify core organizational issues as they revamp their educational products and reposition themselves in the new educational landscape. Psalm 32:8 states "I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you (New International Version). It is through this lens God promises to guide leaders and a fitting perspective to be adopted within educational constructs.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The upcoming section offers a comprehensive review of the contemporary literature on change adaptation to provide context for the central themes influencing leadership capabilities within liberal arts institutions. The research was gleaned primarily from Liberty University's repertoire in addition to current events emphasizing the challenges amid the educational landscape to date. The scholarly and professional sources utilized sought to substantiate such purviews and offered alignment with the principal research questions focusing on a leader's ability to successfully adapt to change, the organizational cultures promoting or impeding these changes, and their financial implications. Designations such as change adaptation, leadership capabilities, transformational leadership, transactional leadership, adaptive leadership, and liberal arts institutions guided the research. It begins with a discussion on the increase of nontraditional leadership in liberal arts institutions as institutions adopt business like postures, characteristics of leadership formulation, and decision-making effectiveness. An exploration of the predominant challenges in the current educational landscape was appropriate for review as it underscored the

dire position of liberal arts institutions and their need for resolve. Transformational, transactional, and adaptive leadership styles were thoroughly examined as such approaches are appropriate for organizations within dynamic external environments. The literature review concluded with a reiteration of potential themes, suggestions for further research, and the implications for liberal arts institutions as this study seeks to contribute to the gap in literature.

Business Practices

Institutions of higher learning are facing a new educational landscape presenting new challenges strategically as they seek to gain and maintain competitive advantage according to Woodworth (2016). He noted how institutions are attempting to offer attractive educational products to help students prepare for the contemporary professional landscape. It is critically important to accurately assess the vastly changing landscape to identify investment opportunities. He urged institutions to properly utilize their organizational constituents to include students as their primary customer and synergy among faculty and administration. His research prioritized accurate assessment of data to understand what the most important human needs are. He suggested doing so would allow for proper allocation of organizational resources. The use of contemporary approaches to accomplish this is an increasing theme in the literature which he deemed as an opportunity for institutions to reassert themselves and productively respond to the changing landscape. He particularly noted the social interests of organizational constituents and how impactful this is for institutions as they assume ethical and humanitarian postures. The millennial generation desires to make equitable contributions to society in their educational pursuits and in their respective careers, as they view these as intertwined. He further noted the importance to live a purposeful life to millennials and how they expect their workspaces to promote good organizational hygiene and advocacy on social issues. Ultimately, they expect

their institutions to represent a microcosm of their desired experience in a real-world context in throughout their educational experience.

The labor market heavily influences the level of proficiency expected of college graduates according to Iordache-Platis (2017). She believed institutions of higher will be deemed successful or unsuccessful of preparing students based on their capabilities. Such capabilities must be informed by global purviews, quality educational product offerings, research and resource capability, and satisfaction among constituency. Her research noted the decrease in resources as a contributor to the instability in higher education constructs, as this makes effective decision-making difficult for institutional leadership. She explained the complexities of the present condition of institutions, as they have become characteristic of strategic initiatives to distinguish themselves amid their diminishing resources. Her position prioritized accurate and efficient resource allocation as institutions seek to pair their internal strengths to the opportunities present in the external environment through the use of their financial, technological, and human resources.

The use of disruptive strategies in the higher education landscape align with the unpredictability of the workforces students will navigate upon graduation according to Woodworth (2016). He asserted higher education will render obsolete if they do not assume a new trajectory where educational innovation is prioritized. This innovation to occur within the classroom and informed through students, faculty, and administrative initiatives, as doing so will provide students the real-world context to which they will work. Their research noted incubator redesign and exposure to conferences as the real-world experience students desire, as it promotes continual learning. They further discussed the realities of menial support to faculty and students from administration. They urged practitioners to unify and employ their organizational

constituents to garner the leadership necessary to foster innovation landscapes and creative

resolve to promote long-term sustainability.

To accomplish a long-lasting presence in the higher education sect, Iordache-Platis

(2018) noted the essentiality of knowledge sharing by fostering research communities. Her

research suggested the effectiveness of knowledge communities in the professional landscape as

organizations seek to capture market share and maintain competitive advantage. Additionally,

institutions can use knowledge communities to better understand their position among

competitors and their ability to navigate a vastly changing landscape. She underscored the

importance of institutions discovering their niche, as it is typical for business organizations to

assume a monopolistic posture. Higher education constructs have an opportunity to set

themselves apart as they magnify their institutional missions and become better aware of how

strategy set forth can influence and bring to fruition their long-term goals.

To adequately address the financial constraints without diminishing their significance, it

is noteworthy to mention the impact leadership has on decision making as the challenges in

educational constructs is far reaching and requires new perspective. Hilton and Jacobson (2012)

discussed the challenges associated when radical adaption occurs in educational constructs and

how organizational constituents do not easily accept change. They noted consensus is not

characteristic of complete agreement, but deviation from an implemented plan by organizational

participants can impede successful implementation and understanding these disparities is

important to promote good organizational hygiene. They offered change management initiatives

in institutions often include facilities, educational products, and educational endowments through

the use of consensus-based approach. However, they found much tension arises as it is difficult

to reach an outcome universally satisfactory, which is why quantifiable approaches are widely used when compared to value-added initiatives as they entail varied perspectives.

To further promote this idea of consensus-based support, Jung and Lee (2016) promoted the idea of choice management consulting. They found management tools of the like to rival conventional methods of management and as an impactful approach to decision-making. As organizations are outsourcing such functions to those with expertise, organizations are likely to adopt contemporary approaches and see the value in such capabilities, cultures, and consensus. They do warn practitioners of the massive amount of resources required and the impact identity-based approaches to decision-making have on organizations. They sought to dispel the myth organizations adopt such approaches as status quo, while promoting the idea popularized management tools are innovative, are proving reliable, and evidence desirable organizational outcomes. They importantly noted popular management tools such as total quality management and business process re-engineering as being heavily criticized when first introduced. Although organizational buy in is necessary and integral to any change management initiative, they noted the priority is to evidence the success of strategies as the most impactful adoption measure.

The changes in the current educational landscape are requiring more from leadership not particularly learned in business modalities according to Seethamraju (2012). He believed institutional leaders will need to demonstrate managerial proficiency to respond to student demand to be best prepared for their prospective employers. His research analyzed the deficiencies in the current educational landscape while exploring historically significant occurrences to learn from. He found the expanding toolkit for institutional leaders as imperative to institutional improvements especially with the massive technological changes amid the educational climate. Although business process has been examined since the industrial age and

not yet mastered, hap hazardous and inefficient outcomes are no longer tolerable, as they lend themselves to organizational decline. They importantly noted the dual responsibility of organizational effectiveness as process and integrative functions must be demonstrated by students, an expectation not always received well by the students as they deem the institutions responsible for successful implementation. He magnified the purview faculty lay the foundation supported by the institution, and although academics can be abstract, students must escalate their commitment to bring such initiatives to fruition.

Institutions of higher learning are characterized as entities that can naturally improve and progress according to Myszewski (2018). She noted the psychophysical capabilities existing within educational constructs and how these capabilities can contribute to sustainability models. She presented a sustainability model to identify benchmarks with a goal to improve educational institutions through the analyses of data lending to sustainability. Her research distinctly noted the importance of organizational participants as they are essential to the success or failure of the changes necessary for the survival of educational institutions, as an escalation of commitment is required from all. She highlighted the importance of the faculty-student relationship as the exchange of knowledge must be enacted in the classroom to foster a rippling effect in varied levels of the organization.

As many educational institutions are assuming a business posture, strategy formulation must be institutional priority and leaders must reassert themselves. Grant (2014) discussed the pressures of leading educational institutions in a climate where the work requires a new skillset and escalated commitment along all organizational constituents. He suggested the experience and coaching received by business leaders is important as it developed a leader's skillset, as they are equipped in varied industries where their competency translates. Additionally, he noted the

agility required by institutional leaders as they are presented with unstructured problems amid a vastly changing landscape. His research perspective promoted leadership development to successfully navigate organizational change, as he examined 31 leaders having achieved their organizational goals, task-oriented postures, a belief in their abilities, and nimble in response to unforeseen occurrences. It is such leadership disposition that can formulate and implement business strategy.

Abdous (2011) presented the skepticism associated with institutional redesign in higher education constructs. He explored the challenges associated with various management styles, as there is often incongruence with organizational fit as the conventional mode of educational leadership was often reflective of the leader itself versus the needs of the organization. He attributed these difficulties to unsuccessful attempts of educational institutions only focusing on administrative and academic changes, whereas the changing landscape requires a larger examination. Additionally, he credited changes to information technology, customer service orientation, management of human resources, and organizational learning as important endeavors, while warning of the potential impact financial, technological, internal, and infrastructure has on the organization. His research sought to offer frameworks which prioritized conceptual and operational goals lending themselves to successful adaption to the current landscape.

The Problem

The educational industry has undergone a massive shift and must assume a dynamic posture to maintain competitive advantage. Baker and Baldwin (2015) discussed the changes occurring in higher education and the influencers of those changes. They importantly noted the impact inadequate response to the changes in the educational landscape can have as liberal arts

colleges report a 33% decline as such institutions are ceasing to exist or successfully navigated organizational change. They believed although difficult to navigate, liberal arts colleges can successfully reassert themselves in the 21st century and offer desirable educational products aligned with their institutional mission.

As presented by Logan and Curry (2015), the challenges impacting liberal arts institutions require successful adaption to a rapidly changing environment. They discussed the ongoing debate as to whether liberal arts curriculum, traditional in construct, is effective in a contemporary landscape. Increasing financial and social pressures have created an environment of uncertainty which is threatening the survival of liberal arts institutions in the United States. Their research further explored the balance between breadth and depth of educational product offerings, breadth being the predominant challenge. Their perspective, informed through the analysis of threats to breadth, makes a case for its appropriateness and essentiality to the educational landscape. They discussed the increase of breadth utilized by foreign universities as it seems to be diminishing in American institutions. This is particularly impactful for Christian colleges that promote the holistic development of their students. However, the utmost point of consideration is a liberal arts education's ability or inability to satisfy the national demand for expert citizenry.

Botstein (2018) responded to such criticisms of the liberal arts as they are met with stale rhetoric, traditional appeal, and journalistic misrepresentation. He credited the skepticism of the liberal arts education to this trifecta, as he believes they have generated and legitimized such. He found such critiques to be unfounded as liberal arts institutions do offer scientific literacy, useful enterprise, and far more than a cherished habit of a narrow-minded elite. However, he importantly noted institutions in the contemporary landscape should not ignore the harrowing

financial pressures plaguing the educational landscape. Such challenges do include demographic decline in college participation and decreases in revenue in 2007 and institutions were tasked with decreasing the rising cost of education, which added a severe financial dimension previously unexplored. The existential consideration is of institutional priority as institutions must redefine and reassess their educational product offerings. However, he underscored such considerations do not invalidate the value of a liberal arts education.

Concepts

Conversely, França Junior (2017) believed the changes in the current landscape are pose impediments many liberal arts students will not be able to recover from. His purview was one of decimation whereas optimists view this as an opportunity for resurgence. He credited decreases in government funding coupled with changes to the professional and technological landscapes which play an important role. He attributed the exasperation of the core values of liberal arts colleges and the constraints the humanities are experiencing such as unconventional pedagogical modalities and redefinition of commonwealth and expression. He found the shift in ideals as a major influencer to the growing concern of the decreasing appreciation for an authentic liberal arts education. Additionally, he credited the increasing demand of STEM education, institutional inflexibility, inequitable curriculum design, traditional teaching modality, and changing student interests.

The 21st century has offered innovation in design, changes in governmental contributions, and constraints on human resource in the educational landscape according to Glyzina et al. (2016). They discussed the decreasing effectiveness of conventional management models as the industry now requires a new set of mechanisms. They found a managerial toolkit

equipped with accuracy in forecasting, goal setting aligned with organizational mission, and efficient resource allocation as institutional priority as it necessitates thorough consideration.

A liberal arts education has large focus on the humanities and as a result of the spillover effects of the Great Recession of 2007, many educational institutions had to reprioritize organizational budgets and as a result many humanities programs were negatively impacted according to Newfield (2012). He discussed how institutions such as Harvard had a 22% decline in endowments and schools began to get grades of F in affordability as tuition costs increased. He noted significant increases in student borrowing, as it nearly doubled contributing to student debt to compensate for rising tuition costs. His research found this was a pivotal time in the history of education attributing to educational attainment decline resulting in a less educated age demographic. He attributed this decrease in educational attainment to an institutional failure to recognize and respond in a manner lending itself to successful strategy identification and implementation aligned with institutional mission and the vastly changing educational climate. A climate requiring conventional financial models be denounced and a resurgence of the humanities.

Rodgers and Jackson (2012) challenged liberal arts institutions to reevaluate their brand promises for context and alignment with institutional mission. They believed such understanding is fostered by liberal arts institutions establishing a culture of assessment where they routinely ask a series of questions to identify deviations and proper alignment. Their research prioritized the perception of the student, as they are ultimately determining whether an institution is aligned with what they believe themselves to be. They examined this through the lens of institutional marketing and brand promise. Ultimately, their examination of a small, liberal arts, not for profit institution found positive results, as freshman from the start of their matriculation throughout the

end of the first year and graduating seniors perceived their institution as aligned with its brand promise. Liberal arts institutions must continually conduct assessments of this type as they create organizational strategy.

Jain et al. (2010) presented the needs of the changing student demographic as it largely focuses on technological, leadership, and real-world capabilities. They noted the prioritization of business schools as they embed an enlarged skillset essential to business operations that solve organizational problems. Their research underscored the increasing student demand for forward-thinking approaches, critical thinking, and real-world contexts applicable to their prospective professional landscapes, which is broader than what a liberal arts institution foundationally offers. An applied learning environment coupled with the fundamental development of the individual is the balance liberal arts colleges must find, on national and international scales.

In doing so there must be particular focus on how the faculty exchange impacts the student experience according to Lundberg et al. (2018). They suggested the student experience is better understood through gleaning information from surveys on engagement. Their research found that the interaction between students and faculty must be meaningful and characterized by quality, mentorship, and preparedness for the professional landscape. Institutions must assume a posture that reflects the dynamics of the external environment and student perspective if they will accomplish their institutional strategies. All institutional members must influence this process and their commitment to institutional goals must be unwavering, as all members of the institutions are agents of change.

The changing landscape is requiring institutions to respond on national and global levels, as institutions seek to gain and maintain competitive advantage according to Jung-Gehling and Strauss (2018). They examined how increased competition and massive technological changes

are necessitating institutions reassess their business practices with a focus on productivity and efficiency. Additionally, they underscored the importance of the changing needs of students as their professional landscapes will be complex and present challenges in managing human and financial resources. Their research informed practitioners of the complex influence social constructs has on the practicality of their experience in the classroom and their prospective working landscapes. As institutions assess the effectiveness and quality of their educational products they must become learned of the approached to best understand their effectiveness. They found that shared values among organizational participants and the consequences associated with not using the knowledge gleaned from the student experience must be of utmost importance to institutions. The creation of a culture where participants are intrinsically motivated, have high levels of self-efficacy, and are outcome oriented. It is these considerations that institutions must prioritize to respond to the changing needs of students.

Theories

There is a malaise among liberal arts colleges in need of a revamp to salient educational products to be accomplished through strong leadership according to Guthrie and Callahan (2016). They believed to adequately respond to the vastly changing educational landscape, anecdotally, impactful leadership is necessary. Their research underscored the importance of liberal arts colleges' institutional mission to equip leaders that will address societal needs. They discussed how a changing landscape requires leaders equipped and agile to lead changing student and societal views, as this type of leadership will foster the new generation of leaders. They importantly noted the separation from organizational ideas heavily influencing educational constructs requiring new curriculum, diversity, and applied educational experiences for students.

Hunt and Weintraub (2017) found in their discovery of leadership development that a broadened skillset is required in educational constructs. As such, they deemed it critical for contemporary leaders to prioritize their development through self-assessments. They emphasized the importance of empathy, trust, and authenticity as organizational alliances are developed. Their research suggested effective communication strategies as essential to good organizational hygiene, as it allows for acceptance and successful implementation of organizational strategy. They warned the lack of prioritization of effective communication can result in an organization characteristic of honesty without fear and fair treatment.

Institutions have the opportunity to become change agents during such a paradigm shift in higher education according to Arif (2016). He noted changes in hopes to improve the trajectory of higher education are largely due to the implementation of analytical tools to improve efficiency of systems and foster continuous improvement. His research promoted the adoption of such practices while underscoring the challenges associated with the implementation of management approaches such as total quality management, business process re-engineering, and Six Sigma. These contemporary approaches to business are adaptable to educational constructs and can help promote a unified approach to identification and implementation of creative solutions to the crisis in higher education.

Leadership style is of utmost consideration as this will be the medium to which leaders express themselves and the institutional mission according to Lamm et al. (2016). They importantly noted the importance of interpersonal skills in the contemporary landscape and its essentiality to leadership. The literature on soft skills presents an opportunity for practitioners to identify leadership traits and the personal attributes essential to navigate dynamic landscapes. Their research explored self-awareness, authenticity, communication, and modeling as leadership

traits that contribute to effective leadership. These skills require development for alignment with institutional mission. Importantly noting leadership occurs at all levels and can be demonstrated by all organizational participants.

Antonakis and House (2014) discussed the essentiality of instrumental leadership capabilities when navigating dynamic landscapes. Institutions of higher learning are navigating unchartered territory and must employ unconventional approaches to achieve their organizational goals. They first noted the importance of accurately surveying the external landscape as to offer tailor made strategy and objectives that promote optimal performance. Such leadership approaches extend beyond conventional motivational and leader member exchanges, as they must become fully transformational, transactional, and adequate for adaptation to changing environments. They examined a framework to provide innovative, adaptive, and performative whether in culture, professional landscapes, and team constructs. Their research found transformational and transactional leadership approaches as the post popular contemporary theories. They further discussed this full-range theory to leadership as appropriate for landscapes requiring creativity and high productivity. Traditionally, they argued, management scholars were not proponents of leadership theory, as they deemed it misaligned with traditional management research. However, a resurgence has taken place as landscapes have psychological impact on organizational participants and idealized influence is shared by inspiring, stimulating, and considering how to communicate organizational goals.

Fourie and Höhne (2019) presented the infallible purview associated with transformational leadership theory, as it is a largely utilized approach in the contemporary landscape. They examined how leaders in the current landscape are heavily scrutinized and are expected to forfeit their positions should they make mistakes. Their research importantly noted

although there are benefits to adopting a transformative posture, doing so does not make a leader infallible, a notion that should be magnified. Thus, the expectation for leaders to be infallible is a criticism of transformational leadership theory. A heroically bias perspective is associated with this leadership approach due to its implementation in tumultuous times for an organization that is contrary to inevitable human mishaps. They found that beyond transformational leadership theory is an opportunity for leaders to lead amid the unrealistic expectation to not fail, as failure does not disable a leader from transforming their respective organizations. They underscored a leader's fallibility can diminish the unrealistic and limited views associated with leadership, adjust expectations of change processes which in turn empowers organizational participants. Leadership and organizational failure are seemingly mutually exclusive, and they deemed this a mischaracterization of the public, as it is expected that leaders are charged with inspiring and motivating through their exemplary behavior. Thus, a leader's imperfection makes them seemingly less likely to be followed by organizational members. They attributed this misperception of leadership to the unrealistic expectation, as the media offers many examples of such instances.

Andersen (2014) discussed the limited conceptualization, the conflation among managerial leadership and political leadership, the universality, and the uncertainties in defining organizational participants as followers or subordinates. He ultimately sought to determine whether transformational leadership qualifies as managerial leadership theory in application. He deemed a disparity among the enthusiasm of transformational leadership, as it is disproportionate to its weaknesses. They discussed the characterization of transformational leadership as one of engagement that is mutually beneficial to the leader and the follower as they seek to achieve high levels of motivation and morale. Transactional leadership was depicted in contrast to

transformation leadership as its exchange offers rewards for desired behaviors. However, such leadership is utilized throughout the world in all organizations throughout hierarchical levels. Both transformational and transactional leadership are complementary in style, whereas transformational leadership is deemed ineffective in the absence of transactional leadership. They importantly noted leaders can be both transformational and transactional in characteristic although they are conceptually distinct, and leaders demonstrate different levels of each. Their research examined a high correlation between transformational components and contingent rewards, which is characteristic of transactional leadership. They argued there are fundamentally two types of leadership: transactional leadership and transactional leadership coupled with transformational leadership. Their position was criticized by the anti-performative stance of conventional management theory and transformational leadership theory that argues its essentiality to organizational performance.

Xu and Wang (2019) further discussed regulatory focus and its impact on transactional leadership alongside dynamic capabilities. The vastly changing external environment has prompted increasing interest regarding how leadership affects dynamic capabilities, as dynamic capabilities are essential for organizations to respond satisfactorily. Due to the gap in literature regarding these effects, they investigated how to mitigate such. They deemed it appropriate to consider regulatory focus as a mediating factor to better illustrate transactional leadership's role. They found contingency reward behaviors to promote characteristics such as sensing and seizing behaviors where management by exception is impactful. Their promotion of such coupled with employee reconfiguration capabilities positively mediates such capabilities. They discovered differing dimensions of transactional leadership are more favorable with differing dimensions.

This is important for practitioners as they inform their organizational strategies to foster collaborative innovation and technological improvisation within their organizations.

Kark et al. (2017) discussed the importance of self-regulation and its impact on creativity as it relates to the transformational and transactional leadership theories. In the current landscape leaders are tasked with formulating creative solutions. Such solutions require employee commitment and creative behavior which is fostered by motivation. Their research added to the gap in the literature regarding self-regulation and general leadership theory has on transactional leadership styles. They intended to examine the impact transformational and transactional leadership has on employee creativity. Additionally, they sought to better understand how these leadership styles promote or prevent the creativity of organizational participants. They describe creativity as the origination of ideas by employees and teams to accomplish organizational goals. However, this can be hindered by managers thus a worthwhile endeavor due to the increasing interests from managers to foster organizational cultures.

Ma and Jiang (2018) discuss the entrepreneurial posture that organizations are adopting as they respond to the changes in the current landscape. They name transactional, transformational, and adaptive leadership as the trifecta organizations must understand to achieve successful change adaptation. An organic approach to leadership, in theory, result in predictable outcomes in social contexts when coupled with financial and nonfinancial rewards. Conversely, their study found transformational leadership insignificantly correlated to the creativity of employees, whereas transactional leadership positively correlated to creative behaviors among employees. Their research suggested this framework for practitioners who seek to implement contemporary approaches to leadership.

Doyle (2017) emphasized the importance of having adaptive leaders when presented with adaptive challenges. She noted the time essentiality of adaptive leadership as increasing competition globally has presented a new set of challenges for organizations to respond to, as not doing so can lead to organizational extinction. Her research named changing work contexts and the speed of these changes as organizational priority as leaders are required to properly inform organizational participants of the direction the organization should go. Adaptive leadership through the lens of organizational learning theory for vastly changing landscapes is integral in understanding how to navigate, as these will require leadership development. She underscored the primary focus of adaptive leadership is to inspire organizational participants to adequately respond to changing environments. Digitization and complexities within the external environment have resulted in matrixed and interconnected organizations which have presented challenges in operations. She suggested practitioners explore complexity leadership theory, closely related to adaptive leadership, as a contemporary approach as it incorporates vastly changing landscapes. Ultimately, the primary outcome of adaptive leadership is for organizations to successfully respond to the changes in the external environment. This is accomplished through efficiency, learning orientation, and increased productivity.

Jefferies (2017) discussed the impact adaptive leadership can have in a landscape that promotes a social perspective guided by an interactionist view. She found adaptive leadership as a leadership style that can be used to establish leaders. This capability will be important in an environment where emergent leadership is necessary as all organizational participants impact organizational outcomes. Her research highlighted symbolic interaction as the foundation for this development as an individual's perception of society largely influences how one interacts with the world around them. She named adaptive leadership as appropriate for the development of

leaders and desirable characteristics in addition to an evaluative aspect due to the agility required to stay abreast of changing landscapes. This is largely accomplished through a leader's interaction with organizational members as to how they are performing amid such changes. She underscored how organizational participants act toward what is meaningful to them, how meaning is derived as a result of social interaction, and how interpretive processes are used to address and modify meaning. The quality of social exchanges severely impacts the reality of individuals and cannot be ignored as individuals believe and do what is significant to them. Thus, leaders must understand their organizational participants and foster quality exchanges that promote good organizational hygiene and synergy.

Dartey-Baah (2015) sought to reframe the discussion on leadership effectiveness to accomplish organizational goals. Ultimately, they viewed this combination as essential to fostering the resilient leadership needed for the changing landscape. They discussed a conceptual link between transformational and transactional leadership, as they lend themselves suitable for environments requiring adaptability. In such climates, leadership capabilities such as strategic thinking, emotional intelligence, successful change implementation, outcome orientation, and collectivism are of increasing demand. These capabilities are aligned with the fundamental concepts of both transformational and transactional leadership, which has prompted this reiteration of the usefulness of these contemporary approaches. Their research was inspired by the volatility and uncertainty characteristic of the current environment. Practitioners are exploring the literature to glean best practices for such environments and yield results. They reiterated the essentiality and emergence of changing leadership orientation in response to the episodic state of the professional landscape. Such challenges are as a result of inept leadership

along with uncontrollable factors that present themselves diminishing the performance of organizations to respond to the needs of the environment.

Constructs

The current educational landscape is necessitating institutions of higher learning assume an adaptive posture as they seek to carry out their institutional missions according to Muluneh and Gedifew (2018). They named adaptation and capability of redesign to be essential for institutions in dynamic business environments to maintain formidability. Organizational change implementation to include collaboration among organizational constituents could yield insights as they craft strategy. Their research noted the importance of investment into financial and human resources within the university construct. Prioritizing such reform will require a shift in institutional priority to inevitably result in creative and innovative outcomes.

Glyzina et al. (2016) discussed the capabilities needed from institutional leadership, as understanding content and the ability to demonstrate the skills necessary to respond to organizational problems lends itself to organizational success. They noted how such capabilities in addition to creativity, motivation, and altruism are integral to institutional leadership, as the marriage of these ideals promote successful implementation. Additionally, they found that institutions must utilize progressive approaches prioritizing administrative, motivational, applied, and process-oriented endeavors. It will be important for institutions to find that balance between productivity and the psychological purviews influencing them.

Lepori et al. (2013) presented the challenges liberal arts colleges are facing to maintain sufficient budgets. They found it is important for institutions to effectively implement their strategic plans to contribute to financial formidability. Their research contends institutional decisions associated with expenses and the allocation of financial resources is integral to any

strategic endeavor. Institutional formidability will largely depend on strategy formulation that is characteristic of understanding the organizational factors that influence successful implementation or organizational demise.

Liberal arts institutions are reassessing enrollment initiatives and the overall student experience. This initiative will require organizational constituency to accurately assess the external landscape and adapt accordingly. Gumpertz et al. (2017) offered that student populations are increasing in diversity, as it is predicted in 2050 demographic majorities will drastically shift in the United States. Their research discussed the potential negative impact underrepresented minority faculty has on enrollment if not properly addressed. In particular, they noted the need for American Indian, African American, and Hispanic faculty to promote equity, as students and faculty should reflect changing workplace landscapes. The research emphasized it is imperative for institutions to accurately assess retention information and identify key success factors that aid in retention initiatives and institutional development. It is this understanding institutions must gain to increase enrollment and revenue as it is a continuous evaluative process.

As liberal arts institutions pursue financial success organizations having achieved success can serve as models. Fletcher (2015) offered business management strategies and actions that promote positive financial positions in economic climates characteristic of budget deficiencies. He found that such institutions demonstrate a strong commitment to institutional mission, planning processes are cyclical, and efficiency in the operating budget that prioritizes mitigating debt.

The efficient use of relational capital should be institutional priority according to Paoloni et al. (2018). Furthermore, they noted human and structural capital as essential to effective decision-making as organizations seek to implement change management initiatives. Their

research discussed the importance of maintaining positive working relationships as they largely influence organizational outcomes. The change management process necessitates transference of knowledge and transformation of perspectives and approaches to decision making, as organizations are having to redefine their business practices and presence in a distinct way. They described this as the third mission which largely focuses on educational delivery, research orientation, along with developments in both the economic and social sects. As institutions redesign their environments establishing a knowledge community will be essential, as a self-referential disposition can lead to organizational extinction.

The paradigm shift occurring in higher education is an opportunity for institutions as they reassess their educational product offerings and the organizational leadership who can accomplish this according to Mrig (2015). He found it essential to have necessary conversations to identify the direction institutions should take and how to use communication channels to promote such conversations. An innovative approach to respond to these changes is necessary as institutions make massive investments toward gaining competitive advantage. He suggested practitioners use information responsibly as misappropriation of information can lead to organizational demise, even extinction in a vastly changing educational climate. His research underscored the importance of new frameworks to reassess and redesign their educational products. This purview is echoed by Hazelrigg (2019) as he discussed the outcome-oriented posture that institutions must adopt. Additionally, they must deliberate and consistent in their gathering of data to inform their decisions. Change initiatives during such times must be creative, forward-thinking, and sustainable. Competitive advantage has become institutional priority as institutions have adopted business characteristics. Such characteristics has required them to forfeit their bureaucratic approaches in exchange for agility and successful change adaptation.

Decision making within organization is an intricate process, as the ability to accurately identify and categorize processes for alignment and objectives is heavily relied upon by leaders according to Hakim et al. (2016). They noted the importance of alignment among decision makers and institutional mission as a daunting effort with cost and time considerations wielding great pressures, as such business processes are crafted with these in mind. They promoted the use of quantitative approaches emphasizing organizational goals as an approach for leaders as they seek to prioritize key factors as organizational changes occur. Their research particularly discussed the importance of changing variables associated with the frameworks used for analytics to ensure accuracy in assessment, as leaders will use their outcomes crafting organizational plans. The paradigm shift occurring in higher education will be characteristic of such changing variables and the demands of the external landscape warrant a framework able to respond to such changes to promote organizational success.

In addition to organizational frameworks that identify and assess organizational variables, preference relations and how they affect decision making must also be considered according to Liu et al. (2017). Their research sought to better understand the affect self-efficacy has on organizational leaders, incorporating varied levels of self-efficacy intro their technological frameworks, linear in context, to estimate such preferences. They found comparative analysis as an unconventional approach to leadership but aiding to the understanding of how decisions and outcomes are determined. Their research asserted in order for leaders to adapt to a quickly changing landscape, they must understand the challenges beyond the traditional purview of operative and financial.

Di Leo (2011) sought to compare such a degree to one obtained at an institution more diversified in content. He found this question to be relevant for students at private universities as

they typically seek out vocational areas of study. Thus, completely understandable that the strength of the curriculum of liberal arts institutions is diminishing in value.

Organizational culture has the potential to negatively impact decision-making especially when there are time constraints, limited perspective due to lack of experience, and low self-efficacy according to Liu et al. (2017). They discussed how organizational participants often demonstrate their preferences, which are often incomplete and assumptive. Institutions must proceed cautiously as to disallow such assumptions, as they are already difficult to identify and accurately measure due to their subjective nature. Their research identified the impact incomplete preference relations has on a leader's confidence. They deemed it a worthwhile endeavor for institutional leadership to explore, as it is multifaceted and can yield the data necessary to determine a path well suited for their organization. They underscored the impact bias has on decision making as leaders and organizational participants vary in their experiences, both professional and academically. Thus, requiring an approach that examines various levels of the organization to yield a better understanding of the vantage points they could be unaware of.

According to Haveman and Wetts (2019) institutions must understand how organizational behavior impacts and influences their organizational strategy. They noted demographic, relational, and cultural perspectives as the trifecta aiding to a vastly changing landscape that will require institutions to adopt a new mindset. Their research discussed the demographic perspective as characteristic of social considerations within organizations, web-related social constructs, and widely shared organizational beliefs as patterned by the organization's mission. As organizational science continues to explore the impact culture has on institutional adaptation and change, social structure such as sociological, economical, scientific, psychological, and managerial pillars must be examined to accurately identify appropriate organizational direction.

If institutions can examine these three perspectives, they can apply the knowledge gleaned in a deliberate and impactful way. These impacts inform institutional policies, formal and informal exchanges, and the daily happenings of the organization.

Related Studies

Hilbun and Mamiseishvili (2016) analyzed how institutional prioritization must be met with the needs of the external environment to successfully adapt and remain formidable. They noted the validity of liberal arts education is it ascribed to have laid the foundation for education. They credited the economic and sociopolitical happenings of the Great Recession of 2007 as a catalyst for this massive educational reform. Their case study intended to diminish the gap in academic literature regarding the notable decrease in institutional endowments amid the challenges associated with student recruitment and retention. They believed the dire state of liberal arts institutions was largely because of the ineffective practices of leadership not lending itself to sustainability, thus charging institutions to employ adaptive strategies.

Although changing landscapes require creative vision, Amankwah-Amoah (2015) presented the challenges and contention among management experts as to the most reliable prediction models to assess business failure. However, they notably asserted decision-making capabilities among leadership was a large contributor to organizational outcome. Their research examined qualifiers such as the size of the organization, the age of the organization, and how dense the population is. The purpose of their research was to assess the organizational landscape for commonalities with a goal of incorporating such into business models, as current models are not able to identify the difficulties associated with decision making and associated precepts. They found this research to be impactful, yet surprising, as organizational leaders seek to employ

continuous improvement initiatives with substantive elements to aid in organizational effectiveness, as organizations are reflective of their leaders.

Boje et al. (2017) presented an ethnographic case study that found there are predictable consequences to redesign in educational constructs. They discussed how the impact of the paradigm shift in higher education is requiring a leadership approach that considers varied approaches, as current frameworks are grossly misaligned with the changing landscape. They found a socioeconomic approach congruent as it promotes the inclusion of the human capacity with the provision to reconstruct revenue streams, as government funding is proving unstable, educational ideals are changing, and graduates are expected to demonstrate proficiency in their prospective professions. They importantly noted organizational redesign initiatives require a vast amount of input as redesign often considers defunding, policy and procedure modification, job sharing or downsizing, and diminishes conventional modes exercised in the liberal arts with what would be described as academic capitalism as they garner support for their initiatives. Ultimately, this redesign in how educational institutions arrive to business decisions does recognize the challenge efficacy of such redesign has on socioeconomic approaches to strategy development and execution.

There are several influencers on decision-making and human elements have a large impact on how information is digested and communicated throughout the organization according to Carillo et al. (2019). They found the ability of organizations to make data informed decisions is essential as organizations seek to adopt a proactive disposition as data analytics is a growing trend. Effective operation of analytics lends itself to sustainability in varied business sects due to their ability to promote sustainability. Their research suggested the very analytics and statistics taught in business schools as foundational components of business must be enacted in

educational sects, as doing so can prove their validity and reliability. They discussed the psychometric components and views toward analytical processes as conceptualized in higher education and how such perceptions impact decisional outcomes. Thus, they asserted institutions must adopt a more fluid mindset to be open to mechanisms that will shape how they operate on communicatively, how they interact, and how they behave.

As organizations assume an integrative posture, groupthink is a natural consequence of such unification according to Riccobono et al. (2016). They found groupthink impacts organizational performance, as personal traits and interpersonal elements influence communication exchanges. Their research sought to explore the impact unproductive groupthink behaviors has on change management initiatives and what contemporary approaches can diminish its impact. Mitigation efforts such as assessment, evaluations, conscientiousness, and a thorough understanding of interpersonal relationships are crucial to successful implementation. They suggested organizations stay informed and lessen the impact of negative groupthink as there are inevitably unintended consequences when enacting organizational change.

Although the changing landscape will require unconventional methodologies, institutions must be careful to maintain their organizational identities. Rodgers and Jackson (2012) suggested institutions begin by reassessing their brands as they rediscover their new identities. They contended this evaluation be laced with strategy as they pair the organizational mission with the current demands of external landscape. To do so successfully, they found it important for student voices to be magnified, as they too are organizational constituents. They reminded organizations that although viewed in a convoluted manner, institutional mission, vision, and brand vary in breadth.

Allen and Baker (2012) offered an idea liberal arts colleges can use as the foundation to underscore the rich history associated with the liberal arts. They found that characteristics of liberal arts education now include more than ever accreditation and accountability as integral to any change management initiative. They implore institutions to be especially mindful of stagnation and conventional modes of business practices, as they are inflexible and do not offer the adaptability required to take full advantage of the opportunities in the changing landscape.

Stollman (2010) believed the opportunity has presented itself to reimagine the philosophical, environmental, and resource elements of higher education. Her research argued that educational institutions have a long-standing reputation for having to respond to the demands of the external environment that have largely focused on adaptability, organizational direction, educational product offerings, needs of the student population, and academic programs. Her perspective was aligned with the current literature which promotes the development of students that will lead their communities and professional landscapes, as they become learned of the tools to respond to the conditions of the world around them and exercise their civic duty.

Baker and Powell (2019) named entrepreneurship as a new liberal art, as institutions seek to reassess and redefine their educational products. They discussed the importance of the skillset required to fully engage in entrepreneurship due to their alignment with contemporary society. Their research believed entrepreneurship to be the solution to the crisis facing liberal arts institutions. A focus on entrepreneurship serves as an opportunity for renewal and a contemporary perspective of the conventionality of the liberal arts. They found that research and teaching is largely characteristic of entrepreneurship and should be further examined. Through highlighting the narrowness of empirical research associating entrepreneurship with management

science, practitioners can create an environment for students to apply concepts they are studying in their respective curriculums. They promoted entrepreneurship as the new liberal art to lead to flexibility and fundamental growth opportunity for the liberal arts. Ultimately, they posited entrepreneurial studies is the gateway for entrepreneurs to establish their identities while impacting the world in a way they envision.

Anticipated and Discovered Themes

The literature promoted the importance of management tools that can accurately discern uncertain environments. Borgianni et al. (2015) found managing uncertainty to be the main contributor to organizational success or demise. They named organizational change management as institutional priority as failure to adapt to change is largely due to the lack of understanding organizational needs, leadership inadequacies, and inept decision-making. Thus, the creation of decisional support systems is essential in the changing landscape, as such constructs foster proper communication. Information must take into account the uncertainty of the environment and the conditions that impact institutions of higher education, as such information is often gleaned from organizational constituents and the changing demand and demographic of customers.

The literature posed growing inquiries to explore how institutions can successfully adapt to a vastly changing landscape. Iordache-Platis (2018) examined what institutions could do to offer quality educational products and student experiences. She echoed the literature that institutions must examine their current practices compared to their institutional mission and the demands of the current landscape for alignment. Without this clarity, institutions will be inept in their resolve as they will be unclear about their areas of misalignment. The literature sets a prevailing tone of exploration of strategies to accomplish this understanding largely through the

utilization of frameworks and successful change management initiatives. She importantly noted the paradigm shift is largely affecting the management sciences, legal, governmental, and social landscape. The research has prioritized technological improvisation, teaching methodologies, and educational economies institutions must become learned of.

Institutions must continually examine their institutional product offerings as liberal arts institutions prepare students for their respective landscapes. Cameron et al. (2019) echoed the opportunities and threats institutions face as the preparation of students for the current business landscape is not solely the responsibility of the student. They echoed the usefulness of the customer voice to lead practitioners as they shape their curriculum and student experience. This can be accomplished through consistent analysis of data, as liberal arts institutions must become comfortable navigating contemporary business landscapes and denouncing ineffective approaches to strategy development. The literature offered a plethora of indications, of utmost importance gleaning data from students and organizational constituency ready to respond proactively and assuredly.

Institutions of higher learning must explore varied approaches to management as they adopt characteristics of business entities. Combs et al. (2019) found a growing trend in the use of meta-analytic approaches to strategy. Although this is currently a gap in the literature, meta-analytic approaches are often utilized in response to growing organizational expectations. Their discussion noted the importance of addressing organizational resolve amid conflicting views. They discussed the opportunity for sophisticated models that can yield new theoretical approaches to examining data to accurately address institutional issues and identify limitations. Their research emphasized the usefulness of the management sciences that focus on equation models, regression analysis, and qualitative meta-analysis. Currently there are approximately 200

articles addressing how organizations can use meta-analysis to inform their strategies. The establishment of approaches that have the ability to compile aggregate data that practitioners can use to test hypotheses or phenomenological events.

Employing a framework that accurately assesses variables that assist in decision making will be of utmost importance according to Amankwah-Amoah (2015). They offered their unified framework as an aid to institutions as they explore how decision making affects strategy. Ineptitude in decision making is the precursor for organizational failure and they noted the impact erroneous decisions among leadership has on organizational outcomes. Imbalance among human resources, self-efficacy, meaning, and institutional linkage does not lend itself to organizational success. Organizational leadership must become learned of the organizational failures of others as they navigate a changing landscape where research has yet to offer a consensus in how institutions should approach a vastly different industry. As institutions adopt a business posture, examining business organizations must become regular practice to understand how to make efficient decisions with organizational resources.

The challenges of the 21st-century landscape present major financial and social considerations requiring liberal arts institutions to reassess their educational products and reposition themselves to take advantage of new opportunities according to Logan and Curry (2015). They underscored the difficulty in navigating unknown educational landscapes as they seek to balance breadth and depth in their educational products while promoting the philosophical traditions inherent to a liberal arts education. As they seek to satisfy these challenges, they encourage institutions to consider the happenings of their international competitors to broaden their perspectives, as international students are an increasing demographic among liberal arts institutions. Their research highlighted the increasing demand

for discipline specific educational products. Although not fundamentally aligned with a liberal arts education, they believed this to be a worthwhile endeavor as understanding the happenings of their community is characteristic of the liberal arts. They deemed this a worthwhile consideration as institutions can incorporate a larger perspective as they rediscover their position to best serve the society at large.

Iordache-Platis (2018) reiterated the challenges presented in the literature for liberal arts institutions. Her discussion on the pressures institutions face as they seek to gain market share and offer salient educational products is relevant. Practitioners must create a culture of assessment that seeks to align organizational happenings with institutional mission. She suggested institutions prioritize the student experience while offering academic programs aligned with the prospective working landscapes. This can only be accomplished through proper identification of organizational priority which will require diverse input. As student engagement through the effective establishment of relationships is fostered, institutions will have the opportunity to tailor their strategy toward such endeavors. It is this relational capital that will allows institutions to realize their goals.

This qualitative study identified six overarching themes aligned with the professional and academic literature. The first overarching theme suggested leadership cultivation and training are essential for traditional leaders. The second overarching theme suggested leadership behaviors contributing to successful change adaptation include collaboration, effective communication, curiosity, and the ability to recognize change. The third overarching theme suggested the predominant changes that exist within the current educational climate are the changing value proposition of the liberal arts, revenue and enrollment considerations, addressing diversity, and the impact of the pandemic on institutions of higher learning. The fourth overarching theme

suggested tradition, mission, and the slow changing nature of institutions are cultural elements that exist within the liberal arts. The fifth overarching theme suggested leaders must prioritize resource management, student satisfaction, and changing generational perceptions of organizational constituents. The sixth overarching theme concluded that the transformational leadership style is essential to the current educational climate.

The overarching themes were the culmination of this qualitative case study. I interpreted the themes within the scope of the professional and academic literature on change adaptation. I prioritized the research problem and conceptual framework to best address the posed research questions. The findings of this study aligned with the challenges discussed in the literature. The literature reiterated the challenges within the current educational climate, and these were affirmed by research participants. As leaders are charged with responding to a rapidly changing external environment to maintain formidability, they must demonstrate dynamism and agility to maintain competitive advantage. Nontraditional leaders are equipped to assist institutions in this endeavor due to their credentialing and professional experiences outside of academia. Research participants noted the importance of incorporating business modalities in higher education constructs. This notion was underscored in the literature by Baker and Baldwin (2015) as they described the steady decline in inadequate response to the existent changes impacting the liberal arts. Institutions must adopt a business model that does not forego their institutional mission, but in a manner that reimagines the liberal arts in the 21st century. Accomplishing this feat will require institutional leaders with a purview to recognize change and respond in a transformative way.

Summary of the Literature Review

The literature echoed the convergence from bureaucratic structures in higher education to business modelling as an evolution in education is taken place according to Cosenz and Noto (2018). Institutions must enact conventional business practices to formulate and execute their strategies. The literature highlighted successful adoption of strategic business processes as they seek to establish a framework to assess financial position, social responsibility endeavors, expansion opportunities, and innovative approaches to operations. Although there are still critics of such a massive change to approach in higher education, there too is the belief that a static view of strategy in higher education can lead to organizational demise. Institutions must adopt an exploratory approach to strategy as they reassert themselves in a vastly changing business landscape and employ business models to suit their organizational needs. A mechanistic approach to education is a detriment and do not lend to the holistic perspective necessary to gain and maintain competitive advantage and institutional effectiveness.

Effective decision-making capabilities were essential to institutions as they either promote or impede successful implementation. Institutions must frequently assess their processes for alignment with institutional mission as they become better learned of the impact decision maker capabilities of leadership on the organization. The literature continued to underscore the importance of decision making, specifically identity maintenance, consensus-based, and escalation of commitment approaches to decision effectiveness as organizations navigate the changing educational landscape. Although unchartered territory, the educational landscape does present an opportunity for institutions to reassert themselves. Institutions are now required to demonstrate characteristics of global and human agents that prioritize strategy formulation and successful implementation of institutional priorities. As economic demand has yielded an

increase in productivity and more attractive educational products, contemporary business approaches can help institutions implement strategic approaches to include innovative teaching methodology. Institutions must reassert themselves in the educational landscape to achieve sustainability while maintaining alignment with their institutional missions.

Summary of Section 1 and Transition

Section 1 provided the foundation for this qualitative case study and discussed the significance of such a study. The problem, to include the unsuccessful adaption of nontraditional leaders to change within liberal arts institutions in the Midwest, was also established within Section 1. The purpose of this study was to add to the body of knowledge by exploring the reasons behind traditional leaders in higher education's failure to adapt to change in the current educational climate, which is impeding organizational enrollment and revenue. Additionally, the rationale of qualitative case study design was discussed along with the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations associated with this study. Research questions and sub questions associated with this study were established through the concepts of failure to adapt to change and culture of competence through the transformational, adaptive, and transactional leadership theories. This was also accomplished through the defining of key terms associated with this study. Section 1 was concluded with a review of the professional and academic literature. The next section includes the research project overview, discussion of research design, research methodology, and the reliability and validity of data collected.

Section 2: The Project

This qualitative case study sought to better understand the impact dynamic changes occurring in the higher education landscape has on institutional leaders' ability to adapt through the infusion of contemporary leadership approaches. The changes occurring in the 21st century

necessitate institutions reassert themselves to remain formidable. The study posed research

questions to explore leadership behaviors contributing to successful adaption to the current

educational climate in liberal arts institutions in the Midwest to aid in that endeavor. I conducted

open-ended interviews with institutional leaders at liberal arts institutions in the Midwest. The

following section underscored the purpose of this qualitative case study while defining the role

of the researcher, research participants, and detailing the research design and methodology.

Furthermore, offering a discussion on population and sampling, data collection methods, and

data analysis procedures that promote the reliability and validity of this qualitative case study.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative single-case study was to add to the body of knowledge by

exploring the reasons behind traditional leaders in higher education's failure to adapt to change

in the current educational climate, which is impeding organizational enrollment and revenue.

According to Black (2015) institutions failed to adapt to changes in the current educational

climate. This concept invoked an exploration into the predominant changes occurring and how

these changes impact a leader's adaptation. As a result of such changes, vulnerable institutions

assume less risk and have welcomed the idea of nontraditional leadership. Leadership supply

experienced significant decline in the number of tenure-track professors. The leadership role has

changed and requires leaders to serve in external capacities. Guetterman and Mitchell (2016)

added that institutions of higher learning have increased public scrutiny and demands for

institutional accountability, improved student learning, and the establishment of a culture of

assessment, with a premium on better management, to foster successful adaption to the changing

educational landscape. This exploration was a methodological approach to include theoretical

concepts such as transformational, transactional, and adaptive leadership styles as influencers to

successful adaptation, as such styles are appropriate for dynamic business environments. The conventional modes of practice in higher education were examined for effectiveness among institutional actors through better understanding increasing interests of private liberal arts institutions to use nontraditional leaders for institutional viability versus traditional leaders.

Role of the Researcher

Creswell (2016) described the qualitative researcher's approach to include exploration in an open-ended way, a development of complex understanding, a lifting up of voices within groups or populations, and the creation of a multi-perspective view gleaned from data collection. In that, qualitative research studies sensitive topics and provides the opportunity to reflect on biases and experiences, as the goal of the qualitative researcher is to report the voices of participants. Qualitative researchers provide the opportunity to contrast what is communicated within an organization with the informal happenings that are not stated, as such research allows for the identification of perspectives different from what the formalized structure offers. He further discussed the misconceptions of qualitative researchers as some may characterize them to be too subjective and even too interpretive, likely referring to the open-ended nature of qualitative researcher's questions, which the qualitative researcher uses to draw codes and themes in the research responses. Although qualitative research is a labor-intensive approach, the ability of a qualitative researcher to tell, describe, discuss, and create are essential.

To capture the plight of traditional and nontraditional leaders in an educational climate characterized by adaptation, I led data collection through conducting open-ended interviews involving breadth and depth in construction. I assumed a pivotal role in data collection as institutional administration helped to identify possible leaders as research participants and the scope of the population. As a result of the information provided, the population was determined

by such data and not by me. The categorical nature of the educational landscape aligned with the

method and design as it informed a qualitative approach to better understanding the current

challenges. The potential participants for this qualitative case study were a part of the Iowa

Association of Independent Colleges and Universities.

van Deventer (2009) discussed the ethical considerations to be made when conducting

qualitative research as the researcher must determine whether a covert or overt research

disposition is appropriate. He described covert qualitative researchers as those not revealing the

reason for conducting research. In contrast, he described an overt qualitative researcher as one

who not only reveals the reasons for conducting the research, but ensures the participants

understand the purpose for the research being conducted. I assumed an overt disposition. This

was accomplished, in part, by discussing the definitions of liberal arts institutions, the

Midwestern region, traditional leaders, nontraditional leaders, transformational leadership,

transactional leadership, and adaptive leadership as defined in this qualitative case study.

Additionally, I assumed responsibility for maintaining consistency throughout interviews

conducted. It was important to note I prioritized staying within the parameters of the conceptual

framework and within the scope of the professional and academic literature.

Research Methodology

Research methods examine personal experiences, social systems, and even political

systems to understand societal happenings and the consequences thereof (Robson & McCartan,

2016; Savin-Baden & Howell-Major, 2013). A substantial amount of this research was

conducted in university constructs or research institutes in the areas of business and

management, criminology, education, and health-related areas. Research of the kind also

examined the social sciences which include the psychological and sociological disciplines in

addition to local government, community organizations, and non-government organizations. In conducting research, serious considerations must be made regarding the design as it is architectural in that the designer is also responsible for executing the project. Such projects are traditionally categorized as quantitative and qualitative research.

Farrelly (2013) discussed the influences associated with choosing a research method, as it can be influenced by a researcher's worldview which is one's ideas, beliefs, and interactions with the world. Thus, if a researcher is particularly interested in how individuals feel then they might be biased toward qualitative approaches to research, as such research methodology seeks to understand the experience of others. A researcher interested in a specific element of research that focuses how much or how many is likely bias towards quantitative approaches to research. Traditionally, quantitative and qualitative research are categorized independently, whereas trends in research suggest the two seemingly contrasted approaches to research may actually complement one another. As such, an opportunity to explore and examine empirical indicators and ontological positions.

Additionally, samples are not intended to represent large populations. Although differing in methodology and design, quantitative and qualitative research, when combined has its advantages (Ahmed et al., 2016; Yin, 2018). Mixed methods approaches bridge the gap between the limitations both methods present, as it can provide more evidence than either one can alone. As a result, offsetting the weaknesses of both approaches to answer posed research questions. This is accomplished by collecting and analyzing persuasive and rigorous data, embedding the two forms of data concurrently, prioritizing both forms of data, and framing procedures with philosophical and theoretical purviews.

Discussion of Flexible Design

Flexible design requires a considerable amount of planning and detailing of procedures; however, the design can evolve as findings emerge (Fetters et al., 2013). It is important to note that fixed designs are often characterized as quantitative due to their dependence on the collection of numerical data whereas flexible designs rely heavily on the collection of qualitative data. However, in practice research can require a substantial collection of both quantitative and qualitative data which is a mixed methods approach. The integration of quantitative and qualitative methodology can enhance reliability and validity of research (Östlund et al., 2011). Quantitative inquiry can help generate the qualitative sample and aid in the explanation of research findings. Qualitative inquiry can inform the development and refinement of quantitative instruments. It is important to note that although there is a plethora of potential gains to mixed methods approach, the extent of this integration remains limited.

Dima et al. (2019) qualitative approach explored the tough choices facing liberal arts institutions as they are facing serious financial stress as a result of declining enrollment, to include excellence models impacting university performance, comprised of various theories with a focus on specific factors. They noted the exploration, identification, and creation of such business excellence models as appropriate instruments for organizations as they seek to gain competitive advantage. They suggested this comparative approach as an opportunity for institutions to aid them in balancing economic development, social, and innovative approaches to adaptation. Black (2015) echoed these assertions as they used qualitative method to find one in five small private colleges in the Midwest are impacted by closures as a result of changing demographics, rising tuition costs, and greater emphasis on professional readiness. He offered a comparison of the existing understanding of leadership alongside contemporary leadership

theory and practice. He importantly noted the essentiality of leadership development to enable adaptation amidst this paradigm shift while identifying the intricacies with consideration to competence frameworks.

The top 30 liberal arts institutions in the Midwest ranked by core curriculum, national and international rankings, student retention rates, notable faculty and alumni, historical significance, and pay scale (ROI) are noteworthy (*30 Best Liberal Arts Colleges in the Midwest*, n.d.). These include schools such as Albion College, Cornell College, Grinnell College, Luther College, and North Central College to name a few (*30 Best Liberal Arts Colleges in the Midwest*, n.d.). The categorical nature of the educational landscape aligns with the method and design as it informs a qualitative approach to better understanding the current challenges, as it is comparable to Ghasemy et al.'s (2017) demonstration of the qualitative method.

Discussion of Case Study Method

This study utilized a qualitative research methodology to examine the happenings within a vastly changing economic climate where successful adaption to change is essential. Creswell and Poth (2018) deemed qualitative inquiry appropriate when research will be collected in a natural setting, multiple methods of data collection are used, the researcher is a key instrument in collecting such data, the analysis of data requires complex reasoning through inductive and deductive logic, participants offer multiple perspectives and meanings, there is reflexivity of the researcher, and the research process is emergent. As I utilized qualitative method, only qualitative designs were considered to carry out the research.

The scope of this single-case study focused on change adaptation in higher education in a climate requiring institutions to consider how to develop their leaders and define appropriate leadership behavior to successfully adapt, as conventional leadership roles in academia are

yielding decreases in student enrollment impacting revenue according to Black (2015). This study required me to develop the complexities associated with such to offer a holistic account of the problem. In order to do so, multiple perspectives were gleaned to identify the many facets of the research problem to offer a general sketch of the larger emergent context. Such research is not limited by cause-and-effect relationships, but rather the description of the complexities surrounding successful change adaptation, which is why I did not use quantitative method to address the research questions (Willis, 2014). Qualitative research is appropriate in the exploration of this issue because such exploration is needed for institutional leadership to better understand how to navigate unchartered territories where reliance on predetermined literature and exploratory studies may not offer sufficient, detailed understanding of the issue.

There are five approaches qualitative researchers can use to answer posed research questions according to Creswell and Poth (2018). To capture the experience of research participants grounded theory, ethnographic, narrative, phenomenological, and case study approaches are offered, as their intent is to identify context. The qualitative approach to inquiry for this research is the single-case study.

Narrative research design, too, can be applied to the social sciences as well as to the humanities (Caine et al., 2013; Heikkinen et al., 2012). It captures the lived experiences of research participants and documents them sequentially through the use of storytelling. A less suitable approach for this qualitative inquiry, as it focuses primarily on business and education constructs. The phenomenological approach also examines one's experience, but through a scientific lens, thus not appropriate for this research. This is largely due to the removal of objectivity, although inherently philosophical in context. It is appropriate to mitigate bias

throughout a research process and promote objectivity, however, the prioritization of real-world context is essential to this study.

Grounded theory was not appropriate for this research, as its intent is not to provide a theoretical explanation. This research design explores a large amount of research experiences with an intent to offer generalizations to be true of a population based on a sample according to Aldiabat and Le Navenec (2011). The intent of this case study was not to generate new theory. Although this case study will focus on liberal arts institutions in the Midwest, proximity and comparable cultural characteristics are necessary for ethnographic research design. Babchuk and Hitchcock (2013) described ethnography as an approach to inquiry to better understand behavior in cultural contexts, which would require proximity to conduct observations and an immersion to capture communal patterns. These patterns included cultural elements such as language and symbolism within group culture. The intent of this qualitative case study was to explore what leadership behaviors promote successful adaptation to change. Thus, exploring communal behaviors, language, and group culture to generate theory is beyond the scope of this research.

Case studies are fitting for higher education constructs as they are complex and require the understanding of systems (Gustafsson, 2017; Lobo et al., 2017). Specifically, from an applied perspective where conceptual models can be used for organizational change. As such, case studies explore the interactive and relational happenings which can result in the creation of innovative standards and conceptual frameworks. While no research problem is identical, researchers must designate a starting point, as to determine breadth and depth. This starting point is determined through the sample size established by the researcher. Researchers must also have clearly defined method which consciously and systematically applied actions, which include normative elements and denotes how such actions will be performed. This systematic and

repeatedly used approach to research widely addresses various problems and can lead to the creation of theoretical generalizations substantiated by empirical research.

Dźwigol (2018) reiterated the complexities associated with addressing problems within research studies. Although research of the kind can be narrow, when designed well it achieves practical goals to be applied where applicable. Irrespective of the industry to explore, all research studies have commonality among analysis and synthesis procedures. How analysis and synthesis are approached is dependent upon what is being examined. Emphasis and careful regard must be exercised toward fitting methods which guide the researcher in verifying hypotheses or answering research questions. Although measures of deductive and analogical reasoning along with inquiry help develop research hypotheses or inform research questions, careful design is essential to successfully addressing the research problem (Farrelly, 2013). As research methods and design have undergone change, conventional thinking toward research method and design have been rejected, while combinative thinking is a growing trend. Combinative thinking involves the establishment of systems to review research process and provide formal structure to unconventional approaches to understanding the happenings within a given landscape.

Harrison et al. (2017) discussed the substantial changes, particularly methodological development, that case study research has undergone over the past 40 years. Case study research has taken on a new identity of pragmatism, flexibility of research approach, and the capacity to offer comprehensive understanding of research issues across varied disciplines. This, in part, is due to contributors of case study research having diverse disciplines and philosophical approaches to research. As successful adaption to change is essential to organizations in business sects and institutions of higher learning assume a business posture, case study research is a reasonable approach to better understand such changes. Case study approaches to research are a

commonplace research approach to explore the social sciences, business, education, law, and health (Yazan, 2015). As historical transformation, individual research preferences, and perspective are antecedents to changes in case study research, this is also characteristic of the changing educational landscape.

Bartlett and Vavrus (2017) proposed a new approach to case study research, the comparative case study approach. This contemporary approach to research incorporates a simultaneous approach to case study design as it addresses the macro, meso, and micro dimensions through the engagement of comparative and contrasting purviews along with tracing. In the exploration to understand the leadership behaviors that promote successful change adaptation within liberal arts institutions, changes to case study research have accounted for the conceptual shifts in better understanding the educational landscape through horizontal, vertical, and transversal comparison. Such changes to conventional case study research strengthen and enhance this form of inquiry to offer unique contributions within the realm of qualitative research to demonstrate the somewhat convoluted differences between case driven studies and variable driven studies.

The delimitation of the object of study was the most defining characteristic of case study research design, as this bounded system underscores the need for case study research design as bounded in context Lobo et al. (2017). When the object of the study was a small group, this group must be distinguished from those outside of the group. This clarification of boundaries within this single-case study offers an opportunity to better understand the challenges leaders of liberal arts institutions in the Midwest are facing as the educational landscape has undergone a paradigm shift. The single study sought to offer perspective to a specified group to identify challenges unique to such institutions.

Gaya and Smith (2016) advocated for the use of single-case study design for qualitative method as practical and appropriate to better under leadership for testing, exploration, or the generation of theory. Case study research design and qualitative methodology complement research within the field due to its ability to offer in-depth analysis and understanding organizational issues as they exist in their natural context. Furthermore, providing an opportunity to incorporate rigor, credibility, generalizability, quality, and limitations in reporting (Turner et al., 2017). This single-case study utilized multiple methods of data collection by conducting face to face semi-structured interviews, questionnaires, and document analysis to achieve conceptual and broad-based views and triangulation, akin to the objectives of case study research design.

Discussion of Methods for Triangulation

Method triangulation was used to contribute to reliability and validity of this single-case study. The four types of triangulation are method triangulation, which is the most commonly used, investigator triangulation, theory triangulation, and data source triangulation (Carter et al., 2014; Turner et al., 2017). Triangulation is used in qualitative research to promote comprehensive understanding. It is also a strategy used by qualitative researchers to ensure validity, which is accomplished by intersecting information from various sources. Method triangulation utilizes multiple methods of data collection and may include interviews, questionnaires, documents and records, observations, focus groups, oral histories, and field notes. Investigator triangulation involves the participation of two or more researchers within a study to provide multiple observations and conclusions. Theory triangulation uses various theories to analyze and interpret research data to gain multiple perspectives and validation of data. Data source triangulation collects data from different types of people such as groups, families, and communities to obtain varied perspectives.

This single-case study used method triangulation to explore leadership capabilities that promote successful change adaptation. The conventional modes of practice in higher education will be explored to better understand the increasing interests of private liberal arts institutions using nontraditional leaders to promote institutional viability versus traditional leaders (Black, 2015; Dima et al., 2019). To thoroughly understand leadership capabilities that lead to successful adaption to change in vastly changing climates and identify emergent themes, method triangulation is appropriate.

Summary of Research Methodology

As Dźwigol (2018) underscored, researchers must emphasize the importance of appropriately selected research methods and a design fitting to address research questions and prove or disprove research hypotheses. Of utmost consideration is the permanence of research results, as research variables can change over time in the external environment. Thus, reiterating the complexity and variation associated with research, especially within the realm of qualitative research where such factors are difficult to measure. As to mitigate the criticisms of theoreticians and practitioners, research methods' normative character can prove formidable when verification of research findings, which often does not occur until such results are put into practice, is predicated with sound research method and design.

van Deventer (2009) cautioned researchers to consider the inherent risks associated with research method and design before, during, and after the planning, implementation and completion of the research process. Design, implementation, analysis, and dissemination are distinct research elements possessing its own principles, ideals, and issues. Implications and applicability of research results must be considered in the design phase, as such research intends to increase humanity's knowledge, as such researchers must contribute to the knowledge of

society without endangering research participants and those involved throughout the research process. Researchers must uphold ethical principles and ensure integrity is demonstrated at all levels. As inferences are made by the researcher, there must be a balance between integrity and objectivity to not skew the meaning of the research results, due to the regard one gives toward personal experience. Ultimately, upon completion of research, the researcher is dutifully responsible for the portrayal, privacy, and protection of the research participants, affiliates, and consumers of their research.

Participants

Participants for this study included 23 university leaders at liberal arts institutions in the Midwest. University leaders were qualified to contribute to this research as their experience, perceptions, and perspectives are appropriate to satisfy the posed research questions. Demographics such as gender, age, race, socioeconomic background, or ethnicity were not factors to be considered of participants. A streamlined approach to screening research participants included querying people knowledgeable of university leaders at liberal arts colleges in the Midwest, coupled with gathering limited documentation about each research candidate. I was able to gain access to this network through her professional affiliation.

The sample size included 23 university leaders of liberal arts institutions in the Midwest, as they are qualified to address the posed research questions. They were especially knowledgeable about and experienced in the research area of interest. Purposeful sampling was used to determine a reasonable sample size because such judgement sampling is the deliberate choice of a participant due to the qualities they possess. Conversely, convenience sampling, although applicable to quantitative and qualitative studies, is mostly used for quantitative studies thus not appropriate for this study (Etikan et al, 2016). Upon approval from Liberty University's

Institutional Review Board, a consent form (see Appendix A) in addition to a recruitment template (see Appendix B) was sent to engage participants. For expediency, email was the preferred method of contact.

According to Yin (2018) it was desirable to establish a case study protocol to involve the research participants, as case and data collection procedures to be of utmost importance. I exercised caution in informing the sample population of their involvement and must mitigate deviations from the data collection methods. I catered to the interviewees' schedules and availability, while understanding throughout the data collection process I may have to make special arrangements. However, I first obtained approval from the Institutional Review Board at Liberty University. I sent a consent form (see Appendix A) to prospective research participants. Research participants were contacted electronically to discuss the details of the research study and identify a convenient time for an interview. Subsequently, I sent an electronic questionnaire (see Appendix D) to research participants for completion and secured the data results. Due to the sensitivity of the data collected, I ensured the interview was in a private location, prioritizing the comfort of the research participant. To ensure discretion was a priority, I conducted all interviews in a private location. Furthermore, I ensured no other party was present while interviewing research participants.

I used semi-structured interviews as the primary data collection method, as doing such provided an opportunity to gather the voices of the research participants. According to Robson and McCartan (2016), an interview provided the opportunity for a qualitative researcher to identify any information that can address research questions. It is the charge of the qualitative researcher to accurately interpret and present research results. The interview schedule (see Appendix C) provided the opportunity for me to identify information which might have been

overlooked in the questionnaire or field notes. The interviews were 30 minutes to 1 hour in duration. The interviews were semi-structured in and conversational in tone. According to Creswell (2016), the priority of the researcher is to listen and establish trust with the research participant. In efforts to maintain an accurate record of data, all field notes, as part of the triangulation process, were kept in an organized manner and securely stored (Sutton & Austin, 2015). All data collected was coded for emergent themes using an inductive approach consistent with the data collection process. After the interviews were transcribed, I provided the research participant the opportunity to review verbatim interviews to aid in reliability. I secured all collected data electronically on a password-protected computer.

Population and Sampling

This section is a summary of the intricacies researchers must consider when choosing a population and accurately selecting a sample size. The scope of the population of this single-case study was defined along with the sampling method to utilized to select research participants. The methods used to ensure research participants meet the criteria established are presented. Additionally, the rationale for population, sampling size, and sampling methods is detailed to demonstrate adequacy in approach. I offer an in-depth discussion as to how university leaders of liberal arts institutions in the Midwest can reasonably address the posed research questions and reach the saturation point.

The saturation point is used exclusively in numerous cases as an oratorical instrument evidenced through methodological practice (Alam, 2021; Marshall et al., 2013). Data saturation is an indication that no new information codes or emergent themes are present in the data sources. The highest position of informational redundancy has occurred without the addition of new contributions to the study. The idea of data saturation is rooted within qualitative research

and regarded as the flagship of validity for qualitative research offering ontological and epistemological foundation. Achieving such evidences sufficient data has been gathered and research objectives achieved.

Discussion of Population

When conducting research, the first phase of the research process is to identify the target population (Martínez-Mesa et al., 2016; Taherdoost, 2016). In order to answer the posed research questions, it is ill-advised that a research collect data from an entire population. All participants within the case study represent a portion of the population. Due to the limitations of time and financial resources, researchers must clearly define the scope of their research. Population is the total number of people within a particular group, whereas samples must be representative of the population. Deriving the sample is conducted by taking a subset from a population.

The population for this study included all leaders in liberal arts institutions in the Midwest. The current educational landscape to be considered are the more than 1,500 institutions of higher learning, of which 59% are private and 49% are public. There are around 200 private liberal arts colleges in North America. Private institutions of higher learning categorically include 21% as large master's schools, 22% as baccalaureate colleges, 10% as medium master's schools, 26% as other, with 21% being private liberal arts colleges (Liberal Arts Colleges: The Complete Guide to Liberal Arts Colleges, 2020).

The top 30 liberal arts institutions in the Midwest ranked by core curriculum, national and international rankings, student retention rates, notable faculty and alumni, historical significance, and pay scale (ROI) are noteworthy (*30 Best Liberal Arts Colleges in the Midwest*, n.d.). These included schools such as Albion College, Cornell College, Grinnell College, Luther College, and North Central College to name a few (*30 Best Liberal Arts Colleges in the Midwest*,

n.d.). This categorization of the educational landscape offers alignment with the research method and design, as a qualitative approach is appropriate to address the current challenges.

Discussion of Sampling

Gentles et al. (2015) described sampling as a selection of specific data sources from which data are collected to address posed research questions. Researchers must be mindful that the sample portion can be misleading as others may interpret the case comes from a larger universe or population of like-cases. As a result, the most desirable sample size in qualitative studies is 25 to 50 units (Bartlett et al., 2001; Martínez-Mesa et al., 2016). The participants for this single-case study included 23 university leaders from liberal arts institutions within the Midwest region. Although the sample range was 12 to 30 participants, I determined the saturation point had been achieved at 23 participants because there was no additional new information attained. It was important to note that gender, age, race, socioeconomic background, or ethnicity of the research participants were not factors in choosing research participants.

Saturation is attained when further data collection and analysis of that data are unnecessary, as no additional data or codes are emergent (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Saunders et al., 2018). Due to the widespread acceptance of saturation as a methodological principle in qualitative research, it is important to address the uncertainty as to how saturation is conceptualized and inconsistencies. Saturation originated in grounded theory; however, saturation is present across a wide range of approaches to qualitative research. Saturation is revered as a guarantee of qualitative rigor. The four models of saturation include theoretical, inductive thematic, A priori thematic, and data. The principal focus of theoretical saturation is sampling and relates to the development of theoretical categories. Inductive thematic saturation is the analysis of the emergence of new codes and or themes. A priori thematic saturation is the

degree to which identification of codes or themes are exemplified in the data. Data saturation is data oriented and the degree to which new data repetitions are expressed in previous data is examined.

It is important to note that when examining a population, simple random, systematic, stratified, cluster, and multi-stage sampling are types of probability sampling used to accomplish this in quantitative studies (Martínez-Mesa et al., 2016; Taherdoost, 2016). Every item within a population has an equal chance of inclusion within the sample when using simple random sampling. The use of probability sampling when examining a population mitigates bias, but is costly as it relates to time and energy of the researcher. Systematic sampling is every nth case from the population, which is a simplistic approach. Stratified sampling is where the population is divided into subgroups, or strata, and a random sample is taken. Cluster sampling is the division of the entire population into groups or clusters with the intent to extract random samples from each cluster, advantageous to researchers whose subjects are in larger geographic areas. Multi-stage sampling of a population is when broadened populations are narrowed by selecting samples concentrated in few geographical regions.

For the qualitative researcher, non-probability sampling is utilized and often associated with case study research design (Acharya et al., 2013; Brereton, 2015). Quota, snowball, convenience, and purposeful sampling are applied to populations to identify the research sample. Quota sampling of a population and chosen participants is based on predetermined characteristics with the intent that the sample will have the same distribution of characteristics as the broadened population. Snowball sampling is more appropriate for difficult to access, smaller populations. Convenience sampling of a population is a favored sampling technique as it aids a researcher in overcoming limitations of research, including difficulty accessing unfamiliar research

participants. Purposeful sampling of a population is used when a researcher's judgement, as they choose participants, is based in their belief they warrant inclusion to address the posed research questions.

Etikan et al. (2016) discussed the ideal, yet impossibility of using a whole population in conducting research, such rationale is the rationale behind using sampling techniques, like convenience sampling. Convenience sampling is the most popular type of nonprobability sampling, as members within the target population meet certain criteria such as easy accessibility geographical proximity, availability at a given time, or willingness to participate. According to Palinkas et al. (2015) purposeful sampling, a type of nonprobability sampling, is a widely used technique in qualitative research, as it involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals that are especially knowledgeable about or experienced in the research area of interest. Purposeful sampling is the availability and willingness to participate, ability to communicate experiences and opinions in an articulate, expressive, and reflective manner.

This single-case study utilized purposeful sampling, as judgement is used to choose research participants based on the qualities of the research participant. According to Etikan et al. (2016), convenience sampling can be applied to both quantitative and qualitative research. Therefore, 23 university leaders of liberal arts institutions in the Midwest were chosen purposefully to help answer the posed research questions due to their knowledge and experience related to the research problem. As such, adequate sampling is determined by the degree of development throughout the process of development (Saunders et al., 2018).

Purposeful sampling methods result in theoretical saturation and mitigates difficulty in estimating the minimum size of purposeful sampling (Acharya et al., 2013; Bartlett et al., 2001; Majid, 2018). This is due to the assumption that more samples lead to theoretical saturation, but

does not encourage oversampling. Therefore, indicating sample sizes often range from 20 to 30 and are usually below 50, noting there is no theoretical mechanism to base these estimates as there are no rules for sample size for qualitative inquiry.

van Rijnsoever (2017) explored sample sizes in qualitative research to reach theoretical saturation. Theoretical saturation is reached when all codes within the study have been observed once in the sample. Random chance, minimal information, and maximum information where random chance is characteristic of probability sampling, minimal information to yield at least one new code per sampling step, and maximum information to yield the largest number of new codes per sampling step. All data collection and analysis should continue until new codes and concepts cease to emerge and whether theoretical saturation has been reached is at the discretion and judgement of the researcher.

A researcher's response to the data is not solely perceived through the formation of data analysis itself. In conducting interviews, saturation is provided by an individual participant in relation to the data provided at a particular point within an interview. Boddy (2016) further added to the discussion on criticisms of qualitative researchers for not justifying sample size decisions, as sample sizes as low as one have been justified. The exploration of the simplistic and relatively uninformed discussion by reviewers on sample size was an attempt to offer a useful guide to determining and critiquing sample sizes. Findings suggested theoretical saturation among practical research is achieved with a sample size of 12 in business and education constructs.

Summary of Population and Sampling

Purposeful sampling was used to determine the sample size of this single-case study. I exercised judgement in choosing research participants due to their qualities. Through selecting

23 university leaders of liberal arts institutions in the Midwest, theoretical saturation was accomplished (Boddy, 2016). Research participants were determined due to their knowledge and experience related to the research problem. The population and sampling methods to purposefully identify the leaders within the liberal arts sect and the Midwest region was reasonable and aligned with the chosen research method and design to address the current happenings within the educational landscape.

Data Collection and Organization

I began data collection by first creating a list of possible research participants and organized them by using tabs named by state in Microsoft Excel. I gathered contact information on respective websites and created a spreadsheet consisting of university leaders in cabinet roles. These leaders were appropriate for answering the posed research questions. I compiled a spreadsheet to aid in organization and potential follow up. The spreadsheet included the potential participant's name, role, institution, email, and phone number. As I emailed the recruitment letters to possible participants, I color coded completed attempts on my spreadsheet to aid in organization. For participants who respectfully declined participation in the study, I coded them red. For participants that willingly participated in the study, I assigned a tab for confirmations color coded in green. This tab also denoted if I had received the consent form, date of the interview, and whether the electronic questionnaire was completed.

I successfully conducted 23 interviews via Zoom. During each interview I compiled field notes for each participant as a triangulation measure. Prior to the electronic interviews I requested that each participant complete an anonymous questionnaire via SurveyMonkey. I was able to obtain 22 anonymous electronic questionnaires through SurveyMonkey. Throughout the research process I maintained consistency in procedure to ensure the data collection process

prioritized reliability and validity. At the conclusion of each interview I immediately uploaded the audio file to NVivo to create a verbatim transcript and compared the audio file to the interview transcript for accuracy. After obtaining the verbatim transcript I uploaded the transcript to NVivo to code according to the codes created to align with the conceptual framework and posed research questions. I assigned a numerical pseudonym to each research participant for anonymity and organization throughout the data collection process.

Prior to collecting data from research participants, I obtained informed consent (see Appendix A). The forms were sent electronically to institutional leaders. Prior to receiving the questionnaire (see Appendix D) and participating in the interview, I received the signed consent forms. Informed consent is formally established when a potential research participant signs a form agreeing to their participation in a research project (CFR Title 21, 2019; Shah et al., 2020). However, informed consent is not a mere form to be signed. Informed consent is essential prior to conducting research, as it serves as representation of a research participant's understanding of the research to be conducted and associated risks. Informed consent includes the nature of the research, reasonable alternatives, risks and benefits associated with the research procedure, and the participants' understanding of such. The wording of the consent form will be understandable to prospective research participants and devoid of any exculpatory language.

Gill et al. (2008) discussed the purpose of data collection and how various methods are used to explore the views, experiences, beliefs and gain a deeper understanding than obtained through quantitative methods. Wheeldon and Faubert (2009) presented the traditional approaches to data collection in qualitative research to include observations, interviews, and reviews of document artifacts to provide interpretation of the world of research participants' lived experiences and perspectives. This single-case study sought to collect data to explore change

adaptation in higher education in a climate requiring institutions to consider how to develop their leaders and define appropriate leadership behavior to successfully adapt, as conventional leadership roles in academia are proving ineffective (Black, 2015).

Barrett and Twycross (2018) discussed data collection through interviews with research participants, as is characteristic of qualitative studies. Interviews are a straightforward approach to gathering rich, detailed data and the preferred method of data collection for qualitative case study research. The main distinction between interview type is the degree of structure. An unstructured interview is often based on a single question between the interviewer and interviewee shaping the conversation in real time as opposed to following a prewritten schedule. This is often utilized in narrative inquiry when the intent of the researcher is to gather a story. Typically, interviews are conducted face-to-face or telephonically. However, changing technology has yielded more possibilities and new approaches to data collection in qualitative research such as videoconferencing in synchronous and asynchronous environments (Janghorban et al., 2014; Sullivan, 2012).

Data Collection Plan

After the purposeful sample was identified, I requested a virtual Zoom meeting with each research participant. The meeting took place at a convenient location that ensured the comfort and privacy of the research participant. Prior to this meeting, I sent an overview of the research and informed consent form electronically for review and completion. Upon receipt of the signed consent form, I sent the questionnaire electronically for the research participant to complete prior to the scheduled meeting using SurveyMonkey. The meeting request included a research synopsis, confidentiality statement, and proposed meeting length. The virtual meetings took place via Zoom and recorded using the Zoom technology.

I used multiple methods of data collection in this single-case study. These methods were face-to-face semi-structured interviews conducted virtually via Zoom (see Appendix C), electronic questionnaires via SurveyMonkey (see Appendix D), and document analysis of field notes via Microsoft Word (see Appendix E). Qualitative research is organized around to include four types of data collection approaches (Johnson et al., 2010; Turner, 2010). These include field notes, baseline qualitative protocol, follow-up qualitative protocol, and focus group protocol. Baseline qualitative protocol includes an interview schedule, where interviews are recorded, transcribed, to be transformed into data elements. Comparable to baseline qualitative protocol, follow-up qualitative protocol asks fewer questions, provides additional information, and involves updates. Whereas focus group protocols involve three to 10 people with expertise to provide information through posed research questions. This single-case study used field notes and baseline qualitative protocol data collection approaches.

An interview is a frequently used method in qualitative research to gather the lived experiences of a research participant to interpret meaning within the scope of research (Anyan, 2013; Qu & Dumay, 2011; Turner, 2010). Interviews are an important method of data collection as they provide the opportunity for research participants to think and talk about their experiences, needs, expectations, and understanding of events. An interview assumes the dialogue between the researcher and research participant is devoid of power dynamics, as such to mitigate any reluctance from the interviewee. This reluctance is also mitigated by the design of the interview questions. Yes/no questions tend to exercise more power and control over the research participant, whereas questions beginning with why, which, what, where, who, and when questions seek information and are interrogative. The researcher must be mindful of power dynamics and how they can impede the success of the interview. This can be mitigated by the

researcher through courting the research participant, enhancing rapport, and cultivating a sympathetic relationship through trust.

Qualitative interview designs include the informal conversational interview, general interview guide approach, and standardized open-ended interview. This qualitative study included standardized open-ended interviews. Informal conversational interviews are characteristic of spontaneity in question generation in natural interactions and typically are a part of participant observation fieldwork (Castillo-Montoya, 2016; Jacob & Furgerson, 2012; Turner, 2010). The qualitative researcher does not ask specific questions. General interview guide approaches are more structured than informal conversational interviews, however, there is still flexibility in composition. As such, a criticism of this interview approach is consistency in posed research questions. Structured open-ended, or semi-structured, interviews are extremely structured in how the research questions are worded, as research participants are asked identical questions (Chenail, 2011). The questions are worded to yield open-ended responses. This approach allows for research participants to offer as much detail as they choose and allows the qualitative researcher to ask thorough follow-up questions.

Questionnaires were sent electronically to research participants to gather information from research participants and can be found in Appendix D of this research study prior to the scheduled Zoom interview. Questionnaires were designed to meet research objectives. A well-designed questionnaire should obtain complete and accurate information with ease for the research participant (Crawford, 1997; Landsheer & Boeije, 2010). The contents of a questionnaire should be given prominent place as a data collection technique, systematically representing the research objective. Question 1 of the questionnaire helped me categorize whether the institutional leaders had come through the full-time tenured-faculty track to lead an

institution of higher learning or is a business leader having not come through the full-time

tenured-faculty track to lead an institution of higher learning, according to Beardsley (2018) and

Gardner (2017). Questions 2, 3, and 4 helped me glean how familiar the leader is with

educational and business constructs and how experienced they are with change management

initiatives. Question 5 helped me assess if adaptive, transformative, and transactional leadership

characteristics are present among the research participants.

Field notes were gathered during the interview process and transformed to narrative as a

triangulation measure. Field notes are written observations documenting occurrences as to what

is seen, heard, or observed in the field setting (Maharaj, 2016; Phillippi & Lauderdale, 2018).

Field notes are roughly equivalent to short interviews in qualitative research. Field notes are

descriptive, free from bias, and respectful of the behaviors gathered from research participants.

Qualitative researchers use field notes to document contextual information, as secondary analysis

has become a measure to provide rigor, validity, and reliability. Although an increasingly used

collection tool in data inquiry, there is no widely used guide to collect, incorporate, or

disseminate field notes. Historically referred to as scratch notes, field notes serve various

functions, predominantly to provide context to inform data analysis.

Instruments

I was the primary research instrument, as is customary in qualitative research study. I

collected data directly from the research participants through conducting semi-structured

interviews (see Appendix C), providing questionnaires (see Appendix D), and developing (see

Appendix E) field notes associated with the interviews. I used open coding to identify emergent

themes during the data organization phase of the research study. As the primary data instrument,

a researcher must possess the complex and demanding skill of conducting interviews (Creswell,

2016; Lopez & Whitehead, 2012; Moser & Korstjens, 2018). Novice and experienced researchers must be appropriately equipped to conduct interviews and understand the rules of engagement. Researchers must be able to create a setting appropriate for asking personal questions and demonstrate a warm and non-judgmental disposition, in addition to being able to ask questions in a balanced, unbiased, and sensitive way. Audio-recorded and video-recorded interviews are more advantageous than handwritten notes due to the impossibility of recording everything heard verbatim and observe everything that occurs in an interview setting.

In qualitative inquiry, researchers are the primary data collection instrument, as their primary roles include observation, recruitment, and analysis of data collected (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Lopez & Whitehead, 2012). The process for data collection is aligned with the sampling method, as it is complementary. Researchers collect data from the research participants within the sample population until data saturation is achieved. The data can either be direct or indirect. The researcher must determine if direct or indirect data is appropriate for the research project. Direct data typically includes words that are written or recorded, body language that can be observed, a research participant's actions, or a research participant's interactions with others. Indirect data is generated by someone or something else. A researcher must be able to distinguish between potential and actual data. The type of data collection method is determined by the researcher and whether these should be singular or in combination. The researcher can collect data through interviews, observation, open-ended questionnaires, journaling, or think aloud sessions. In qualitative research the primary approach to data collection used by researchers is through interpersonal contact, usually in the form of an interview.

I used the interview guide as a secondary instrument to collect data. The interview guide can be found in Appendix C of this research study. The interview guide can improve the

interview experience as it supports the researcher's ability to pose questions (Kallio et al., 2016; Pedersen et al., 2016). It supports consistency throughout the interview and serves as a tool to connect the research problem, research questions, and existent literature on the subject matter. The thematic dimension of the interview guide includes broad questions related to the research questions and the dynamic dimension of the interview guide, specific questions that promote natural conversation. All research participants were given the opportunity to address the primary themes of the research through the probing and follow-up questions in the interview guide.

The interview guide began with introductory questions and reiterated informed consent as interview protocol. Question 1 of the interview guide asked research participants to verify information such as the submission and signature of the consent form, answer any questions the research participants might have before the official start of the interview, answer any questions regarding the transcript review form, and if the research participants understand the definitions of the research concepts defined withing the research study. Question 2 of the interview guide asked research participants to verify how they were chosen for the study, their current institutional affiliation, whether they have had to respond to changes in the educational environment, and their willingness to participate in a honest and detailed manner.

I designed the interview questions were designed to address the posed research questions named in Section 1 of this single-case study and varied in format, with the first question an opening or introduction to the research study. Interview questions began with a combination of who, what, when, where, how or why. The questions were characteristic of my experience, pre-understandings, and conceptual knowledge described in the research framework. The quality of the interview guide impacted the implementation of the interview and analysis of the data, and included primary themes and follow-up questions carefully constructed by me.

Research Question 1, from Section 1 of this single-case study, sought to address how leaders of educational institutions are responding to the changes within the educational environment. Questions 3 and 4 within the interview guide addressed the impact change adaptation has on leaders' professional experience and ability to respond to changes. Research Question 2 sought to gain leaders' purview of the predominant changes impacting the educational landscape and a leader's response to such changes. Questions 6 and 7 of the interview guide addressed leaders' identification of changes impacting the educational landscape and how they would prioritize such changes. Research Question 3 addressed the impact organizational culture has on a leader's ability to respond to changes within the educational climate. Questions 5 and 8 of the interview guide addressed how change adaptation impacts how leaders respond to organizational constituents.

A researcher, as a data collector, must carefully construct and conduct interviews, as a poor interview will produce poor quality and poor outcomes (Creswell, 2016; Moser & Korstjens, 2018). I was responsible for posing follow-up questions, as is customary for semi-structured interviews, collecting the responses, and creating field notes, which is the responsibility of the qualitative researcher. Additionally, I secured the data and ensured privacy for research participants by securing the data collected on a personal computer, with two-step authentication to access folders containing data. All data collected is found in the appendices section of this qualitative case study.

A researcher provides comfortability and privacy which can be accomplished through mindfulness of recording equipment, consent forms, participant information sheets, and even beverages and tissues (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012). Researchers take active steps, such as, posting do not disturb signs and silencing electronic devices to avoid interruption during an interview.

Interviews should be appropriate length, not be hurried or stopped, and have natural completion. Throughout the interview, I engaged in active listening, as the primary focus was to concentrate on what is said in the interview in addition to being alert to cues and nonverbal cues.

This single-case study used semi-structured interview methodology. A semi-structured interview ensures data are captured in specific areas, while still allowing for flexibility in order to incorporate research participants' personality and perspective. The type of interview I utilized was tailored to the research question, the characteristics of the research participants, and my preference. Interview methodologists have found that a qualitative researcher cannot glean from interview results and claim objectivity in such findings (Qu & Dumay, 2011). I considered additional insights to offer critical reflection of structured, semi-structured, and unstructured interviews. A qualitative researcher must be cautious in that oversimplifying and idealizing an interview and research participants can result in an ineffective interview (Rabionet, 2009). Conducting qualitative research interviews should not be trivialized but characteristic of intensive listening, note taking, careful planning, and sufficient preparation. In order for a qualitative researcher to collect interview data that contributes to the research study, a qualitative researcher must gain expertise in the area and use that expertise to create informed interview questions. Interviews require a combination of respect and curiosity along with a systematic effort to hear and understand the voices of the research participants.

Data Organization Plan

Johnson et al. (2010) provided strategies as to how a qualitative researcher plans, organizes, collects, manages, stores, retrieves, analyzes, and writes about data in an efficient way. The data collected in this single-case study was organized considering such. File folders were created on a secured personal computer. These folders were organized by research

participants with subfolders categorized by the source of data. The personal computer was secured with a password. Additionally, the personal computer had a two-step authentication to access folders containing data. All contents collected were available to me, the program director, and my doctoral committee, upon request.

As qualitative research results in mounds of narrative, whether conducted on a large or small scale, methodology depends largely depends upon eliciting information from research participants. The structured qualitative research includes questions that are framed by the researcher to systematically elicit answers from research participants, as doing such assists the researcher to obtain, store, organize, and analyze data efficiently and effectively (Qu & Dumay, 2011). A fundamentally important decision for the qualitative researcher is the software program that serves as an integrative tool with varied functions and purposes. This single-case study used a combination of Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Outlook, Zoom, SurveyMonkey, and NVivo, where applicable.

For this single-case study, interviews were digitally recorded and transferred to the created file for storage and transcription to identify emergent themes. All questionnaires and field notes were secured in subfolders. The recording device was secured by lock in a drawer where only I had access. Questionnaires were retrieved from research participants electronically and immediately secured in the appropriate subfolder. Field notes were generated electronically and directly saved to my personal computer, secured by password. After data contents were collected and secured, verbatim interview transcripts were created from the digital recordings. I created an inventory spreadsheet, as a work unit, to provide expedient reference. The inventory spreadsheet included the type of data collected along with date and location specifics. The inventory spreadsheet was restricted and accessed only by me, the program director, and my

doctoral committee. The primary organization technique for this single-case study consisted of password protected files using two-step authentication. After being stored for a minimum of 3 years, the data collected electronically will be removed from the personal computer irreversibly.

To maintain efficient recording and management of work units, (Castillo-Montoya, 2016; Johnson et al., 2010), suggests researchers compile work units. A unit of work is a file, usually constructed in Microsoft Word, that denotes the date, time, location, and focus specifics. All units of work standard heading information, file names, participant names, locations, descriptions, and information pertinent to the research being conducted. The file name includes the type of work being done, researcher, date, and specifics to the research participant or not. The researcher is responsible for the unique location for storing digital files and transcripts, as it is customary to protect the privacy and integrity of the information with a password.

Summary of Data Collection and Organization

Onwuegbuzie et al. (2010) underscored the importance of debriefing after interviews are conducted. Debriefing questions should include concepts such as researcher's interview experience, understanding of the participants, depth of knowledge of nonverbal communication, the interpretation of the researcher, the impact the research had on the researcher, how the research impacted participants, ethical and political issues, and any problems stemming from the collection of data. To promote effective communication throughout the single-case study, I electronically invited interviewees to serve as possible research participants. The electronic communication outlined the intent and scope of the research, interview process, and consent form (see Appendix A) for review. Upon acceptance, research participants were asked to schedule a time for their interview along with a copy of the consent form prior to the interview or receipt of questionnaire. To exercise due diligence, I reviewed the consent form with research

participants, obtained a signature to engage in research, and began the semi-structured interview and dissemination of the questionnaire. Interviews were open-ended in structure coupled with follow-up questions as described in the interview schedule.

Ultimately, a qualitative researcher must exercise reflexivity before and after the research is conducted to ensure accuracy in context and understanding is achieved (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2010; Sutton & Austin, 2015). The four main sources of data collection in qualitative research include interviews, observations, focus groups, and document analysis have undergone technological improvisation in the 21st century to respond to a changing research landscape. Reflexivity requires researchers to not only reflect, but clearly articulate their viewpoint and subjectivities for consumers of the research to understand the lens through which the questions were asked, data was collected, and how findings were reported, as doing such results in quality research. This was underscored by the transcription of interviews and the provision of such to research participants to review and ensure accuracy of its contents. Additionally, I reviewed the results of the questionnaires and created a narrative of the field notes gathered from the interview to substantiate the position of the research results and enrich the data.

Data Analysis

As qualitative research gains prominence in the social sciences, how to analyze collected data and the decisions a researcher must make in regard to research design and analytical process are of importance (Mannion et al., 2016; Skjott Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019). Qualitative researchers are tasked with analyzing non-numerical data which is often captured through field notes, case studies, audio/video recordings, questionnaires, and interview transcriptions. Case studies are appropriate when a researcher is seeking balanced structure in question standardization, understanding of the complexities associated with real-life context, and

establishing themes. The decisions a qualitative researcher must make in preparation for the data analysis process focus on an established research question and research design, a thorough understanding of the existent literature, and the collection of data documented in a form allowing for systematic analysis.

For novice qualitative researchers, current material on coding is either too comprehensive or too superficial to be used in practicality (Saldaña, 2015). It is important to note the process of coding is easy, however, coding well can be challenging. In essence, these words and phrases provide summary, saliency, essentiality, and evocative attributes to collected data. In qualitative research, coding is used to conduct thematic analysis, which identifies themes through analyzing word and sentence structures (Skjott Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019). Coding, as systematic analysis, although laborious, offers rigor to qualitative research. It allows for the acquisition of comprehensive and thorough insight into the data collected, while making the data easily accessible and retrievable to the researcher. Coding also sorts and structures data collected, fosters transparency, ensures validity, and promotes the voice of research participants which is characteristic of sound data analysis.

I began data analysis by reviewing verbatim transcripts, listening to audio/video recordings, and reviewing field notes. In addition to me reading the transcripts, research participants were asked to review the contents of the interview transcripts and provide any additional information, if necessary, to ensure accuracy and offer clarification. In this first phase, I identified descriptive statements to aid in the identification of themes (Saldaña, 2015). These statements were compared against the interview recordings and field notes. Real-time data analysis was utilized in this single-case study, as analysis coincided with data collection as opposed to after data collection. This allowed me to ensure relevance and precise follow-up

questions to prioritize context in data collection and allows for the data collected to guide the analysis of data.

Emergent Ideas

I prioritized the research problem and aligned it with the professional and academic literature on how institutional leaders respond and adapt to change. I used deductive coding to aid in flexibility and alignment with the qualitative study's purpose. Doing so allowed me to better understand the themes identified in the data analysis phase. The process of coding required me to become familiar with the data as cautioned by Caulfield (2020) and Saldaña (2015). I identified six themes aligned with the conceptual framework and adjusted for data that emerged from the data analysis process. Data was classified, prioritized, integrated, and synthesized to best represent the data collected. I clustered codes to identify patterns while conducting theoretical triangulation.

In addition to the six overarching themes, I found two emergent ideas within the data. I offered the two emergent ideas as recommendations for further study. Research participants discussed the impact the pandemic had on their mental health and how sexism was a leadership behavior that impedes successful change adaptation. The mental health of education administrators was an emerging idea within the data outside of the conceptual framework. Research participants discussed the fatigue associated with leadership and how the pandemic exasperated it. They shared how they had to be especially mindful of taking care of themselves during the pandemic and how grateful they were for the support of their institutions. The data also revealed sexism to be rampant in higher education. Female leaders discussed the challenges they have faced throughout their careers. I also discovered the purview of a male leader that

expressed how he appreciated working under the leadership of female administrators and that higher education must promote women in leadership.

Coding Themes

Coding is the simplistic operation of a qualitative researcher to identify meaning through segmentation of data collected and then labeling segments with code (Medelyan, 2020; Saldaña, 2015). I used coding as a qualitative data analysis measure as it largely examines and interprets data collected to understand its contents. Although coding can be performed in various ways, I decided against the use of color coding, where each code has a designated color because this is typical for smaller research projects, having limited amounts of data, to use. Doing such is accomplished with software such as Microsoft Word and Microsoft Excel, as such software allow for texts and images to be moved from data documents into newly created documents using copy-and-paste functions. Due to this single-case study having larger amounts of data, I used NVivo to code the data, as software programs are useful and allow for data analysis, delve deeper into the data, offer better presentation of the data collected and findings, and result in higher quality. However, as a novice researcher, I was mindful that software programs have the potential to generate too many codes, become mechanistic in nature, and lack reflexivity, analytical depth, and focus.

Before a researcher begins coding an interview, they must decide what type of transcription to use. Qualitative researchers can choose among verbatim, intelligent, or edited transcriptions (Medelyan, 2020). This single-case study used verbatim transcription, which transcribe every word to include pauses, stuttering, and filler words to best represent the context the research participant conveyed. Intelligent transcription was not used, as it offers interpretation excluding pauses, stutters, and filler words. Edited transcriptions are more

appropriate when transcripts will be published to audiences, as they are cleaned up and edited for readability and clarity. After I transcribed the interview data verbatim, the interview was organized in a narrative form. The same approach was taken for the coding of the questionnaires and field notes. After the data collected from the interviews, questionnaires, and field notes were put into narrative form, the research used deductive coding.

The first step in the coding process is to determine what coding method will be used (Skjott Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019). Traditionally, qualitative research extracts codes directly from the data collected and develops codes from the phrases and terms of the research participants. This approach to coding is an inductive approach. An inductive approach to research does not use a theoretical framework, which allows for the codes to closely mirror the contents of the data as opposed to the prior ideas of the researcher. Inductive coding is more appropriate when conducting an exploratory approach to research as an attempt to offer credible interpretations. Although completely loyal to the data collected, inductive coding has risks of complication and lack of focus, which should be taken into consideration by the novice researcher. I used deductive coding to narrow the focus by identifying a pre-defined list of codes aligned with the conceptual framework prior to collecting data (Saldaña, 2015; Skjott Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019).

I prioritized the research problem and aligned it with the existent literature on the subject matter with some theoretical presence. I chose deductive coding to allow for flexibility and fit, as the purpose of the study is to better understand themes drawn from the research study. The coding process required me to read through the data and establish familiarization (Caulfield, 2020; Saldaña, 2015). I identified five to 10 codes derived from the established conceptual framework, adjusting if differences emerge within the data not previously identified in the

conceptual framework. Throughout the coding process, I classified, prioritized, integrated, and synthesized data to capture the essence of the text. Lastly, I clustered codes together to identify similar and regular patterns for analysis and to conduct theoretical triangulation.

Interpretations

After an extensive review of identified themes, I ensured themes were the best representation of the data (Caulfield, 2020; Yi, 2018). I compared the themes to the data set to determine if anything was missing, if identified themes reflect the data, and what changes can be made. If themes became problematic, I determined if themes should be rearranged, combined, or discarded. Once I had a finalized list of acceptable themes, each theme was named and defined. The naming and defining of a theme involves identifying meaning and how these meanings help to better understand the data and answer posed research questions. I named themes succinctly in an understandable manner. Lastly, I introduced identified themes and reiterated the research problem, research questions, and the purpose of the study. The summation of the thematic analysis included how often the themes occurred, their meanings, and how the analysis addressed posed research questions.

I used a thematic approach to analysis, which is appropriate when trying to identify someone's views or experiences from a qualitative data set, such as an interview transcript (Caulfield, 2020; Yi, 2018). Thematic analysis includes familiarization, coding, theme generation, theme review, the defining and naming of themes, and the write-up of findings. I became familiarized with the data by transcribing interviews, reading through the data, taking notes, and review. After becoming familiar with the data, I thoroughly highlighted phrases and sentences within the sections and created codes to describe its contents. The information was then collated into groups by code, as a systematic overview of the main points and meanings

recurring within the data. I reviewed the codes to identify any patterns and create themes based from these codes. Themes are typically broader than codes. I combined several codes into a single theme, where appropriate, as is commonplace in the creation of themes. Throughout this process, I discarded any codes that were vague or irrelevant and identify codes that essentially become themes.

Data Representation

I began thematic analysis after transcribing the audio files and creating verbatim transcripts in NVivo. I created parent categories in NVivo to align with the theoretical framework and posed research questions. I used these parent codes as a framework to conduct thematic analysis. I looked for repetitive phrases to aid in theme generation. The parent categories were as follows:

- cultural elements within liberal arts institutions

- implications for liberal arts institutions

- leadership behaviors contributing to successful change adaptation

- leadership behaviors impeding successful change adaptation

- leadership classification

- leadership cultivation

- leadership style

- predominant changes in the current educational climate

I used these parent codes to aid in organization throughout the data analysis process. When I began coding the verbatim transcripts, I created child codes. The child codes were indicative of repetitive phrases and concepts I identified. Before incorporating the perspectives of the research participants, I was sure to reference the participants using their numeric

pseudonym to promote anonymity. The child codes identified throughout data analysis that

resulted in overarching themes included the following:

- tradition, mission, and organizational culture

- resource management, meeting organizational needs, and organizational

  constituencies

- resource management, meeting student needs, and changing generational perceptions

- collaboration, communication, curiosity, and the ability to recognize change

- transformational, transactional, and adaptive leadership style

- value proposition of the liberal arts, revenue and enrollment, pandemic, and diversity

Analysis for Triangulation

I used methods triangulation to increase validity through the use of an interview guide

(see Appendix C), questionnaire (see Appendix D), and field notes (see Appendix E) to inform

the results from various angles until saturation is reached. The use of methods triangulations

decreases any deficiencies and biases that can arise throughout the research process (Carter et al.,

2014; Hales, 2010). The strength of one method of data collection and analysis may compensate

for any weakness of another data collection method. Methods triangulation is comparable to a

mixed methods approach, which is common among the social sciences. This triangulation

method is used to enhance, augment, and offer clarity to the results of another. It is a form of

data triangulation that places greater emphasis on using data collected using different methods

versus the researcher having to collect data from various programs, populations, and locations.

I used the interview guide (see Appendix C), questionnaire (see Appendix D), and field

notes (see Appendix E) to perform methods triangulation to increase the validity of the research

results and to determine varying angles until saturation was reached. I reached saturation after

interviewing 23 research participants, as no new themes were identified. Through using methods triangulation, I decreased any deficiencies and biases that may have presented themselves (Carter et al., 2014; Hales, 2010). I was the primary instrument of data collection. I collected the data directly from the research participants through the questionnaires (see Appendix D), interview guide (see Appendix C), and compiled field notes (see Appendix E).

Summary of Data Analysis

In order for the qualitative research to transition from coding to thematic analysis, although seemingly distinct, these two phases are interrelated processes that evolve together (Mannion et al., 2016; Medelyan, 2020). The coding of data itself is a mechanical process that was conducted using NVivo for this single-case study. I used categorized codes to reflect themes. The identification of themes, within these codes, occurred when I derived an overall interpretation. I demonstrated insight to identify emergent themes. This was accomplished using analytical memorization to enable emerging themes in the data. To demonstrate undeniability in the research findings, I formed detailed descriptions, specific examples, and thorough discussion. The larger categories were identified as overarching themes and the smaller categories denoted as supporting themes. After the themes were established, I depicted research findings in narrative form, boxed displays, and matrices, where appropriate, using Microsoft Word. Boxed displays are appropriate when highlighting specific narrative. Matrices are appropriate when multiple categories are cross classified. At the conclusion of identifying themes, my goal was for the data to have meaningful order.

To elevate the level of trustworthiness, I employed the five principles of authenticity criteria (Chenail, 2011; Rabionet, 2009). These five principles are fairness, ontological authenticity, educative authenticity, catalytic authenticity, and tactical authenticity. Fairness in

data collection defines the representation of balance and the extent to which information is solicited and honored throughout the research evaluation process. Ontological authenticity is the degree to which research participants' awareness has been affected by their involvement in the study. Educative authenticity refers to the degree to which research participants are aware of but not in agreement with those not representative of the participant's group. Catalytic authenticity refers to the new perspective research participants will have at the conclusion of the research how new perspectives will impact their decisions and actions. Tactical authenticity is the applicative posture research participants assume as their level of understanding is elevated. I employed all five principles of the authenticity criteria throughout the data collection, analysis, and evaluative phases of this single-case study.

Reliability and Validity

According to Cho and Trent (2006), in qualitative research, reliability and validity are vital, as a researcher's subjectivity can affect the interpretation of the data collected. Thus, a qualitative researcher must ensure reliability and validity are at the forefront of their research, as qualitative data is often met with skepticism within the field of academic research. The reliability of a research study provides clarity to otherwise seemingly confusing events to aid in understanding. The validity of a research study is achieved through saturation when consistency is found among the samples. A qualitative researcher can also accomplish validity through seeking various interpretations of the data collected.

Credibility within qualitative research is contingent upon the researcher's abilities and efforts (Hayashi, 2019; Rose et al., 2020). In qualitative research, a study can be reliable, but not be valid. However, a qualitative research study cannot be valid without being reliable. Although an analogous debate as to how to define reliability and validity in qualitative research, of utmost

importance is the promotion of rigor. For the novice researcher, grasping the complexities of reliability and validity along with its ramifications for the research outcome is crucial. Qualitative inquiry is not an easy feat as this form on inquiry is more complex than conventional investigation. As data collection measures are repeated extensively, often through the researcher as a sole data collector, rigor is demonstrated by the qualitative researcher through these reassessments and reiterations.

Reliability and validity prove their essentiality as qualitative researchers hold the position that rigor within qualitative research equates, conceptually, to reliability, validity, and quality in research (Spiers et al., 2018). Although reliability and validity are operationalized in quantitative research, reliability and validity have become a measure used to add quality to qualitative approaches to inquiry. Rigor, as a cornerstone, to reliability and validity, is characteristic of being exact, careful, thorough, and accurate in conducting research. The demonstration of this trifecta lends itself to trustworthiness, which directly addresses the criticisms of subjectivity in qualitative research. Qualitative researchers are challenged with replacing the concepts of reliability and validity with trustworthiness as central concepts, as trustworthiness refers to the quality, authenticity, and truthfulness of research findings.

A qualitative researcher establishes trustworthiness in their findings when they have achieved saturation. Qualitative researchers conclude data collection and data analysis when saturation is achieved (Carter et al., 2014). Saturation has gained widespread acceptance in qualitative research as an essential methodological principle, as it is characteristic of reliable and valid research results. Saturation indicates that the data collected and analyzed aligns with the research questions, is sufficient, and further data collection or data analysis is not needed.

However, there is uncertainty in the research community as to how saturation is achieved and its role across different methodologies.

Reliability

As saturation lends itself to reliability, there are four models a qualitative researcher can employ to achieve it (Fusch et al., 2018; Saunders et al., 2018). The four models of saturation are theoretical saturation, inductive thematic saturation, a priori thematic saturation, and data saturation. Theoretical saturation focuses on sampling, the development of theoretical categories, and is related to grounded theory methodology. Inductive thematic saturation focuses on analysis and is related to the emergence of new codes and themes. A priori thematic saturation focuses on sampling and relates to codes and themes exemplified in the data collected. Data saturation focuses on data collection and is related to the extent to which new data is repeated in the previous data. I employed a combination of a priori thematic saturation and inductive thematic saturation. The coding process began with predetermined codes, which align with the research concept, as is characteristic of a priori thematic saturation. However, I considered emergent new codes and themes as they appeared in the data analysis phase, which is characteristic of inductive thematic saturation.

Conceptually, qualitative research is characteristic of discussion and depth beyond the periphery (Cypress, 2017; Noble & Smith, 2015). Although qualitative research is not a precise science, qualitative researchers must consider the array of standards to ensure their research yields reliable results. I ensured the research endeavor is credible and congruent by using established research methods, sampling procedures, and iterative questioning. The questions within the interview guide were created in alignment with the existent literature and open-ended were created with neutrality to capture the authentic experience of the research participant. I

asked each research participant the same questions and in the same order. At the conclusion of the interview, I transcribed each interview verbatim for additional review.

Typically, qualitative case studies are applicable to a smaller population and a qualitative researcher cannot infer that their findings are true to larger populations (Mannion et al., 2016; Rose et al., 2020). However, transferability is one measure I demonstrated to aid in reliability through the consideration that research findings within broadened contexts and how these results would be of value. This value adds to the reliability of the research and can serve as a catalyst for qualitative researchers to continue on the research path forward. Thus, I ensured the process was dependable to accomplish such. I ensured the process, as to how the study was conducted, is detailed in such a way that another qualitative researcher could repeat the study and achieve comparable results. Qualitative research presents the challenge of demonstrating objectivity. However, I ensured that research results and themes are identified through solid evidence captured from research participants and are methodologically sound.

Validity

As previously discussed, there are some qualitative researchers that would suggest validity is not associated with qualitative research, and deem validity more aligned or interchangeable with quality, rigor, and trustworthiness. Validity, conceptually, indicates research findings are consistent with the parameters set forth within a qualitative research study (Spiers et al., 2018). Thus, I began validity measures through conducting ethical recruiting. I chose research participants that are truly representative of the sample. I screened each research participant and ensured they attest to the parameters set forth in the research study. At the conclusion of the interviews, I demonstrated internal validity by ensuring the detailed accounts accurately reflect the experience of the research participant.

It is difficult to assess and assure validity in qualitative research, as qualitative research can be subjective in nature whether in business, education, or the social sciences (Mannion et al., 2016; Noble & Smith, 2015). Validity in qualitative research is essential, as qualitative inquiry often informs decisions that have important implications. Although qualitative research is not extrapolated to larger populations, validity can be established in qualitative research in a meaningful way. To accomplish this, I exercised reflexivity of identified themes and concepts. In addition to reflexivity, as a data collector, I checked for personal bias and mitigated such through bracketing prior to data collection and debriefing after interviews are conducted.

It is important to note that saturation in data collection and data analysis is difficult to define as an event or a process when establishing validity (Carter et al., 2014; Fusch et al., 2018). Saturation of data is more commonly understood to be a point where further collection and analysis become unproductive. Qualitative researchers must also consider conceptual depth. As it relates to a case study, has depth of understanding been achieved as defined in the research framework. The qualitative researcher must determine how much saturation is enough, whether one additional interview would result in the data analysis becoming more rich or insightful. This desire to confirm such can leave a researcher with a degree of uncertainty or equivocation. In numerous case studies, although the researcher claims saturation, it is not uncommon to still collect data as an attempt to confirm or validate their claim. I selected a sample size based on the recommendation for qualitative studies of this nature, while considering the complexities and level of depth for the posed research questions. Thus, providing the best opportunity to achieve data saturation.

Bracketing

Prior to data collection and data analysis, I used bracketing to mitigate any potentially detrimental effects preconceptions may have on the research process (Gearing, 2004; Sorsa et al., 2015). Although phenomenological in origin, bracketing has become common place in qualitative research throughout the data collection and data analysis phases. Bracketing is used as an attempt to identify any unacknowledged preconceptions in respect to the research, given the close proximity a researcher may have with the research topic. The intent behind bracketing is to remove any bias throughout the data collection and data analysis processes, while also protecting the researcher from the spillover effects associated with exploring emotionally challenging studies (Tufford & Newman, 2012). These challenges may leave a researcher exhausted and adopt the mindset that the research is arduous. If this occurs, research results and interpretations may become skewed. However, bracketing also has the potential to facilitate a researcher's reflexivity and depth throughout the data collection and data analysis phases of research, which may result in multifaceted analysis and results. Bracketing requires a researcher to set aside their preconceived notions and beliefs to remain objective. It is important to note, research participants were not asked to participate in the process of bracketing, as their subjectivity was essential in capturing context and answering posed research questions.

Summary of Reliability and Validity

Ultimately, assessing the reliability and validity of research findings requires a researcher to make judgements about the soundness and appropriateness of the methods used to collect and analyze data (Cypress, 2017; Hayashi, 2019; Rose et al., 2020). A novice researcher must be especially mindful of the criticisms associated with qualitative research such as its lack of rigor, poor justification of methods, lack of transparency in data analysis, researcher bias, and lack of

consensus regarding the standards to which qualitative research is judged. It was important to understand the inherent differences between qualitative and quantitative methods, as it relates to their philosophical positioning, purpose, and alternative frameworks for establishing rigor. Reliability is characteristic of consistency in data collection and data analysis, whereas, validity refers to the integrity and application of research methods with precision and accuracy. Triangulation and saturation are strategies to test and ensure reliability and validity are present within the research findings. A qualitative researcher must further demonstrate truth, consistency, neutrality, and applicability strategies to ensure credibility.

Summary of Section 2 and Transition

This qualitative case study sought to better understand the impact change adaptation has on institutional leaders' capabilities, as the changes occurring in the 21st century necessitate institutions reassert themselves to remain formidable. The posed research questions explored leadership behaviors contributing to successful adaption. I conducted open-ended interviews with institutional leaders at liberal arts institutions in the Midwest. Section 2 began with the reiteration of the purpose statement and detailed the role of the researcher and participants. Additionally, the research method and design were outlined and offered a discussion of the population and sampling. Section 2 concluded with the discussion of how data would be collected, analyzed, and strategies to achieve reliability and validity. The foundation of the research project was essential to conducting a successful qualitative case study. I prioritized reliability and validity throughout the data collection and data analysis phases of this project. The data organization plan and data collection plan were successfully executed to promote the anonymity of research participants and protect the integrity of the research. I clearly defined the

sample population and its suitability for this qualitative study. The following section is a detailed

account of the experience of 23 liberal arts leaders in the Midwest.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Section 3 is the culmination of this qualitative case study, as it details its results. The problem in this qualitative case study was the leadership crisis in the current educational landscape—specifically, as it related to change adaptation, or lack thereof. The survival of institutions of higher learning, particularly private liberal arts institutions in the Midwest, is under the threat of extinction. I formulated research questions informed by the professional and academic literature, inspired by the priorities of liberal arts institutions, and an educational landscape where value propositions have been redefined and social implications have changed. Section 3 begins with an overview of the study and a presentation of the findings of the qualitative case study. The presentation of the findings included the themes I discovered, the interpretation of those themes through representation and visualization of data, and their relationship to the findings. An in-depth discussion of the findings' applicability to professional practice, recommendations for further study, reflections, and summative comments concluded this section.

Overview of the Study

I began this exploration by conducting a thorough review of the academic and professional literature on the predominant changes impacting liberal arts institutions to better understand the leadership behaviors that promote or impede successful change adaptation. The intent of the literature review was to offer alignment among the research problem, purpose, and research questions to address how traditional and nontraditional leaders perceive and adapt to change within the current educational climate. The exhaustive review included at least 50 peer reviewed references with 75% of the references published within the last five years. The scholarly articles were obtained through Liberty University's Jerry Falwell library. Additionally,

texts used to underscore qualitative research design, leadership, and biblical integration were retained by me from the coursework phase of the doctoral program.

The research participants included university leaders at liberal arts institutions in the Midwest, as these leaders were uniquely qualified to highlight relevant experiences and perceptions to aid me in answering the posed research questions. Research participants were not chosen to participate in this qualitative case study based on demographic characteristics such as race, age, gender, socioeconomic background, or ethnicity. They were invited to participate using a streamlined approach that involved identifying university leaders at liberal arts colleges in the Midwest by gathering information about research candidates. The decision to participate in this qualitative research study was voluntary. I electronically sent a recruitment letter (see Appendix B) and consent form (see Appendix A) to potential participants for their review and consideration. After receiving the signed consent form, I scheduled a mutually convenient time to have a Zoom interview. Prior to the scheduled interview, I electronically sent the questionnaire for participants to complete. I used purposeful sampling in choosing the research participants based on their qualities. The sample size for this qualitative case study was 23 university leaders of liberal arts institutions in the Midwest. Research participants were chosen purposefully due to their leadership role in their institution. Saunders et al. (2018) noted the adequacy of sampling was contingent upon the degree of development throughout the research process.

This qualitative case study was completed within the third and fourth phases of the dissertation process over a 16-week period. Due to the pandemic and time commitment of university leaders, I had to consider possible limitations in participant availability. I was able to stay aligned with the proposed timetable in the field study plan and meet the major project

milestones. Research participants were selected by Week 3, data was collected between Weeks 4 and 8, data analysis was completed by Week 12, and research findings were written and finalized between Weeks 13 to 16.

I coded descriptive statements to aid in theme identification using real-time analysis as Saldaña (2015) suggested. This allowed me to ask precise follow-up questions and guide data analysis. I created codes to describe the contents by highlighting phrases and sentences within the interview transcript. I established patterns by compiling highlighted phrases and sentences which resulted in a systematic overview of recurrences in the data. After patterns were identified, I identified themes. I gave prominence to codes that were relevant and categorized less prominent codes as further recommendations to study.

Presentation of the Findings

It is important to note the transition from coding data collected to performing thematic analysis, as these two processes are distinct but are interrelated in that they evolve simultaneously according to Mannion et al. (2016) and Medelyan (2020). I used NVivo 12 to code the data collected, as it is a mechanical process, and reflect themes. To identify themes, I derived an interpretation of the themes from the codes. Analytical memorization and emergent themes demonstrated undeniability in the findings, as I formulated detailed descriptions and specific examples to provide thorough discussion. I deemed larger categories as overarching themes. After establishing the themes, I depicted the findings in narrative form and through visualization, as doing so allowed me to provide meaningfulness to the data collected and ease in understanding.

Themes Discovered

I identified six overarching themes at the conclusion of thematic analysis. The themes were identified in alignment with the professional and academic literature, research questions and established conceptual framework. The overarching themes are the outcomes of this qualitative case study. Its results are the culmination of this qualitative case study, as it depicts the purviews of 23 institutional leaders of liberal arts institutions in the Midwest.

1. Leadership cultivation and training are essential for traditional leaders.

2. Leadership behaviors contributing to successful change adaptation are collaboration, effective communication, curiosity, and the ability to recognize change.

3. Predominant changes that exist within the current educational climate are the changing value proposition of the liberal arts, revenue and enrollment considerations, addressing diversity, and the impact of the pandemic on institutions of higher learning.

4. Tradition, mission, and the slow changing nature of institutions are cultural elements that exist within the liberal arts.

5. Leaders must prioritize resource management, student satisfaction, and changing generational perceptions of organizational constituents.

6. Transformational leadership style is essential to the current educational climate.

Interpretation of the Themes

The interpretation of themes began with the understanding of the professional and academic literature review, which was inspired by the research problem, posed research question, and conceptual framework. The professional and academic literature underscored the massive changes occurring within the current educational climate and how institutions must

exhibit dynamism to maintain competitive advantage. Inadequate responses to the predominant changes and their influencers have resulted in a 33% decline as liberal arts institutions are failing to adapt according to Baker and Baldwin (2015). They believed although difficult to navigate, liberal arts colleges can successfully reassert themselves in the 21st century and offer desirable educational products that align with their institutional mission. França Junior (2017) believed leaders must understand the changing perceptions of the liberal arts to adapt to professional and technological ideals. As institutions adopt a business posture that addresses organizational issues as impediments to strategy formulation in alignment with institutional mission, leaders must equip themselves with competencies that promote cultures of learning, listening, and effective communication. According to Brown (2016) traditional leaders are well versed in the academic landscape characteristic of slow-paced change whereas, nontraditional leaders are accustomed to rapidly changing, competitive landscapes increasing their capability to adapt to change. Ultimately, this requires a leadership purview able to recognize and respond to such changes, as is characteristic of business leaders having to demonstrate such in their respective fields. The following themes are offered through an interpretive lens for institutional leaders as they respond to the current educational climate.

Overarching Theme 1: Leadership Cultivation and Training

I found that leadership cultivation and training were essential for traditional leaders. This, in part, is due to the academic trajectory traditional leaders take versus that of nontraditional leaders. Traditional leaders are characterized as not having come through the full-time tenured or faculty track to lead an institution of higher learning according to Beardsley (2018) and Gardner (2017). Participant 23 stated:

And I don't know, again, if we've done a great job at developing those skills. A faculty

member with a terminal degree, with all due respect, may not be qualified for some of

these roles, but somebody with a better understanding, strategic management, might be.

This purview spoke to the essentiality of leader preparedness and a call to reassess the process

for promotion. Participant 23 impactfully stated:

But the problem is that we don't create other avenues for people to grow or to increase

their compensation or to be promoted or to be recognized. So we've kind of fallen into

this trap where we just kind of promote and we just kind of hope and pray that they have

the skills that we need them to have.

Although it is important to note there is no widely accepted definition for a traditional leader.

Whereas nontraditional leaders are defined as institutional leaders that have not come through

the full-time tenured or faculty track to lead an institution of higher learning, according to

Beardsley (2018) and Gardner (2017). Of the 22 completed anonymous questionnaires, 11

leaders identified as traditional leaders and 11 leaders identified as nontraditional leaders.

Traditional leaders can be exemplary faculty members promoted to administrative positions and

not have an administrative credential. Whereas nontraditional leaders do not possess academic

bias and have administrative credentials associated with their role.

It was important to note the longevity of leaders to better understand their experiences

and how their leadership was cultivated. Participant 20 stated, "I mean, I've been in higher ed

now for 37 years, 37 years, I've seen massive changes." I found that 16 leaders had worked at

educational institutions for more than 20 years, one leader worked at educational institutions

between 15 to 20 years, one leader worked at educational institutions between 10 and 15 years,

four leaders worked at educational institutions between 5 and 10 years, and no leaders worked at

educational institutions between 0 to 5 years. I found it important to note that 10 leaders spent 0 to 5 years working outside of an educational institution, eight leaders spent between 5 and 10 years working outside of educational institutions, four leaders spent between 10 and 15 years working outside of an educational institution, whereas no leaders spent 15 to 20 years or more than 20 years working outside of educational institutions.

According to the data collected through the electronic questionnaires, interview transcripts, and field notes, leadership preparedness occurred informally through professional experiences. I found that leaders' professional experiences affected their leadership approaches. Research participants believed their various and vast professional experiences shaped their leadership style, leadership behaviors, and preparedness as a leader. They noted a team like atmosphere where trust, collaboration and communication were present were most desirable. Particularly as such environments promoted good organizational hygiene and an organizational culture conducive to successful outcomes. Participant 12 underscored, "And so I say all that to say that the implications are around leadership and what are we looking for in new presidents and senior administrators and their ability to foment change, to make it a cultural reality." This purview suggested that leaders must be able to successfully adapt to change to constitute impact.

To accomplish this, as relational entities, liberal arts institutions have the opportunity to adopt a collaborative posture. While autonomy was essential to learning from organizational successes and failures. The opportunity to discover and define the type of leader they were, they found to be important. However, this was not found by most leaders deliberately or directly, but through witnessing the types of leadership behaviors that did not promote organizational success or hygiene and those that did. During thematic analysis, leadership cultivation and leadership preparedness were referenced 39 times. Thus, I determined that although learning occurred

informally and through observation, deliberation in leadership development are essential to successfully navigate institutions developing business postures.

Overarching Theme 2: Leadership Behaviors Contributing to Successful Change Adaptation

The professional and academic literature highlighted the diminishing efficacy of conventional management models in the 21st century educational landscape according to Glyzina et al. (2016). They found that institutional leaders must be competent in forecasting, creating strategy aligned with the institutional mission, and efficiently manage financial resources. However, these skillsets conflict with conventional leadership approaches in higher education, as the promotion of such skillsets are deemed essential. Cosenz and Nato (2018) believed the current educational landscape is requiring leaders to understand business models, contemporary approaches to leadership, and collaboration to best serve organizational constituencies, as doing so demonstrates both academic and professional prowess. They noted the successful management of the student experience, organizational constituencies, and resource management is accomplished through creative vision, curiosity, and accurately assessing and adapting to the changing market. They advised institutions to adopt business modelling to identify critical successful factors as they formulate strategy to respond the changes in the educational landscape and better understand the root causes to the influencers of these changes. It is important to note the adoption of such models is not a deviation from their core values, but an aid as they reassert themselves to a landscape characteristic of change.

This qualitative case study found that leadership behaviors contributing to successful change include collaboration, effective communication, curiosity, and the ability to recognize change. Collaboration was referenced 19 times throughout thematic analysis by Participants 2, 5,

7, 8, 11, 18, 19, and 23. Muluneh and Gedifew (2018) echoed that organizational change is effectively implemented when there is collaboration between organizational constituents when creating strategy. He found this to be an essential investment into an institution's financial and human resources. Participant 11 stated:

> I think I go back to our ability to collaborate, but putting something on the table, somebody takes the initiative to put a draft together and puts it out on the table. Nobody is territorial. Nobody is offended, and it just generates more thoughtful processes to have it in place.

Although research participants found collaboration to be essential to successfully compete externally, they also believed successful collaboration should be internally characteristic as it is conducive to authentic collaboration. This is pertinent as institutions are having to rid themselves of siloed behaviors and demonstrate cross collaboration within their institutions.

Ghasemy et al. (2017) found the combination of a leader's capability coupled with managerial competence impact a leader's performance. They noted the essentiality of role generic and role-specific competencies such as effective communication when trying to diagnose institutional issues and formulate strategy. Participant 18 echoed this sentiment by offering, "I think the best positions are, again, those that are institution wide that come out of the president's office or part of the president's cabinet, because that gives you the ability to work across the institution." Communication was referenced 24 times throughout thematic analysis by Participants 2, 5, 7, 8, 11, 13, 14, 16, 17, and 19. Research participants found interpersonal, technological, external, and inclusive forms of communication to be important. Collaborative communication most accurately identifies institutional problems and creates an opportunity for institutional resolve.

Interestingly, curiosity was referenced 17 times throughout thematic analysis by leaders 1, 2, 7, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, and 21. Dima et al. (2019) discussed the essentiality of productivity, as higher education is largely bureaucratic in nature. However, denouncing this inefficiency and traditional roles of autonomy where new ideas are discussed and creative solutions are prioritized, leaders must demonstrate curiosity. Participant 15 simply stated, "And I think one other quality is just questioning." Research participants believed a challenging leader must ask questions to understand why traditions, seemingly unnegotiable, are in place and what that means for an institution going forward. Leaders must also be curious about the happenings within their institution. This is especially significant as institutions serve a vastly changing demographic. It will be important for leaders to understand the needs of their organizational constituencies and discuss this information at the cabinet level, as cabinet must be able to ask the difficult questions. These questions can range from what degree programs to offer, sustainability as it relates to reliance on tuition, to fundraising initiatives. A leader in the current educational landscape must be equipped to have difficult conversations as they attempt to reach institutional resolve. This can be especially difficult within an organizational culture that is allegiant to tradition and questions are perceived as criticisms.

In order to accurately answer these questions, a leader must be able to recognize change is on the horizon. Participant 1 stated, "You have to be able to, first of all, be able to recognize that change is coming." The ability to recognize change was also referenced 17 times throughout thematic analysis by Participants 1, 3, 6, 9,10, 12, 16, 18, 19, 20, and 21. Due to the bureaucratic nature of liberal arts institutions, change can be a glacial process exasperated under extreme conditions. Research participants believed the pandemic to be evidence that higher education can

demonstrate agility and forward-thinking approaches at a quickened pace, as not doing exposed many institutions. Participant 14 stated:

> Students today want to say, why do I have to learn this? Why do I have to sit in this class? And that's a very different mindset than what people were used to when they went to school even 25 years ago. Certainly, I see the most dramatic difference in the last 10 or 15 years.

Leaders who understand these trends will be essential, as they understand what their customers will need in the future, the issues their customers are facing, and how to adequately prepare to address their issues. It will also be important for a leader to demonstrate the level of self-awareness to recognize when their tenure as a leader should end. This will be especially true as higher education prepares to serve a changing generation. Institutions will need leaders who can accurately evaluate a system and successfully adapt, as it will not be in the best interest of an institution to continue on an unproductive, inefficient path.

Overarching Theme 3: Existent Predominant Changes in Current Educational Climate

Woodworth (2016) discussed the challenges associated with the predominant changes in the current educational landscape, as institutions are having to adopt strategic postures to maintain competitive advantage. He urged institutions to assess the current climate for investment opportunities and the needs of their organizational constituents through the prioritization of data analytics and proper allocation of organizational resources, particularly human resources. His suggested that institutions can accomplish their strategic goals by using contemporary approaches to leadership as social capital will be essential, especially with equitable societal contributions to be of major consideration.

I found the existent predominant changes in the current educational climate to be the changing value proposition of the liberal arts, revenue and enrollment considerations, diversity management, and the impact of the pandemic to have large impact on liberal arts institutions. To effectively depict the value proposition of the liberal arts, leaders are having to properly manage what is meant by and understood to be a liberal arts education, as such distinctions are often accompanied with a price. The perception of the price and its relationship to the student experience are of major consideration to institutional leadership, especially those that promote equitability in how they meet a student's financial needs. Participant 1 stated, "I think the value proposition is totally impacting us right now." Student perception of the cost considerations may result in a student believing a public education is more cost-efficient than a private liberal arts experience. Institutional leadership is charged with having to convey the value of the liberal arts education in a meaningful way, a way that showcases the symbiotic relationship between what students perceive as a valuable educational experience. This is particularly challenging when parents, as organizational constituents expect their investment into a college education to result in viable career paths, student loan debt management, and sustainable living, which is ultimately what a liberal arts education can provide. Participant 15 stated, "For more of that business model approach to recruitment and higher ed, of course, those folks who could utilize certain credentialing, not even necessarily degrees." This purview underscores the challenge leadership is tasked with in managing the stigma privatized education translates which is an elite education, which translates to an expensive education that may not be well suited for the contemporary workforce.

The current educational climate has changed in that, consumers are questioning what productivity, traditional concepts, such as tenure, and what a student receives in exchange for

their enrollment to an institution of higher learning. Institutional leaders must adapt to respond to the changing student demographic, technologies, financial considerations, and desire for workforce readiness. The changing value proposition of the liberal arts was referenced 39 times throughout thematic analysis by Participants 3, 6, 9, 12, 14, 15, 16, 18, 20, 21, 22, and 23. Participant 3 offered:

> Our humanities departments are struggling because parents want to make sure that their investment for a college education for their children leads to a job so that their children can pay off student debt and make a living. And we recognize that liberal arts education ultimately does lead to those things

Liberal arts institutions are having to make the case to the changing demographic of student, as generational perceptions are all but traditional. As institutions manage their revenue and enrollment, they must view the student experience as highly impactful. Students are defining high impact experiences as internship and study abroad opportunities while simultaneously learning how to communicate well, engender creativity, and cultivate a historical lens to understand the current and ever-changing landscapes—the hallmarks of a liberal arts education. However, institutional leadership must now consider how to repackage their educational products, as liberal arts institutions traditionally teach how to learn, not role-specific competencies. Participant 15 stated:

> How do we say what's behind the word? So if people have all these different meanings in terms and what they perceive, whatever arts is, what we have, all these things that we know are value pieces, getting the small, intimate learning environment, the ability to be adaptable, having the different transferable skills, and then really specifically honing in

on. How do we tie this into particular disciplines to turn into points of distinction where

we still will talk about the liberal arts?

Liberal arts education, a holistic approach to education, prepares students to adapt and

successfully navigate future endeavors. Leaders must understand that students now have an

expectation of credentialing coupled with the broad-based learning a liberal arts education

provides.

As financial resource managers, institutional leaders must become learned in concepts

such as enrollment management, tuition resets as a revenue stream, and discounting to meet

student needs. Revenue and enrollment were referenced 37 times throughout thematic analysis

by Participants 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, and 21. The current collegiate

consumer will decline enrollment invitations if the financial package is unsuitable. Participant 20

noted:

> I think the dynamic change that's occurring right now is how every university, not just a
>
> liberal arts, but every university is trying to deal with the demographic change that's
>
> going on as the number of traditional students, 18-year-old students leaving high school.
>
> We predict that it's a drop between now in twenty thirty-four seriously drop. How do we
>
> as a college adjust? Do we start picking up nontraditional students? Do we start offering
>
> programs that would be maybe attractive to those type of students? Do you start looking
>
> for students who started a degree and now need to finish it? So, do you refocus? That is
>
> probably the biggest because most liberal arts, most independent private schools from the
>
> state rely on tuition as the biggest part of their revenue. So, solving that problem,
>
> anything else is secondary.

This purview underscored that the prior financial model was heavily reliant and driven by the demand for education per previously established terms. However, this is no longer the case, as enrollment is ultimately determined by the customer. Liberal arts institutions in the Midwest have to be particularly mindful of the changes in rural areas families where families are not having as many children anymore, which has negatively impacted previously anticipated full-time freshman, thus a changing demographic.

This has provided the opportunity for liberal arts institutions in the Midwest to embrace nontraditional students, as those who have not considered changing demographics have jeopardized their enrollment which directly impacts their revenue stream. Participant 1 stated, "I think families and students in particular are very much weighing the investment they have to make in a higher education versus the benefit they're going to get out of it." This is especially troublesome as most independent private liberal arts institutions rely on tuition. It is important to note the balancing act between enrollment, revenue, and tuition may require institutional leaders to creatively respond, however, the impact and subsequent benefit tuition has on enrollment cannot be understated. Thus, filling the gap is largely the result of discounting and auxiliary revenues to offset inevitable tuition increases, especially when institutions do not have endowments and consistent benefactors. Additionally, liberal arts institutions will see the rippling effects free tuition to all students in public institutions has on their enrollment and revenue should the government warrant such.

As liberal arts institutions address financial equity, this study found it of utmost importance and institutional benefit for liberal arts institutions to address issues associated with diversity, equity, and inclusion. Throughout thematic analysis, diversity, equity, and inclusion was referenced 49 times by Participants 1, 3, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, and 22. The

basis for a liberal arts education is one that promotes tolerance and societal promotion of institutional values. Participant 22 stated, "I think one of the things that's needed to transform the liberal arts is what voices are represented, what experiences are represented." The current educational is prime to further social justice missions as evidence to constituents that all persons are valuable in word and in deed. Currently there is an imbalance within the liberal arts institution as some are more willing to take on the hard questions and have the hard discussions necessary to effect change. This will be essential as changing generational perceptions have extinguished conventional thought on how to establish cultural competence. This authenticity must move beyond written policy to students experiencing belonging at their institutions, as admittedly successful implementation of diversity initiatives is not a cultural norm within the liberal arts as a whole. This in large part has historical context and has been exasperated by the current emotional climate in society.

Liberal arts institutions must ensure all voices are captured and heard by institutional leadership. In part, this looks like institutions investing in diverse faculty, as seeing themselves throughout their collegiate experience is essential to fostering this sense of belonging. Institutions must also take a look at their gender makeup at the leadership level, which has been traditionally male. The time for change is long overdue and essential to the conversation on authenticity and deliberation in promoting and evidencing the promotion of inclusion. Participant 22 stated, "I take great hope from not just our younger faculty, but especially our younger and newer faculty, because they're coming to the table with a lot a lot more breadth of voice and experience." If inclusion of thought is a foundational element of a liberal arts education as a product offering, it must be demonstrated internally. There is also an opportunity to demonstrate this as it relates to age of faculty, as traditionally there has not been much diversity in this regard.

Although faculty of all ages are valuable, institutions have the opportunity to be more inclusive of younger, newer faculty as their voices have breadth and experience as well.

I was sure to inform research participants that although the study focused on change adaptation, this topic had been researched for 2 years prior to the onset of the pandemic. However, leaders found the impact the pandemic had on higher education to be noteworthy, as it was referenced 41 times while conducting thematic analysis by Participants 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 12, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, and 22. Characterized as an educational moment in higher education, the pandemic left organizations extinct, while also unveiling emergent leaders. This was seen, in large part, as it related to the bureaucratic structure of higher education, massive technology changes, and how institutions communicate internally and externally. Participant 8 stated, "I feel like we've hit a point in higher education, I guess, in education across the board where it is a defining moment where I don't think it's ever going to be the same." The pandemic required all institutions, not just the liberal arts, to pivot and make decisions far more quickly than they have done in the past. Institutional leaders were already learning how to respond to financial constraints in addition to making life altering decisions regarding the physical and economic safety of organizational constituents. Liberal arts institutions in the Midwest saw their response to the pandemic as evidence of the value of their degree. Simply put, if institutional leadership could not respond and adapt successfully, how salient are their educational products.

Although the pandemic magnified challenges that most leaders admit they never want to see again, how they responded was also promising. Promising in that, institutions now know that they can make informed decisions more expediently and that shared governance truly does require shared accountability. Institutions had the opportunity to respond to challenge with financial and collaborative support without fear of failure and remove should there be a better

outcome, as many leaders found they had to make decisions based on information available to them at the time. Participant 12 stated:

> If you're a college leader who says, well, after the pandemic, we're going to go back to exactly the way things were, you missed it. You just completely missed it. You had the cover of the pandemic. You could have gotten a whole bunch of stuff done and you said, well, because of the pandemic. Listen, if you go back and students are not trying to hear I can't be hybrid because I was just hybrid for a whole year.

The pandemic highlighted the traditional comfort associated with the liberal arts is no more. It is apparent now more than ever, that leadership is not singular, but evolving and to effectively lead an institution, like students, leaders must be willing to change, learn, and grow.

Overarching Theme 4: Existent Cultural Elements in Current Educational Climate

Liu et al. (2017) discussed the impact organizational culture has on organizational decision making, as organizational participants demonstrate subjectivity. Institutions must understand organizational culture is the bridge between tradition and institutional mission, as it can either promote or prolong change management endeavors. Organizational culture is difficult to identify which makes it extremely difficult to manage. However, being able to recognize its influencers has the potential to create a successful path forward. Haveman and Wetts (2019) echoed this sentiment, as they believed an organization's culture has profound influence on organizational strategy formulation and execution. They urged organizations to become learned of how relational capital, cultural perspective, and demographics, as they traverse unchartered territory.

Thematic analysis concluded that tradition, mission, and organizational ethos are cultural elements that exist within the current educational climate. Collectively, they were referenced by

Participants 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, and 23 over 100 times. Leaders discussed the challenges associated with change management initiatives when resistance and reluctant are disguised as tradition and commitment to institutional mission. These beliefs also permeate organizational culture, as cultural norms are widely accepted and often upheld, in large part, for sake or tradition. However, research participants discussed the essentiality of a leader who can have difficult conversations if it moves an institution beyond preservation to transformation aligned with its core values. One aspect of this is seen in how a liberal arts education is talked about. As institutions employ business modelling techniques, leaders must carefully draft messaging that does not offend the sensibilities of organizational constituents, which can impede change when buy-in is essential. Participant 21 stated:

> When I look at the external constituency, there is nowadays less and less of the traditional on campus experience for many students, and so they don't necessarily identify with the traditions that were in place when they were a student anymore or the lack thereof. And therefore, they have no affinity towards their institution.

Understanding organizational constituencies is imperative to elongating institutional mission aligned with traditional values.

The resilience, as evidenced by its longevity, of higher education underscores its capability to withstand happenings within changing climates. However, the increasing presence of business modality is perceived as a threat to institutional mission and as assault on tradition. It is imperative leaders of institutions, particularly liberal arts institutions in the Midwest, recognize this reassertion and repositioning themselves within the market will aid in the longevity of tradition and mission through using contemporary approaches to leadership. Participant 2 stated, "I've taught some of these models and styles and leadership courses, and my heart often goes to

that transformative it's an aspirational model. It's a belief in achieving something higher."

Overall, research participants believed enacting a transformational leadership style is how lasting change will occur within institutions. This is largely due to the overlooked historical context of transformational change. If institutions are never willing to realign their traditions and mission, this could event result in students having no affinity toward their institution simply because they do not identify with traditions, they neither informed or truly understand the meaning of.

A characteristic of a liberal arts education is to understand the drivers and influencers of change and how to navigate such spaces. When leaders question tradition, mission, and organizational culture, it forces institutions to conduct a self-assessment and truly examine their effectiveness. The liberal arts tend to resist change under the guise of tradition. This mischaracterization can breed discontentment, inaction, and ineffectiveness when trying to perpetuate change within an organization bureaucratic in nature. However, the current pandemic is a reminder that yes, conventional modalities are important (i.e., physical brick and mortar institutions). Participant 10 stated, "And so there's a whole system or industry that's fixed on rules. Right. And within education, you have to follow them." Institutions will also need to understand that this event unearthed a greater need for flexibility that new generations require—to be aware of this desire and not adapt to respond to it will be a wasted opportunity for higher education. This provides nontraditional leaders, with an understanding of how to create new organizational cultures, an opportunity to showcase the benefits to organizational culture as a business concept to aid in transformation. When an organization understands its mission and are passionate, it has permeating effects. These outcomes will be seen in retention, attrition, and customer satisfaction. However, internally, organizations will attract employees and potential benefactors who genuinely believe in their mission as well. Ultimately, it will provide liberal arts

institutions the opportunity to answer whether they are who their organizations need now and reimagine their commitment to meeting the needs of their constituencies in the future.

Overarching Theme 5: Resource Management, Student Satisfaction, and Changing Generational Perception as Institutional Priority

Fletcher (2015) presented business management processes institutions of higher learning must adopt in the current educational landscape. He believed that institutions, must like organizations, must demonstrate fiscal prowess as they pursue financial formidability by decreasing budget deficits, maintaining alignment with an institution's mission, and achieving sustainability. Botstein (2018) echoed this sentiment, as financial consideration promotes efficient enterprise and should lack prioritization. This will require leaders to demonstrate financial competence and wherewithal to adequately facilitate institutional change. Accomplishing financial sustainability amid an educational climate posing challenges as result of the anticipated demographic decline and diminishing institutional revenue is forcing institutions to take a collaborative approach to managing financial resources, organizational constituencies, and changing generational perceptions, which do not invalidate the liberal arts, but will most certainly redefine it.

I found that balancing resource management, meeting student needs, and changing generational perceptions of organizational constituencies to largely impact a leader's ability to adapt in the current educational climate. Resource management was referenced 47 times by Participants 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, and 23. Meeting student needs was referenced 38 times by Participants 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13,15, 16, 18, 20, 21, and 22. While managing organizational constituencies was referenced 29 times as I conducted thematic analysis by Participants 1, 4, 6, 10, 11, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, and 23. As liberal arts

institutions find their niche and create consortiums for resource management, there is an opportunity to reassess policies for transfer students and promote reciprocal relationships in the event states begin offering free tuition at the community college level. Leaders understand the apparent implication of decreasing government support as it will be followed with declining enrollment numbers. Participant 14 stated, "Well, you have to be more of a salesperson, I think, than we might have had to be 50 years ago." It is this type of strategic thinking institutional leaders of liberal arts institutions in the Midwest will need to demonstrate, as such considerations will require institutions to assess their resources to determine if they are in a financial position to support such endeavors.

Moreover, the changing demographic is accompanied by a changing generation's perception of salient educational products. Institutional leaders are having to accurately assess what types of programs are attractive to this changing demographic and financially commit to its delivery. These considerations may increase enrollment which in turn increases revenue, however, expanding financial capability to offer financial support to students is equally important. Students are requiring attractive facilities which are often supporting through fundraising, along with discounted tuition rates leaving institutional leaders to determine how to fill the gap in between—often mitigated with auxiliary revenues. Participant 6 stated:

> We were not prepared to believe the reality of a constricting market of it not collapsing. It's a consolidating market. And so in that sense, what you have is all of these different changes that make perfect sense. If you think about a consolidating, constricting market, they're not really changes, they are just adjustments to this, to the ecosystem. You know, inputs are different. So, the system changes to accommodate, otherwise the system goes away.

However, this study also found that students do not want to add debt to their parents, as parent plus loans are often considered to be a financial resource leaving families overextended and institutions pricing themselves higher and eventually out of the market. Higher education must move beyond models that focus on filling seats and residence halls. Ultimately, a deep dive needs to occur, and institutions must create a culture of belonging that students can resonate with. This type of thinking is as important as an institution's ability to recognize when to move stock as needed, if doing so strengthens their financial position. There must be commit to the plan, as there cannot be an overestimation of what can be done in 5 years and an underestimation of what can be done in 20 years.

Institutional leaders must interact with the external constituencies in a manner that results in buy in, as leaders must possess effective communicative and fundraising skills to foster collaborative, yet mutually beneficial partnerships. This added duty has made it difficult for leaders to adapt to changing landscapes, especially if they are not adept in that area—as is a contributor to why traditional leaders have a more difficult time adjusting to a rapidly changing landscape. Participant 4 stated:

> You know, we're hitting an interesting time in our in our society where remote working isn't going away and students take classes and then going away. So I think it's a different type of leadership, a different type of skill sets that many of us have had to learn how to work with our remote students.

In the same way it is desirable for institutional leaders to raise money for their respective institutions, the ability to manage and mitigate debt is essential as higher education is a high-cost model. It is important for institutions to understand that their institutional leadership must reflect the future of the liberal arts experience while maintaining alignment with the mission, as doing

so will create new relationships essential to an institution's financial health. Institutions must not overlook the consistency between investment decisions in the professional landscape and how this spills over to the education sect. In the professional landscape it is not uncommon for investors to wait and see how an organization's leadership aligns with the organization's mission and how long the leader holds a position—when leadership is transitioning investors typically wait to see what will happen. Higher education must understand they will have similar experiences when leadership is misaligned or in transition. In the current educational climate, liberal arts institutions must identify, own, communicate, and demonstrate their value in a meaningful way.

Overarching Theme 6: Essentiality of Transformational Leadership in Current Educational Climate

In order to reimagine the liberal arts of the 21st century, contemporary approaches to leadership must be considered. The conceptual framework offered in this qualitative case study presented this trifecta to include the transformational, adaptive, and transactional leadership styles for consideration, as they are appropriate for organizations in highly dynamic industries. Participant 7 stated "Like in my career, I was transactional one hundred percent, and then I was able to be more adaptive to things. And then that kind of built a bridge to the transformational setting." Fourie and Höhne (2019) discussed the challenges associated with leadership as they relate to the high levels of scrutiny many encounter when they fail at offering organizational resolve, as they are often expected to relinquish their roles. While this infallibility is a major criticism of the transformational leadership theory, the qualitative case study found it to be the most essential leadership style for the current educational climate.

The results of the electronic leadership questionnaire found that of the 22 respondents, nine would describe their leadership style as transformational, eight would describe their leadership style as adaptive, one would describe their leadership style as transactional, and four would describe their leadership style as neither transformational, adaptive, nor transactional. The results of the questionnaire were consistent with the results of the thematic analysis, as transformational leadership style was referenced 18 times by Participants 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 17, 19, and 22. Adaptive leadership style was referenced 16 times by Participants 4, 6, 9, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, and 23. While transactional leadership style was referenced 10 times by Participants 2, 5, 7, 9, 11, 15, and 19. There was minimal mention of servant leadership style, but not substantial enough to create a code.

I found the transformational leadership style to be the aspirational model of leaders, as they believe the current state of the liberal arts necessitates reimagining. While, noting the adaptive leadership style to be essential, especially amid the pandemic, but lacking the long-lasting impact they believed the transformational leadership style posits. Participant 12 stated, "And so this notion of transformation and I'm talking where you can't recognize the thing, right, I'm talking transformation. I'm not talking about well, yeah, that we just moved that building from this to this." Research participants believed the adaptive leadership style lends itself to the transformational, in that it serves as a catalyst for change. Although an incremental occurrence, change was thought to be on the horizon for higher education, however, the results of this qualitative study underscore that change is not only here, but here to stay. It is important to note that leaders must not synonymize change with transformation. Institutions have demonstrated their propensity toward change and their capability to do such. However, transformation is dramatic in form and to many will seem unrecognizable. Institutional leaders must first free

themselves from the inundated and antiquated purviews of leadership in higher education as they transform the liberal arts.

Representation and Visualization of the Data

The following are visual depictions associated with the overarching themes.

Overarching Theme 1 Leadership Cultivation and Training
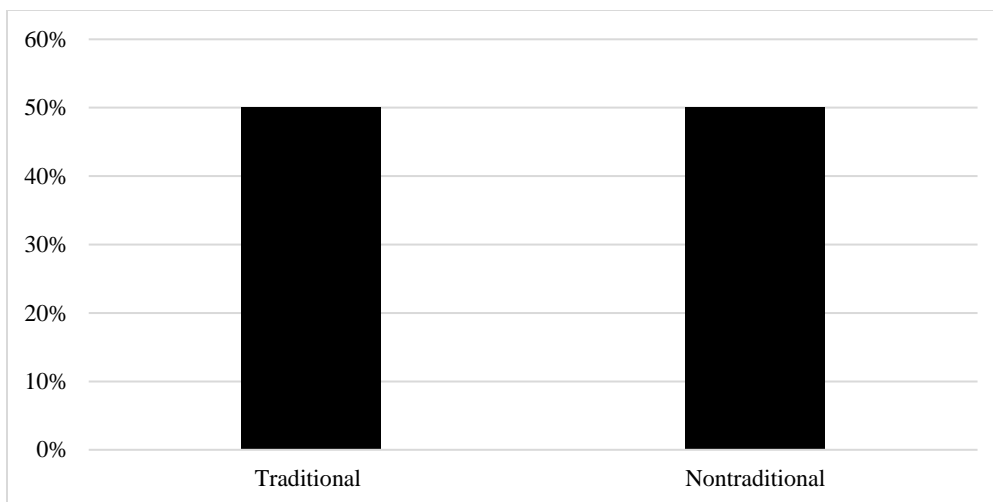

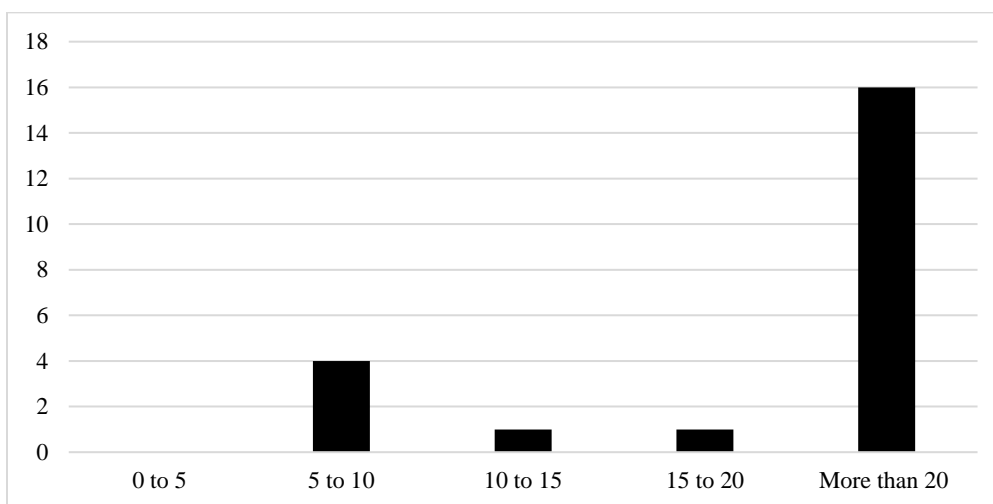*Figure 2. Participants categorized as traditional or nontraditional leaders.*

Figure 3. Participants' professional experience (in years) within academia.
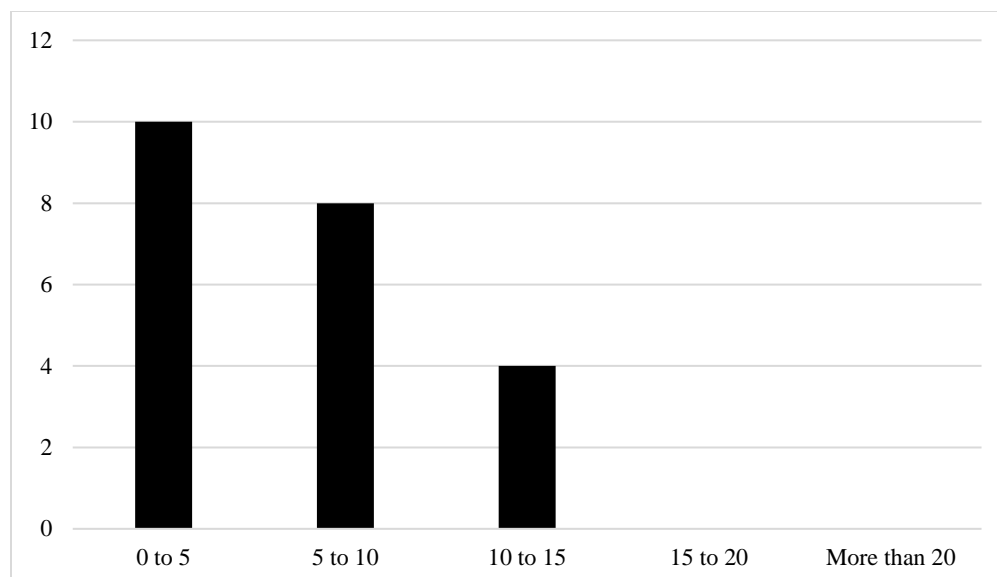
Figure 4. Participants' professional experience (in years) outside of academia.

Overarching Theme 2: Leadership Behaviors Contributing to Successful Change

Adaptation

Table 1

Leadership Behaviors Contributing to Successful Change Adaptation

Behavior	References	Participants
Collaboration	19	2, 5, 7, 8, 11, 18, 19, 23
Effective communication	24	2, 5, 7, 8, 11, 13, 14, 16, 17, 19
Curiosity	17	1, 2, 7, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21
Ability to recognize change	17	1, 3, 6, 9,10, 12, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21

Overarching Theme 3: Existent Predominant Changes in Current Educational Climate

Table 2

Existent Predominant Changes

Change	References	Participants
Value proposition	39	3, 6, 9, 12, 14, 15, 16, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23
Revenue and enrollment	37	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21
Diversity management	49	1, 3, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22
Pandemic	41	2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 12, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22

Overarching Theme 4: Existent Cultural Elements in Current Educational Climate

Table 3

Existent Cultural Elements

Elements	References	Participants
Tradition and mission	53	1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23
Organizational ethos	52	5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23

Overarching Theme 5: Resource Management, Student Satisfaction, and Changing

Generational Perception as Institutional Priority

Table 4

Impacts on Leader Ability

Impact	References	Participants
Resource management	47	5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23
Meeting student needs	38	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13,15, 16, 18, 20, 21, 22
Generational perception	29	1, 4, 6, 10, 11, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23

Overarching Theme 6: Essentiality of Transformational Leadership in Current
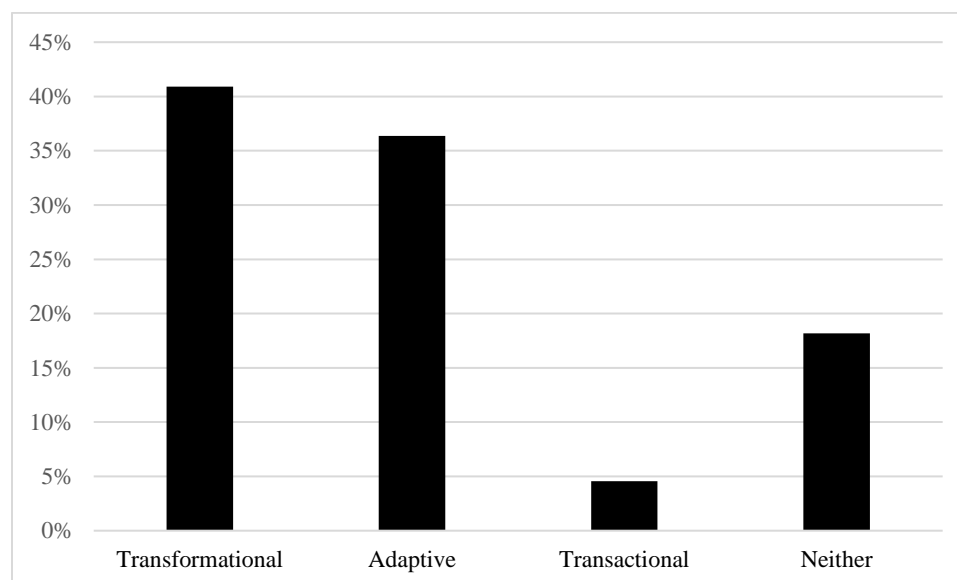
Educational Climate

Figure 5. Participants' leadership styles.

Table 5

Essential Leadership Styles

Elements	References	Leaders
Transformational	18	2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 17, 19, 22
Adaptive	16	4, 6, 9, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 23
Transactional	10	2, 5, 7, 9, 11, 15, 19

Relationship of the Findings

Liberal arts institutions have been tasked with having to reevaluate their educational products, as the changing value proposition is apparent and must be addressed according to Rodgers and Jackson (2012). Institutions must adapt to the changing educational landscape in a meaningful way. Institutional leaders must have difficult conversations as they reimagine leadership of the liberal arts. The intent of this qualitative case study was to better understand the effects of rapidly changing educational landscapes and the ability of institutional leadership to adapt. The research findings provided a foundation for leaders of liberal arts institutions in the Midwest to consider as they respond to the current educational climate. As pedagogical pioneers, liberal arts institutions are uniquely positioned to respond to the predominant challenges associated with enrollment and revenue, diversity and inclusion, technological advancements, and how to best serve organizational constituents. Institutions must assume exploratory and executive postures to respond to the dynamism that is higher education, as a mechanistic approach is a deterrent to successful change adaptation and does not lend itself the gaining and maintenance of competitive advantage in a climate requiring collaboration. Leaders must understand behaviors that lack diversity and sexist behaviors are impediments to successful change adaptation Liberal arts institutions have the opportunity to address these changes through leadership reimagined and the marriage of tradition and transformation through establishing innovation within their organizational cultures.

Adewale and Ghavifekr (2019) reiterated the opportunity higher education has to promote economic advancements by equipping students with a liberal arts education. In a vastly changing landscape, liberal arts institutions can perpetuate the formidability of a liberal arts education. Competence, social awareness, and technological agility are the blueprint to be followed. If institutional leaders fail to adapt, this will impede strategic initiatives. The findings of this qualitative case study relate to a widespread issue in higher education that institutional leaders must address. The overarching themes of this qualitative case study highlight the ways in which institutions may address deficiencies in their current processes, while offering elements to be of institutional priority. The findings are not arbitrary, as they show the connectedness among various institutional leaders as they respond to the current changes in the educational landscape and what they have learned about themselves and higher education as a result. Their purviews are useful to institutional leaders and addressed this study's posed research questions.

Research Question Relationship

RQ1: Why do traditional leaders fail to adapt to changes in the current educational climate at liberal arts institutions in the Midwest?

RQ1a: What leadership behaviors contribute to a failure to adapt to the current educational climate?

RQ1b: What leadership behaviors promote successful adaptation to the current educational climate?

RQ2: What are the predominant changes occurring within the current educational climate at liberal arts institutions in the Midwest?

RQ2a: How do these changes impact a leader's adaption to the current educational climate?

RQ3:   What cultural elements exist within liberal arts institutions in the Midwest that

foster successful adaptation to the current educational climate?

The posed research questions informed the specific problem statement. The specific

problem statement addressed the failure of traditional leaders to adapt to changes in the current

educational climate and examine the way in which traditional leaders affect enrollment and

revenue within the scope of liberal arts institutions in the Midwest. Research Question 1 sought

to address how leaders of educational institutions are responding to the changes within the

educational environment. The sub questions for Research Question 2 intended to analyze factors

contributing to the success and failure of adaptation among traditional leaders. Research

Question 2 sought to gain leaders' purview of the predominant changes impacting the

educational landscape and a leader's response to such changes. The sub question offered for

Research Question 2 intended to explore how changes in the current educational climate impact a

leader's adaptation. Research Question 3 sought to address the impact organizational culture had

on a leader's ability to respond to changes within the educational climate.

Overarching Theme 1 related to Research Question 1. The findings suggested that

traditional leaders of liberal arts institutions come through faculty ranks to administrative

promotion. Traditional leaders understand academia, however, they are not always adept in

business processes. They often learn informally through professional experiences. However, as

higher education faces challenges much like those of conventional businesses, they must

establish fiscal and administrative competencies.

Although not identified as an overarching theme, research findings suggested

organizations that demonstrate a lack of diversity and sexist behavior impede successful change

adaptation. Such behaviors are impediments as they do not promote a culture where all voices

are included in shaping the direction of the institution. Deliberation in the establishment of an inclusive organizational culture is a common business concept that institutions would benefit from adopting.

Overarching Theme 2 related to Research Question 1b which sought to identify leadership behaviors contributing to successful change adaptation. The findings largely suggested collaboration, effective communication, curiosity, and the ability to recognize change are leadership behaviors contributing to successful change adaption in higher. Although not as apparent as the previously named behaviors, the findings also identified decision making and listening as behaviors that contribute to successful change adaptation.

Overarching Theme 3 related to Research Question 2, which sought to identify the predominant changes occurring within the current educational climate at liberal arts institutions in the Midwest. The findings largely suggested the changing value proposition of the liberal arts, revenue and enrollment considerations, diversity management, and the impact of the pandemic to be the predominant changes impacting liberal arts institutions in the Midwest. Institutional leaders must successfully adapt to these changes as they are inevitably encountering a changing demographic which will require an innovative approach.

Overarching Theme 5 related to research question two a, as it sought to better understand how a leader's adaptation is impacted in the current educational climate. The findings suggested that leaders having to balance resource management, meeting student needs, and changing generational perceptions of organizational constituencies largely impacts their ability to adapt. The leadership requirements of higher education administrators have evolved beyond academic facilitation, as institutions are having to establish a professional purview as they adapt.

Overarching Theme 4 related to Research Question 3, as it sought to identify the cultural elements that exist within liberal arts institutions in the Midwest. The findings largely suggested tradition, mission, and organizational ethos are cultural elements that exist within the current educational climate. Liberal arts institutions, as the oldest form of education, have established core values, beliefs regarding education, that permeate institutions and shape their identities. However, conventional approaches will note render the reimagining and transformative posture institutions must adopt to remain formidable.

Relationship to Conceptual Framework

This qualitative case study examined the leadership behaviors contributing to successful change adaption and impediments to successful change adaptation. I presented a conceptual framework to better understand the changes affecting liberal arts institutions in the Midwest, as traditional and nontraditional forms of leadership are on the rise, as Ekman (2014) and Collins (2014) reiterated. According to Kezar et al. (2018), a paradigm shift is underway in higher education. This resounding alarm was the basis for the conceptual framework, as it was informed by the literature and posed research questions. Ultimately, the conceptual framework demonstrated the connection between the current literature and its gap, which informed the research problem. I prioritized the conceptual framework throughout the research process, as it identified the goals, purpose, and objectives of this qualitative case study.

As traditional and nontraditional leaders in private liberal arts institutions respond to a culture of dynamism, leaders must couple managerial competencies with the development of leadership capabilities to promote successful change adaptation. The actors within this qualitative case study included traditional leaders, nontraditional leaders, and liberal arts institutions in the Midwest. I sought to explore how leaders responded to increasing institutional

challenges such as decreasing revenue, decreasing enrollment, changing demographics, technological improvisation, and delivery of educational products.

The findings in the research study related to the concept of failure to adapt to change, as it was determined that lack of collaboration, ineffective communication, lack of curiosity, and inability to recognize change as leadership behaviors contributing to a failure to adapt to change. Leaders found such behaviors as impediments to successful change adaption. They believed a leader must adopt an inclusive posture to better understand the needs of internal and external constituencies. As liberal arts institutions promote the relevancy of ideals inherent to a liberal arts education, they must be careful in how this message is understood and communicated, as a misaligned perspective in the current educational landscape may diminish relational capital characteristic and essential to the liberal arts. This concept directly related to overarching theme two.

The concept of a culture of competence led me to explore the reasons why traditional leaders were failing to adapt to the changes in the current educational climate. Overarching Theme 1 related to this concept as it offered a better understanding of the impact of leadership capability and competence on change adaptation. As most leaders in the study had more than 20 years of experience in higher education, they largely attributed their leadership purviews to their professional experiences, not their formal education training. Whereas nontraditional leaders had approximately 15 years outside of higher education with purviews largely influenced by their experience working for organizations characteristic of change. Although capable of learning, most leaders felt they would have benefited from intentional leadership development and do benefit from the competence they gained prior to their careers in higher education.

Thus, I wanted to determine if transformational, adaptive, and transactional leadership models were indeed the contemporary approaches best suited to respond to the liberal arts, now characterized by dynamism. The transformational, transactional, and adaptive leadership theories are utilized by leaders in organizations necessitating change. Transformational leadership theory was appropriate for this qualitative case study as it is utilized by leaders intending to employ creativity and dramatic change within an organization through inspiring commitment and loyalty within an organization. Adaptive leadership theory was appropriate for this study, as it is often utilized within complex climates and is influenced by external happenings that may include changing demographics and new technologies. Transactional leadership was appropriate for this study due to its demonstration of leader–follower relationships and is widely used in educational exchanges. The conceptual framework allowed me to enact the exploration to address the research problem.

It is important to note the findings underscored the realization the pandemic provided in that institutions characteristic of slow change can actually adapt quickly. Although appropriate for dynamic environments, adaptive leadership is characteristic of fluidity and may vary in characteristic. This leadership theory can yield positive feedback among participants while increasing the demand for more fluid exchanges. However, the transformational theory was found to be the aspirational model for liberal arts institutions as institutions must reimagine leadership and address the needs of a vastly changing demographic where conventional leadership models will render obsolete. Theoretically, the transformational leadership model is appropriate for organizations seeking to create innovation and fresh perspective while promoting organizational growth and good organizational hygiene. Organizations characteristic of transformational leadership intentionally inspire commitment, passion, and loyalty. Whereas

transactional leadership, while promoting efficiency and coordination with existing capabilities, is a leadership style that is task oriented. The findings suggested that the few leaders who identified with the transactional leadership style had done so in their recognition to avoid doing so long-term. Such findings related to overarching theme six which found transformational leadership style to be the most essential style for institutions in the 21st century given the current institutional challenges.

Relationship to Anticipated Themes

I anticipated the following themes as they were summarized in the professional and academic literature review:

1. The predominant changes in the current in the current educational environment require leaders that understand how to implement change management strategies.

2. The cultural elements that promote successful change adaptation in the current educational climate include alignment with institutional mission and meeting customer needs.

3. The current educational landscape requires contemporary leadership approaches to successfully respond to change such as the leadership trifecta of transformational, adaptive, and transactional leadership styles.

The professional and academic literature underscored the predominant changes in the current educational environment to require adept leaders in change management. Woodworth (2016) found that leaders seeking to maintain formidability and transform their educational products must under the essentiality of effective change management. He found it noteworthy to mention how critically important it was for leaders to skillfully and accurately identify investment opportunities and demonstrate fiscal savviness. This would require breadth in

leadership purview and the ability to properly allocate organizational resources. According to Iordache-Platis (2017) the ability to identify and execute such approaches is foundational for students with a demand for workforce readiness, as there is demand for the promotion of good organizational hygiene, awareness of social issues, and real-world experiences. She believed ultimately that institutions must be prepared to demonstrate their ability to change, as they guide students in their capability to respond to change in their prospective workspaces in dynamic environments.

The results of this qualitative study reiterated Anticipated Theme 1 which highlighted the need for leaders to demonstrate competencies found typically in dynamic work constructs outside of higher education. Traditional leaders in higher education lack the proficiency in contemporary business approaches, as they are namely experts in the academic fields they teach, which often do align with contemporary business approaches to business. Traditional leaders are doubly charged with becoming learned in such approaches while responding to changes necessitated in a rapidly changing educational climate. However, nontraditional leaders often have credentials aligned with their leadership roles or come from industries that required competencies and capabilities to identity and adequately respond to dynamism. The findings revealed an overarching theme of leadership preparedness essential for leaders to successfully adapt to change.

Secondly, the professional and academic literature reiterated the prioritization of institutional mission and meetings customer needs for leaders in the current educational climate. Liu et al. (2017) discussed the impact that understanding organizational culture would have on successful change adaptation, as lack of understanding is largely a result of lack of experience and low self-efficacy. This is often demonstrated through assumptive approaches to leadership,

which inaccurately measures organizational needs as it demonstrates incomplete preference while omitting data necessary to establish an informed path. Although there is bias laced in institutional mission, leaders must be diligent in not confusing tradition and mission with failure to adapt to change. This will be especially important as institutions craft strategy to respond to changing demographic and cultural changes according to Haveman and Wetts (2019).

The results of this qualitative study reiterated anticipated theme two, which highlighted alignment of institutional mission and meeting customer needs as institutional priority. Identified as an overarching theme, tradition, mission, and the slow changing nature of liberal arts institutions were noteworthy. The research findings were in alignment with the anticipated identification of tradition and mission. However, the findings suggested that the slow changing nature of liberal arts institutions is an impediment to successful change adaptation. This is consideration must be of institutional priority as institutions have data that suggests conventional leadership modality is rendered ineffective in dynamically changing educational climates. A concept that Iordache-Platis (2018) also provided as she identified how leaders could successfully to offer salient educational products and impactful student experiences. While social constructs often influenced by institutional mission are to be commended, leaders must examine the economic, sociological, and managerial pillars to lead in a transformative way. Institutional leaders must create an inclusive environment that properly identifies student priorities. As institutions effectively establish these relationships and make the maintenance of them common class, this relational capital will allow for them to reach offer customer satisfaction aligned with institutional mission.

Lastly, the professional and academic literature necessitated the use of contemporary leadership approaches to respond to the current educational climate. Borgianni et al. (2015)

noted successful management of uncertainty as the largest contributor to organizational success. They named deficiencies in decision making, leadership inadequacies, and mischaracterization of organizational needs as major contributors to organizational decline. They noted the importance of institutional leaders being able to successfully manage relationships with organizational constituencies through the use of contemporary leadership approaches as the path forward. The prominent contemporary approaches to leadership identified were the transformational, adaptive, and transactional styles. However, Combs et al. (2019) noted an increasing trend in meta-analytic approaches to institutional leadership. Largely scientific and a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches to research to address organizational issues within organizations with increasing expectations. They further discussed the use of sophisticated models to examine data beyond the assumptive or through using a historical lens.

The results of this qualitative study were mostly aligned with Anticipated Theme 3, which highlighted the transformational, adaptive, and transactional leadership trifecta as contemporary approaches to leadership. However, while the results discussed the importance of understanding the changing demographic in a systematic manner, use of meta-analytic approaches to examine the changing educational landscape was missing. I also anticipated consistency and equivalency in the leadership styles leaders identified within the electronic questionnaire with a consistency and equivalency within the coding. However, transactional leadership style was the least desirable or deemed effective in the current educational landscape by leaders, which was unanticipated by me. Whereas the transformational and adaptive leadership styles were more prominent. I did not anticipate for the transformational leadership style to be the most aspirational style among leaders as they respond to the changes in the current educational climate.

Overall, the anticipated themes aligned with the qualitative case study's research scope with slight deviation. I anticipated themes that directly addressed the research questions and aligned with the established conceptual framework. Although the research findings inspire recommendations for further study, I believed the overarching themes best depict the research findings. I extensively reviewed the codebook to ensure identified themes best represented the data collected as Caulfield (2020) and Yi (2018) caution qualitative researchers to do. To perform due diligence, I compared themes to the data collection to ensure no information was missing, the themes reflected the data, and if changes needed to be made. I did not encounter any problematic themes that needed to be discarded. However, I did rearrange and combine certain themes to aid in fluidity. After doing so, I created a finalized list of acceptable themes, where each theme was named and clearly defined to showcase alignment with my concept to best address posed research questions. I named themes concisely to aid in understanding, properly introduce themes, while reiterating the research problem, research questions, and purpose of the qualitative case study. The conclusion of thematic analysis showcased how often identified themes occurred, the meaning of the themes, and their relationship to the research problem.

Relationship to the Literature

As there is no widely accepted approach to change adaption in vastly changing educational climates, though they may vary, there are convincing perspectives having been established in the research community. Thus, providing me with an opportunity to fill the gap in the literature. The professional and academic literature characterized the transformative undertaking higher education institutions are experiencing as they shift from bureaucratic to business modelling structures to address institutional needs according to Cosenz and Noto (2018). To accurately assess and address institutional needs, leaders must demonstrate effective

decision making due to the impact such decisions have on the promotion or impediment of organizational success. As institutions enact continuous improvement initiatives to ensure institutional mission is prioritized, decision maker capability is essential for leaders employing change management initiatives. Successful change adaptation and the adoption of strategic business processes will help institutions establish appropriate frameworks to establish financial formidability, advance conversations regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion, while expanding strategic opportunities creatively. While there are critics of the impact institutional transformation has on mission, the literature also underscored a static viewpoint of how change can impede organizational success.

However, Boje et al. (2017) described a massive shift occurring in the 21st-century educational landscape that is requiring leaders to reimagine leadership and its contemporary approaches. The predominant changes occurring have resulted in increasing institutional pressures, as leaders must properly assess these acute changes to adapt and remain formidable. This formidability will be rooted in effectively addressing changes associated with communication, changing demographics, diversity, long-term planning, mental health, workforce readiness, technology, and the changing value proposition of the liberal arts' impact on revenue and enrollment. Such changes will require both traditional and nontraditional leaders of liberal arts institutions to demonstrate competent decision making and offer creative resolve, as doing so will evidence their commitment to sustainability. While the current educational climate presents the opportunity for institutions to reassert themselves, although an unchartered landscape, institutions like business organizations, are expected to demonstrate their global competence and human agency as they become agents of change. The economic landscape and organizational constituencies are demanding evidence of productivity, relevant educational products, and

contemporary leadership approaches to achieve sustainability within the scope of institutional mission.

Gumpertz et al. (2017) contended that of utmost importance to institutional leadership is the predicted shift in demographic occurring in 2050. Although a consideration to North American institutions, leaders in this qualitative case study believe this to be one of their most important considerations. Institutions must prioritize reestablishing their organizational cultures, while also establishing an authentic culture of belonging students. As the literature underscores, this undertaking, if done successfully, will positively impact retention, attrition, and revenue. However, to accomplish such, institutional leadership must understand the leadership behaviors and styles that promote such.

Relationship to the Problem

I determined the general problem of this qualitative case study to be the failure of traditional leaders to successfully adapt to the happenings in the current educational climate, as this ultimately results in a decline in student enrollment and institutional revenue. I specifically sought to address these occurrences in the Midwestern United States by first establishing alignment among the proposed research questions as they allowed the research to identify institutional impediments. A qualitative case study was conducted, as case studies are well suited for better understanding the happenings within smaller populations and do not infer findings are true for larger populations (Mannion et al., 2016; Rose et al., 2020). The research findings related to the research problem in that it addressed the impact institutional leadership has on institutional outcomes. The findings also confirmed that although academic constructs have not traditionally adopted a business posture, the current educational climate has revealed academic

institutions would benefit from contemporary leadership approaches coupled with fiscal and administrative competencies—often characteristic of business modality.

I demonstrated transferability throughout the research process to promote reliability through analyzing research results within broadened contexts and the value of research to higher education. Such value aided in the reliability of the research and can serve as a foundation for qualitative researchers to build upon. I ensured the research process was dependable by detailing the process of how to replicate the study and achieve similar results for a qualitative researcher interested in conducting the study. In conducting qualitative research, objectivity can be a challenge. I ensured alignment among the research findings and identified themes by collecting solid data using methodologically sound data collection methods.

Summary of the Findings

Qualitative research is characterized by thorough discussion and depth; however, it is not an exact science (Cypress, 2017; Noble & Smith, 2015). Therefore, I used an array of standards to offer reliable results. I employed established research methods, sampling procedures, and iterative questioning to create alignment with the professional and academic literature through creating a neutral open-ended interview guide to best understand the experience of the research participants. After gathering data from the verbatim transcripts, I began data analysis by reviewing verbatim transcripts, electronic questionnaires, and compiled field notes. Doing so allowed me to ensure relevance and prioritize relationships as themes were identified and no deviations occurred.

The findings of this qualitative case study directly addressed the identified research problem, thus contributing to the gap in literature regarding traditional leadership's failure to adapt to the challenges amid the current educational climate. This was accomplished by first

establishing a conceptual framework inspired by a review of the professional and academic

literature. I posed research questions to explore the research problem to offer a meaningful

outcome. After conducting 23 interviews with institutional leaders at liberal arts institutions in

the Midwest, I determined saturation was achieved, as collecting more data did not provide more

information to address the posed research questions.

Overall, research findings provided the following key conclusions. Leadership cultivation

and training are essential for traditional leaders, which addressed Research Question 1. Research

Question 1 sought to understand why traditional leaders may fail to adapt to changes in the

current educational climate. Organizations that demonstrated a lack of diversity and sexist

behavior impeded successful change adaptation, which addressed research question 1a. Research

Question 1a sought to identify leadership behaviors contributing to a failure to adapt. Leadership

behaviors contributing to successful change adaptation are collaboration, effective

communication, curiosity, and the ability to recognize change, which addressed Research

Question 1b. Research Question 1b sought to identify leadership behaviors that promote

successful change adaption. The existent predominant changes within the current educational

climate are the changing value proposition of the liberal arts, revenue and enrollment

considerations, addressing diversity, and the impact of the pandemic on institutions of higher

learning, which addressed Research Question 2. Research Question 2 sought to better understand

the predominant changes occurring within the educational climate at liberal arts institutions.

Leaders must now prioritize resource management, student satisfaction, and changing

generational perceptions of organizational constituents, which addressed Research Question 2a.

Research Question 2a sought to better understand how the predominant changes impact a

leader's ability to adapt. Research findings suggested tradition, mission, and the slow changing

nature of institutions are cultural elements that exist within the liberal arts, which addressed Research Question 3. Research Question 3 sought to understand the existent cultural elements within the current educational climate. This qualitative case study contributed to the professional and academic literature to serve as a guide for leaders adapting to change in the current educational climate seeking to transform liberal arts education.

Application to Professional Practice

The findings of this qualitative case study contributed to the gap in literature regarding the failure of traditional leaders to adapt to changes in the current educational climate. The findings were not intended to be extrapolated beyond liberal arts institutions in the Midwest. However, institutional leadership experiencing the existent challenges in higher education may benefit by the results of this study—particularly as it relates to successful change adaptation. There is an opportunity for institutions of higher learning to equip traditional leaders with the skills they may not be accustomed to in their areas of study. Nontraditional leaders typically have skillsets aligned with their administrative roles. Institutional leaders are charged with creating innovative approaches to address resource management, student satisfaction, and changing organizational constituencies. A transformation in higher education will require institutions to assume an applicative posture by employing business strategies to reimagine the liberal arts.

Improving General Business

As liberal arts leaders identify frameworks for organizations to accurately identify organizational needs, Sanchez-Ruiz et al. (2019) reiterated the difficulty in such a feat. Generally, specificity of construction is essential to improving a business. Institutional leadership in the current educational climate is unconventional. Leaders are tasked with cultivating and maintaining relationships with their organizational constituencies. According to Plenert (2012) to

successfully implement change management strategy organizations must demonstrate deliberation. Institutions must move beyond a top-down approach to leadership through crating a culture of accountability with a commitment to organizational growth and a clear strategy as to how to accomplish their goals.

Institutions must understand their organizational constituencies to enact lasting change. Traditional leaders must become competent in commonplace business practices to address the challenges within their industry. Economic proficiency is the clear path forward to addressing revenue and enrollment constraints. The education industry has undergone a vastly changing demographic and ever-increasing prioritization of customer satisfaction. Although this is clearly understood by traditional leaders, nontraditional leaders possess a skillset that is often aligned with their administrative specialties. The professional experiences of nontraditional leaders outside of academia aid to the holistic perspective needed to recognize and adapt to change. Institutions in crisis or with governing boards are more willing to take risks. However, this qualitative case study revealed an unwillingness to change and risk aversion are impediments to successful change adaptation.

The results of this qualitative case study will assist leaders as they make decisions in response to the current educational climate. It is important that institutions adopt a business posture of continuous improvement, as conventional modalities are proving ineffective. Institutional leadership must understand that adaptability is essential to the current educational climate. Liberal arts institutions have an opportunity to promote the value of a liberal arts education in a 21st-century context by successfully responding to challenges. Although the implementation of this study's findings are of consideration to institutional leaders, continuous process improvements do not guarantee perfection, but progress in the right direction. The onset

of the pandemic has exasperated institutional weaknesses, while also unveiling emergent leaders. It must be of institutional priority to conduct organizational assessments and create flexible plans.

Institutions are being charged with proving the saliency of their organizational products with a premium for quality management. Institutions must prioritize the customer experience. Business organizations are familiar with the prioritization of the customer experience and the findings of this study suggested institutions must too. It is this understanding of customer loyalty and buy-in that institutions must establish. Institutions have an opportunity to benefit from the happenings within their external environments, as they seek to understand the needs of students and how to adequately address those needs. This in turn has spillover effects for an organization, as it promotes good organizational hygiene. Kuei and Lu (2013) discussed the prioritization of the principles of quality management. These principles must be of consideration to institutions as they seek to capture a changing demographic to understand the customer base. The quality management principles of customer focus, leadership support, engaging with organizational constituencies, strategic approach, routine assessment, competent decision making, and maintaining relationships align with the findings of this study.

Businesses understand the symbiotic relationship between internal and external environments, as both significantly impact organizational performance. Institutional leaders must understand this relationship to foster a culture that successfully responds to change. Leaders must prioritize the needs of students by creating a framework aligned with their institutional missions. Institutions must realize that an unconventional approach to leadership is not a denouncement of heritage and tradition. Liberal arts institutions of the 21st century are uniquely equipped to showcase their staying power and essentiality. This will be accomplished if institutions view the

current happenings in the environment as an opportunity to reimagine the liberal arts as a force

of change.

Potential Application Strategies

As pioneers and proponents of education, liberal arts institutions have the opportunity to

reimagine higher education. Institutional leaders can accomplish the transformation needed to

remain formidable through breakthrough thinking. According to Plenert (2012) and Starbird and

Cavanagh (2011) breakthrough thinking is an approach leaders can use, as it incorporates

multiple perspectives and is well suited for vastly changing landscapes. This contemporary

approach to leadership aligns with the institutional needs discussed within this study. Although

liberal arts institutions are characteristic of tradition, mission, and changing customer focus,

institutions are still multifaceted. This will require institutions to find their niche as they

implement continuous improvement strategies. The findings of this study reiterated the

essentiality of collaboration and competence among institutional leaders, which will require

leaders to accurately assess what strategies suited for their institutions. It will be imperative for

leaders to be fully aware of the challenges within the educational landscape and understand how

these challenges directly affect their decision-making capability.

Institutions must first understand their customer base. This can be accomplished through

implementing voice of the customer strategy to collect information from organizational

constituents to draft meaningful strategy according to Starbird and Cavanagh (2011). The

findings of this study reiterated the essentiality of understanding student needs and how to meet

them. Understanding the customer experience is the most integral component of the voice of the

customer strategy and will allow institutions to draft strategy aligned with customer needs. While

voice of the customer strategy is not methodological in approach, as many institutional policies

are, it is necessary for businesses in the current landscape to continually assess the current

landscape using data analytic tools such as surveys to identify trends to better understand the

customer experience.

It is important to note how business entities have prioritized having stable organization

rather than change—much like institutions of higher learning, according to Plenert (2012).

However, avoiding change may prove disastrous for institutions unwilling to proactively address

organizational challenges. To maintain competitive advantage in a vastly changing educational

environment, customer satisfaction is essential. Institutions must consider the use of benchmark

tools to measure customer loyalty to test the formidability of their educational products. Through

determining a net score that determines whether their educational products would or would not

be recommended. The net score is a measure organizations use to determine customer

satisfaction and allows for modifications to adapt. He suggested organizations in rapidly

changing environments implement change models to address the changes in the external

environment. It is important to note the opportunity for engaged team performance to adapt to

change. Starbird and Cavanagh (2011) suggested organizations assume a collaborative posture as

they seek to improve organizational culture. The findings of this study reiterated the impact

leadership behaviors such as collaboration, communication, and the ability to recognize change

had on institutional outcomes. Institutions must make these behaviors commonplace within their

institutions, as continuous improvement initiatives cannot be accomplished without them.

Like business entities, institutions must prioritize their institutional missions while

prioritizing the needs of their organizational constituencies. Institutions must implement change

management models that focus on quality and promote a culture of assessment for continuous

improvement. Plenert (2012) offered Lean Six Sigma as a measure institutions can use to

improve institutional operations, as efficient leadership is essential to adapting to the change. Specifically, the changes identified in this study included organizational constraints associated with tradition, mission, and the customer experience, while also considering the siloed and bureaucratic processes within higher education. Liberal arts institutions would benefit from incorporating objective measures into their change management models, as they focus on improving quality, aid in efficiency, prioritize productivity, and improve resource allocation. Such models include growth in phases, investments into technology, improving organizational culture, change adaptation, and influence procedural change. These phases align with the findings of this study and require leadership committed to moving their organizations forward.

Summary of Application to Professional Practice

Institutional leadership of the 21st century must possess the ability to recognize change to transform their organizations using collaboration, curiosity, and clearly communicated approaches. The changing value proposition within the liberal arts, revenue and enrollment considerations, and diversity management must become institutional priority. To better understand their customer base, institutions have the opportunity to implement business approaches suitable for the current educational climate. These approaches include breakthrough thinking, voice of the customer strategy, change management, and Lean Six Sigma to efficiently, deliberately, and creatively meet customer needs.

Recommendations for Further Study

The findings of this qualitative study reduced the gap in literature relating to change adaptation within liberal arts institutions in the Midwest. This section discussed opportunities for future researchers to explore beyond the scope of liberal arts institutions in the Midwest. This qualitative case study identified six overarching themes that addressed the posed research

questions on how to successfully adapt to a vastly changing educational climate. In addition to the overarching themes, I found two supporting themes to recommend for further study. The two supporting themes present opportunities for future researchers to better understand the challenges facing higher education. The first supporting theme recommends exploring the impact sexism has on female leaders in higher education. The second supporting theme would explore the mental health challenges for higher education administrators. These challenges were discussed by leaders throughout the data collection phase and present opportunities for institutions to better understand and respond to the happenings within their internal environments.

I recommend exploring the impact sexism has on female leaders in higher education. It would be appropriate for the scope of this study to expand beyond the Midwest region and the liberal arts. The participants of consideration would be women leaders in higher education throughout North America. This research would contribute to the professional and academic literature on gender bias. The results of this study found lack of diversity to be an institutional challenge. Research participants referenced sexism 15 times throughout the data collection phase. Research participants described feeling at a disadvantage due to their gender. They also felt the disadvantages were greater for Women of Color. Understanding the experience of women and marginalized populations will be important, as better understanding demographics was noted as a predominant change in the current educational landscape. It is important to note the findings of this qualitative study named communication to be essential to successful change adaptation. Female research participants described how they had been spoken to and perceived negatively throughout their careers. This presents an opportunity to research the experiences of women leaders in higher education. Future researchers can explore the experiences of women in leadership to improve organizational culture. Institutions must be able to understand the

experiences of women in leadership to promote inclusivity, as there is an increasing presence of women in leadership in higher education.

The second recommendation for further study would seek to better understand the mental health of education administrators. The pandemic magnified institutional challenges and demanded more of administrators. The impact of the pandemic was referenced 41 times throughout the data collection phase. Research participants discussed their feelings of isolation and their fears associated with decision making. The participants for this study would include higher education administrators. Due to the pandemic's far-reaching impact, this study would expand beyond the Midwest to North America. Research participants discussed the impact the pandemic had on their mental health while navigating an unprecedented landscape. Institutions of higher learning would benefit from exploring how business entities are addressing their workforces, as conventional modalities in higher education are not promoting good organizational hygiene. Expanding this study beyond liberal arts institutions would provide various viewpoints that can be utilized to create strategies to address mental health considerations. By including institutions throughout North America more consistent themes might be found to be generally applied in higher education. Although the long-lasting impacts of the pandemic are not fully understood, the results of this type of study may benefit institutions and provide the opportunity to better understand the mental health needs of leaders to ultimately provide the support they need.

Reflections

I found conducting this qualitative case study to be rewarding. I learned much about the importance of the alignment among the literature as a foundation for conducting qualitative research. I implemented the suggestions in the literature regarding how to conduct qualitative

research and saw the value in doing so. Conducting this project provided the opportunity to better understand the vast changes in higher education and how the liberal arts may posit solutions to these changes. I felt prepared to conduct this qualitative case study by laying a solid research. It was imperative for me to have a thorough understanding of the research problem and a clear path forward to answer posed research questions. The field study plan was a useful tool, as it served as a reliable guide to successfully collect and analyze data. Conducting this qualitative case study helped me to understand the essential skills of a qualitative researcher and become better acquainted with software tools to organize and analyze the data. Throughout the process of conducting this qualitative case study, I was able to learn of the cost and ethical considerations associated with conducting research, while learning to successfully recruit participants and conduct interviews. Overall, the research problem was addressed through conducting a qualitative case study and I look forward to contributing to the professional and academic literature for the challenges facing higher education.

Personal and Professional Growth

I am grateful for the opportunity to be in a doctoral program. Women of Color encounter challenges as they pursue doctoral degrees. These challenges include a lack of support, availability of resources, and a sense of belonging in academic programs. African American women, specifically, are underrepresented in doctoral programs. Through successful completion of this doctoral program, I will diminish the inequity for Women of Color. Despite these challenges, there is an increasing need for African American female scholarship in academia. It is my hope this qualitative case study contributes to the professional and academic literature on change management.

I chose this research topic due to my academic affiliation with a liberal arts institution. As an assistant professor of business and mathematics at a liberal arts institution, I recognize the essentiality of change management. Liberal arts institutions promote a mission that is characteristic of leadership, technology, and are principled in areas such as simplicity, peacemaking, integrity, community, and equality. I did not receive formal education through liberal arts institutions; however, I learned through my professional experience the value of a liberal arts education, as the purpose is to establish a lifelong journey of growth. Exploring change adaptation in the liberal arts provided me an opportunity to apply what I learned throughout the coursework in the doctoral program. Throughout each course, I focused on better understanding how to apply business concepts within education industry.

When deciding to pursue a PhD or DBA, ultimately my decision to pursue a DBA was largely the result of directly addressing organizational issues. The dissertation phase of this program presented the opportunity for me to address an organizational problem that I was acquainted with through her professional experience as an educator. It is important to note that the intent of liberal arts institutions is to offer a broadened education. This dissertation provided the opportunity to gain a foundation in conducting research to establish myself as a researcher. This purview will equip me and add value to my institution as I will continue to identify challenges within the liberal arts and offer a solution, as my intent is not to create theory.

Biblical Perspective

Throughout this qualitative case study, institutional leaders discussed the influence religion has on tradition and serves as a guide to decision making. 1 Timothy 3 (New International Version) presented the qualifications for leaders, as leaders should be above reproach, faithful, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not

quarrelsome, of good reputation, and not lover of money. Due to the religious missions of liberal arts institutions, these characteristics would assist leaders as they seek to transform their organizations. As the transformational leadership style was the aspirational style found throughout this qualitative case study, leaders must undergo a transformation of self before they can transform others. In part this can be accomplished through leadership modelling, a leadership behavior this study found to be a contributor to successful change adaptation. Jesus demonstrated leadership modelling during his exchanges with the twelve disciples. This is depicted in Matthew 13:36 (New International Version) where "he left the crowd and went into the house. His disciples came to him and said, 'Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field.'" Institutional leaders must mitigate any power distance, often characteristic of higher education models, that do not promote opportunities for mentorship. As found in this qualitative case study, leadership training and the promotion of good organizational hygiene are essential to successful change adaption.

The findings of this qualitative study also found competence to be a leadership behavior contributing to successful change adaptation. The ministry of competence was presented by Keller and Alsdorf (2012) as it allows believers to demonstrate proficiency as an offering to God while promoting His plan. Competence is an essential leader capability, as it demonstrates good stewardship and evidences the discipline required to further God's kingdom. This demonstration of proficiency requires leaders to recognize the happenings within the current landscape and respond to them with impactful decision making as they influence change. As higher education adopts a business posture, which often promotes the prominence of leaders, leaders must be careful not to fall prey to idolization. They warn against the temptation of the idolization of a leadership role, as doing so may convolute God's plan for an institution. Institutional leaders can

combat this by promoting good organizational hygiene that promotes a biblical worldview, while constructively meeting the needs of organizational constituencies.

Self-examination of leaders is essential as human fallibility impacts all and when leaders are prominent within institutions their actions may have spillover effects to believers and nonbelievers. Leaders must be careful to live authentically, while in alignment with biblical standards. In 1 Corinthians 10: 1–3 (New International Version) the Apostle Paul discussed how fragile an individual's belief system was. This notion aligns with the challenge of the liberal arts in that, institutions are having to inspire the belief in a liberal arts education. This fragility was demonstrated by the Egyptians when they were delivered from the bondage of Pharaoh. During their transition to the land God promised them they had difficulty adjusting. Moses, as a leader, experienced firsthand the difficulties associated with change and inspiring belief during transition. Institutional leaders are experiencing a comparable challenge, in that, higher education is experiencing unprecedented challenges in an environment that is foreign. The pandemic has magnified the current position of many institutions. Some institutions have closed their doors, while others have undergone a transformation. In 1 Corinthians 10: 6–7 (New International Version) it's stated:

> Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did. Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written: The people sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in revelry.

It will be important for institutional leaders to learn from the decisions of their past and the past decisions of other institutions as they navigate the current educational landscape. A new mindset must be adopted, even if that moves competitors to collaborators in order to reimagine the liberal arts and prove the saliency of a liberal arts education.

Summary of Reflections

Through conducting this qualitative study, I was reminded of the privilege leaders of liberal arts institutions have to implement a biblical worldview, as liberal arts institutions have religious heritages. Through careful consideration and implementation of a biblical worldview, leaders can creatively inspire a vision of the liberal arts while meeting both internal and external needs. As institutions are charged with adopting continuous improvement initiatives, they have the opportunity to partner with a God that never changes. This is an opportunity for Christian leaders to showcase the formidability of a biblical worldview through their leadership endeavors.

Summary of Section 3

Section 3 was the conclusion of this qualitative case study. I provided an overview of the study, thoroughly discussed the research findings and their applicability to liberal arts institutions, and offered two recommendations for future researchers to study. Liberal arts institutions, particularly in the Midwest, are experiencing an array of challenges that require a transformation. As Dima et al. (2019) reiterated, institutions must successfully adapt to a rapidly changing educational climate to survive. This qualitative case study identified the predominant changes impacting liberal arts institutions in the Midwest and leadership behaviors that promote successful change adaption. Black (2015) underscored that bureaucratic approaches to institutional leadership are rendering ineffective. Thus, it is necessary for institutional leaders to demonstrate the formidability of a liberal arts education by first transforming their institutions. Section 3 ended with my reflections on the research experience and essentiality of a biblical worldview. This qualitative case study will serve as a framework for institutional leaders as they seek to successfully respond to change.

Summary and Study Conclusions

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to contribute to the body of knowledge on change adaptation and explore the impediments to successful change adaptation within liberal arts institutions in the Midwest. The existent challenges of the changing educational landscape are significantly impacting enrollment and revenue, which is of utmost consideration to organizational constituents. This study found that institutional leaders are charged with responding to a changing value proposition of the liberal arts, revenue and enrollment fluctuations, a changing demographic—exacerbated by a pandemic. I explored how less risk-averse liberal arts institutions are welcoming nontraditional leaders in administrative roles, as leadership supply for tenure-track professors is declining. Changing leadership roles are requiring leaders to demonstrate competencies outside of their academic credentials, as institutional accountability, continuous improvement initiatives, and meeting student needs have become characteristic of higher education.

I used a methodological approach that included transformational, transactional, and adaptive leadership concepts to better understand which best promote successful change adaption. The results of this study found the transformational leadership style to be the aspirational model for leaders to successfully adapt to a rapidly changing educational climate. This study addressed the problem with traditional leaders' failure to successfully respond to change given the bureaucratic nature of higher education constructs and determined leadership cultivation and training was essential for traditional leaders. The leadership behaviors identified in this study that promote successful change adaption included collaboration, effective communication, curiosity, and the ability to recognize change.

The professional and academic literature echoed the findings of this study which suggest liberal arts institutions exchange their bureaucratic approach for a business modelling approach to propel their organizations. Institutions would benefit from practical business modalities as they create and implement strategy to prove the formidability of liberal arts institutions. The findings of this study aligned with the literature in that to successfully adapt to change institutions must successfully adopt strategic business processes that promote good financial health and incorporate the priorities of organizational constituencies. Through utilizing contemporary business approaches to their operations, institutions can reassert themselves in the current educational landscape. Dima et al. (2019) underscored the importance of accelerating productivity through coupling approaches used within higher education with business approaches.

This study found that nontraditional leaders often have the credentialing and professional experience outside of academia that equips them in a way that traditional leaders are not. Ghasemy et al. (2017) discussed the importance of role-specific competency and adopting a change mindset when addressing changes in a rapidly changing environment. Effective decision-making capabilities will be essential for leaders, as they will have to routinely assess their processes to ensure alignment with institutional mission. Institutional leaders have an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to increase productivity and salient educational products. The findings of this study discussed the opportunity liberal arts institutions have to improve their technological infrastructures. Research participants discussed how liberal arts institutions are slow changing, but how the rapid response to the pandemic showed that they are capable of change.

The purviews of the 23 institutional leaders informed the research. I addressed the posed research questions to serve as a guide for institutional leaders attempting to reassert themselves. The results of this qualitative research underscore the essentiality of leadership cultivation and leadership development to reimagine the liberal arts. At the conclusion of thematic analysis this qualitative study outlined six overarching themes and application strategies for leaders to consider. Higher education leaders must adopt a change mindset to successfully respond to the happenings with the current educational climate. Leaders must view change as an opportunity instead of an insurmountable challenge. This educational moment presents the opportunity for leaders to showcase the formidability of a liberal arts education.

References

Abdous, M. (2011). Towards a framework for business process reengineering in higher education. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, *33*(4), 427–433. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1360080X.2011.585741

Acharya, A. S., Prakash, A., Saxena, P., & Nigam, A. (2013). Sampling: Why and how if it? *Indian Journal of Medical Specialties*, *4*, 330–333.

Adewale, A. S., & Ghavifekr, S. (2019). Leadership self-efficacy and staff organizational citizenship behavior in higher education institutions: Experience from Nigeria. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, *22*(1), 116–133. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13603124.2018.1543540

Ahmed, V., Opoku, A., & Aziz, Z. (Eds.). (2016). *Research methodology in the built environment: A selection of case studies.* Routledge. http://dx.doi.org/10.4324/9781315725529

Alam, M. K. (2021). A systematic qualitative case study: Questions, data collection, NVivo analysis and saturation. *Qualitative Research in Operations and Management*, *16*(1), 1–31. http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/QROM-09-2019-1825

Aldiabat, K., & Le Navenec, C.-L. (2011). Clarification of the blurred boundaries between grounded theory and ethnography: Differences and similarities. *Turkish Online Journal of Qualitative Inquiry*, *2*(3), 1–13.

Alhaqbani, A., Reed, D. M., Savage, B. M., & Ries, J. (2016). The impact of middle management commitment on improvement initiatives in public organisations. *Business Process Management Journal*, *22*(5), 924–938. https://doi.org/10.1108/BPMJ-01-2016-0018

Allen, J., & Baker, J. J. (2012). Building an institution worthy of its history: The evergreen strategic plan at Widener University. *Planning for Higher Education*, *40*(2), 48–58.

Amankwah-Amoah, J. (2015). A unified framework for incorporating decision making into explanations of business failure. *Industrial Management & Data Systems*, *115*(7), 1341–1357. http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/IMDS-03-2015-0085

Andersen, J. A. (2014). Barking up the wrong tree. On the fallacies of the transformational leadership theory. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, *36*(6), 765–777. http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/LODJ-12-2013-0168

Antonakis, J., & House, R. J. (2014). Instrumental leadership: Measurement and extension of transformational–transactional leadership theory. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *25*(4), 746–771. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2014.04.005

Anyan, F. (2013). The influence of power shifts in data collection and analysis stages: A focus on qualitative research interview. *The Qualitative Report*, *18*(18), 1–9. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2013.1525

Arif, S. (2016). Leadership for change: Proposed organizational development by incorporating systems thinking and quality tools. *Business Process Management Journal*, *22*(5), 939–956. http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/BPMJ-01-2016-0025

Babchuk, W. A., & Hitchcock, R. K. (2013). *Grounded theory ethnography: Merging methodologies for advancing naturalistic inquiry* [Paper presentation]. 54th Annual Adult Education Research Conference, St. Louis, MO, United States.

Baker, V. L., & Baldwin, R. G. (2015). A case study of liberal arts colleges in the 21st century: Understanding organizational change and evolution in higher education. *Innovative Higher Education*, *40*, 247–261. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10755-014-9311-6

Baker, V. L., Baldwin, R. G., & Makker, S. (2012). Where are they now? Revisiting Breneman's study of liberal arts colleges. *Liberal Education*, *98*(3), 48–53.

Baker, V. L., Pifer, M. J., & Lunsford, L. G. (2016). Faculty challenges across rank in liberal arts colleges: A human resources perspective. *Journal of Faculty Development*, *30*, 23–29.

Baker, T., & Powell, E. E. (2019). Entrepreneurship as a new liberal art. *Small Business Economics*, *52*, 405–418. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11187-018-0099-0

Barrett, D., & Twycross, A. (2018). Data collection in qualitative research. *Evidence-Based Nursing*, *21*, 63–64. http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/eb-2018-102939

Bartlett, J. E., Kotrlik, J. W., & Higgins, C. C. (2001). Organizational research: Determining appropriate sample size in survey research. *Information Technology, Learning, and Performance Journal*, *19*, 43–50.

Bartlett, L., & Vavrus, F. (2017). Comparative case studies: An innovative approach. *Nordic Journal of Comparative and International Education*, *1*(1), 5–17. http://dx.doi.org/10.7577/njcie.1929

Beardsley, S. C. (2018, February 9). Shaking up the leadership model in higher education. *McKinsey Quarterly*. https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/strategy-and-corporate-finance/our-insights/shaking-up-the-leadership-model-in-higher-education#

Bial, D. (2016, March 30). Diversity in the workplace starts with diversity in higher education. *Forbes*. https://www.forbes.com/sites/schoolboard/2016/03/30/diversity-in-the-workplace-starts-with-diversity-in-higher-education/?sh=727d345a5d98

Black, S. A. (2015). Qualities of effective leadership in higher education. *Open Journal of Leadership*, *4*(2), 54–66. http://dx.doi.org/10.4236/ojl.2015.42006

Bobrowsky, M. (2018). Science 101: How can I make science fun and have students learn more by using phenomenon-based learning? *Science & Children*, *56*(2), 70–73. http://dx.doi.org/10.2505/4/sc18_056_02_70

Boddy, C. R. (2016). Sample size for qualitative research. *Qualitative Market Research*, *19*(4), 426–432. http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/QMR-06-2016-0053

Boje, D. M., Hilton, Y. C., & Mele, T. M. (2017). 21st century university and the failure of business process reengineering. *Organization Development Journal*, *35*(1), 91–106.

Borgianni, Y., Cascini, G., & Rotini, F. (2015). Business process reengineering driven by customer value: A support for undertaking decisions under uncertainty conditions. *Computers in Industry*, *68*, 132–147. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.compind.2015.01.001

Bostrom, P. K. (2019). In search of themes – Keys to teaching qualitative analysis in higher education. *The Qualitative Report*, *24*(5), 1001–1011. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2019.3898

Botstein, L. (2018). Redeeming the liberal arts. *Liberal Education*, *104*(4), 74–79.

Brereton, R. G. (2015). Populations and samples. *Journal of Chemometrics*, *29*(6), 325–328. http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/cem.2695

Brown, V. (2016, March 4). *Needed: Business-minded college presidents*. The James G. Martin Center for Academic Renewal. https://www.jamesgmartin.center/2016/03/needed-business-minded-college-presidents/

Caine, V., Estefan, A., & Clandinin, D. J. (2013). A return to methodological commitment: Reflections of narrative inquiry. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, *57*(6), 574–586. https://doi.org/10.1080/00313831.2013.798833

Cameron, J., Tiessen, R., Grantham, K., & Husband-Ceperkovic, T. (2019). The value of liberal arts education for finding professional employment: Insights from international development studies graduates in Canada. *Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education*, *11*(3), 574–589. http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/JARHE-07-2018-0141

Carillo, K. D. A., Galy, N., Guthrie, C., & Vanhems, A. (2019). How to turn managers into data-driven decision makers: Measuring attitudes towards business analytics. *Business Process Management Journal*, *25*(3), 553–578. http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/BPMJ-11-2017-0331

Carter, N., Bryant-Lukosius, D., DiCenso, A., Blythe, J., & Neville, A. J. (2014). The use of triangulation in qualitative research. *Oncology Nursing Forum*, *41*(5), 545–547. http://dx.doi.org/10.1188/14.ONF.545-547

Caulfield, J. (2020, August 14). *How to do thematic analysis*. Scribbr. https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/thematic-analysis/

Castillo-Montoya, M. (2016). Preparing for interview research: The interview protocol refinement framework. *The Qualitative Report*, *21*(5), 811–831. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2016.2337

CFR Title 21. (2019, September 19). https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/cdrh/cfdocs/cfcfr/CFRSearch.cfm?CFRPart=50&showFR=1&subpartNode=21:1.0.1.1.20.2

Chenail, R. J. (2011). Interviewing the investigator: Strategies for addressing instrumentation and researcher bias concerns in qualitative research. *The Qualitative Report*, *16*(1), 255–262. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2011.1051

Cho, J., & Trent, A. (2006). Validity in qualitative research revisited. *Qualitative Research*, *6*(3), 319–340. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1468794106065006

Collins, J. P. (2014). Leadership and change in twenty-first century higher education. *BioScience*, *64*(7), 561–562. http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/biosci/biu080

Combs, J. G., Crook, T. R., & Rauch, A. (2019). Meta-analytic research in management: Contemporary approaches, unresolved controversies, and rising standards. *Journal of Management Studies*, *56*(1), 1–18. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/joms.12427

Cosenz, F., & Noto, G. (2018). A dynamic business modelling approach to design and experiment new business venture strategies. *Long Range Planning*, *51*(1), 127–140. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.lrp.2017.07.001

Crawford, I. M. (1997). *Marketing research and information systems*. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

Creswell, J. W. (2016). *30 essential skills for the qualitative researcher*. SAGE Publications.

Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches*. SAGE Publications.

Cypress, B. (2017). Rigor or reliability and validity in qualitative research: Perspectives, strategies, reconceptualization, and recommendations. *Dimensions of Critical Care Nursing*, *36*(4), 253–263. http://dx.doi.org/10.1097/DCC.0000000000000253

Dartey-Baah, K. (2015). Resilient leadership: A transformational-transactional leadership mix. *Journal of Global Responsibility*, *6*(1), 99–112. http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/JGR-07-2014-0026

DeRue, D. S. (2011). Adaptive leadership theory: Leading and following as a complex adaptive process. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, *31*, 125–150. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.riob.2011.09.007

Dhukaram, A. V., Sgouropoulou, C., Feldman, G., & Amini, A. (2018). Higher education provision using systems thinking approach – Case studies. *European Journal of Engineering Education*, *43*(1), 3–25. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03043797.2016.1210569

Di Leo, J. R. (2011). Who wants the liberal arts? *Symploke*, *19*(1-2), 325–328.

Dima, A. M., Clodniţchi, R., Istudor, L., & Luchian, I. (2019). Business excellence models in higher education – Innovative solutions for management performance. *Proceedings of the International Conference on Business Excellence*, *13*(1), 38–46. http://dx.doi.org/10.2478/picbe-2019-0005

Doyle, A. (2017). Adaptive challenges require adaptive leaders. *Performance Improvement*, *56*(9), 18–26. http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/pfi.21735

Dźwigol, H. (2018). Selecting methods within a research process – Scientific and practical considerations. *Zeszyty Naukowe Politechniki Śląskiej*, *121*, 87–96.

Ekman, R. (2014, August 12). New directions for higher education: Q&A with Richard Ekman on challenges, misconceptions facing independent colleges. (P. DiSalvio, Interviewer)

Etikan, I., Musa, S. A., & Alkassim, R. S. (2016). Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, *5*(1), 1–4. http://dx.doi.org/10.11648/j.ajtas.20160501.11

Exactly where are the liberal arts schools? (n.d.). Liberal Arts Colleges: The Complete Guide to Liberal Arts Colleges. Retrieved Month DD, YYYY, from https://www.liberalartscolleges.com/exactly-where-are-the-liberal-arts-schools/

Farrelly, P. (2013). Selecting a research method and designing the study. *British Journal of School Nursing*, *7*(10), 508–511. http://dx.doi.org/10.12968/bjsn.2012.7.10.508

Fetters, M. D., Curry, L. A., & Creswell, J. W. (2013). Achieving integration in mixed methods designs—Principles and practices. *Health Services Research*, *48*(6pt2), 2134–2156. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/1475-6773.12117

Fletcher, W. L. (2015). Expense management strategies within financially successful Christian universities. *Christian Higher Education*, *14*(4), 212–228. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15363759.2015.1049754

Fourie, W., & Höhne, F. (2019). Thou shalt not fail? Using theological impulses to critique the heroic bias in transformational leadership theory. *Leadership*, *15*(1), 44–57. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1742715017730453

França Junior, J. L. (2017). Sete alertas saudáveis para as humanidades: um breve vislumbre da faceta mais trágica das artes liberais hoje [Seven salutary warnings for the humanities: A brief glimpse into how the liberal arts have fallen from grace]. *Anuário de Literatura*, *22*(1), 151–174. https://doi.org/10.5007/2175-7917.2017v22n1p151

Fusch, P., Fusch, G. E., & Ness, L. R. (2018). Denzin's paradigm shift: Revisiting triangulation in qualitative research. *Journal of Social Change*, *10*(1), 19–32. http://dx.doi.org/10.5590/JOSC.2018.10.1.02

Fusch, P. I., & Ness, L. R. (2015). Are we there yet? Data saturation in qualitative research. *The Qualitative Report*, *20*(9), 1408–1416. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2015.2281

Gardner, L. (2017, September 17). 'Everything is a business.' *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. https://www.chronicle.com/article/everything-is-a-business/

Gaya, H. J., & Smith, E. E. (2016). Developing a qualitative single case study in the strategic management realm: An appropriate research design? *International Journal of Business Management and Economic Research*, *7*(2), 529–538.

Gearing, R. E. (2004). Bracketing in research: A typology. *Qualitative Health Research*, *14*(10), 1429–1450. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1049732304270394

Gedminiene, M., & Kaminskienė, L. (2016). Educational leadership in higher education: A scientific literature review. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, *21*(3), 93–98.

Gentles, S. J., Charles, C., Ploeg, J., & McKibbon, K. A. (2015). Sampling in qualitative research: Insights from an overview of the methods literature. *The Qualitative Report*, *20*(11), 1772–1789. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2015.2373

Ghasemy, M., Hussin, S. B., Megat Daud, M. A. K. B., Abdul Razak, A. Z. B., & Maah, M. J. B. (2017). Pivotal qualities for effective university leadership on the basis of a modified Australian model: The application of FIMIX-PLS and IPMA in the Malaysian academic context. *Asia Pacific Education Review*, *18*, 501–517. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s12564-017-9504-7

Gill, P., Stewart, K., Treasure, E., & Chadwick, B. (2008). Methods of data collection in qualitative research: Interviews and focus groups. *British Dental Journal*, *204*, 291–295. http://dx.doi.org/10.1038/bdj.2008.192

Glyzina, M. P., Telesh, A. D., Muradova, S. S., Chernykh, A. I., Smolentsev, V. M., & Koroleva, E. V. (2016). Psychological aspects of management and economics of higher education. *International Journal of Economics and Financial Issues*, *6*(8S), 240–244.

Grant, A. M. (2014). The efficacy of executive coaching in times of organisational change. *Journal of Change Management*, *14*(2), 258–280. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14697017.2013.805159

Green, H. E. (2014). Use of theoretical and conceptual frameworks in qualitative research. *Nurse Researcher*, *21*(6), 34–41. http://dx.doi.org/10.7748/nr.21.6.34.e1252

Guetterman, T. C., & Mitchell, N. (2016). The role of leadership and culture in creating meaningful assessment: A mixed methods case study. *Innovative Higher Education*, *41*, 43–57. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10755-015-9330-y

Gumpertz, M., Durodoye, R., Griffith, E., & Wilson, A. (2017). Retention and promotion of women and underrepresented minority faculty in science and engineering at four large land grant institutions. *PLoS ONE*, *12*(11), Article e0187285. http://dx.doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0187285

Gustafsson, J. (2017). *Single case studies vs. multiple case studies: A comparative study* [Master's thesis, Halmstad University]. DiVA. https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1064378/FULLTEXT01.pdf%20(10

Guthrie, K. L., & Callahan, K. (2016). Liberal arts: Leadership education in the 21st century. *New Directions for Higher Education*, *2016*(174), 21–33. http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/he.20186

Hakim, A., Gheitasi, M., & Soltani, F. (2016). Fuzzy model on selecting processes in business process reengineering. *Business Process Management Journal*, *22*(6), 1118–1138. http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/BPMJ-05-2015-0057

Hales, D. (2010). *An introduction to triangulation*. Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS. https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/sub_landing/files/10_4-Intro-to-triangulation-MEF.pdf

Harrison, H., Birks, M., Franklin, R., & Mills, J. (2017). Case study research: Foundations and methodological orientations. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, *18*(1), Article 19. https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-18.1.2655

Haveman, H. A., & Wetts, R. (2019). Contemporary organizational theory: The demographic, relational, and cultural perspectives. *Sociology Compass*, *13*(3), Article e12664. https://doi.org/10.1111/soc4.12664

Hayashi, P., Jr. (2019). Validity in qualitative research: A processual approach. *The Qualitative Report*, *24*(1), 98–112. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2019.3443

Hazelrigg, N. (2019, July 2). *Slow going on faculty diversity*. Inside Higher Ed. https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2019/07/02/little-progress-diversifying-faculty-ranks-study-finds-particularly-research

Heikkinen, H. L. T., Huttunen, R., Syrjälä, L., & Pesonen, J. (2012). Action research and narrative inquiry: Five principles for validation revisited. *Educational Action Research*, *20*(1), 5–21. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09650792.2012.647635

Hilbun, A. J., & Mamiseishvili, K. (2016). Organizational adaptation of liberal arts colleges during the great recession of 2007. *Innovative Higher Education*, *41*, 5–18. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10755-015-9331-x

Hilton, M., & Jacobson, R. (2012). A lesson of lost political capital in public higher education: Leadership challenges in a time of needed organizational change. *Contemporary Issues in Education Research*, *5*(3), 227–232. http://dx.doi.org/10.19030/cier.v5i3.7099

Houghton, C., Casey, D., Shaw, D., & Murphy, K. (2013). Rigour in qualitative case-study research. *Nurse Researcher*, *20*(4), 12–17. http://dx.doi.org/10.7748/nr2013.03.20.4.12.e326

Hunt, J. M., & Weintraub, J. R. (2017). *The coaching manager: Developing top talent in business*. SAGE Publications. http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781071801345

Iordache-Platis, M. (2017). Strategies for academic leadership towards increasing productivity in higher education institutions; Business education case. *Proceedings of the International Conference on Business Excellence*, *11*(1), 255–263. http://dx.doi.org/10.1515/picbe-2017-0027

Iordache-Platis, M. (2018). Building a higher education learning experience strategy; Theoretical and practical approaches. *Proceedings of the International Conference on Business Excellence*, *12*(1), 486–497. http://dx.doi.org/10.2478/picbe-2018-0044

Iowa Association of Independent Colleges and Universities. (n.d.). *About IAICU*. Retrieved Month DD, YYYY, from https://www.iowaprivatecolleges.org/pages/iaicu.aspx

Jacob, S. A., & Furgerson, S. P. (2012). Writing interview protocols and conducting interviews: Tips for students new to the field of qualitative research. *The Qualitative Report*, *17*(42), 1–10. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2012.1718

Jain, R., Chandrasekaran, A., & Gunasekaran, A. (2010). Benchmarking the redesign of "business process reengineering" curriculum: A continuous process improvement (CPI). *Benchmarking: An International Journal*, *17*(1), 77–94. http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/14635771011022325

Janghorban, R., Latifnejad Roudsari, R., & Taghipour, A. (2014). Skype interviewing: The new generation of online synchronous interview in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-Being*, *9*(1), Article 24152. http://dx.doi.org/10.3402/qhw.v9.24152

Jefferies, S. S. (2017). Adaptive leadership in a socially revolving world: A symbolic

    interactionist lens of adaptive leadership theory. *Performance Improvement*, *56*(9), 46–

    50. http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/pfi.21741

Johnson, B. D., Dunlap, E., & Benoit, E. (2010). Organizing "mountains of words" for data

    analysis, both qualitative and quantitative. *Substance Use & Misuse*, *45*(5), 648–670.

    http://dx.doi.org/10.3109/10826081003594757

Jung, D.-I., & Lee, W.-H. (2016). Crossing the management fashion border: The adoption of

    business process reengineering services by management consultants offering total quality

    management services in the United States, 1992–2004. *Journal of Management &*

    Organization, *22*(5), 702–719. http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/jmo.2015.58

Jung-Gehling, C., & Strauss, E. (2018). A contemporary concept of organizational control: Its

    dependence on shared values and impact on motivation. *Schmalenbach Business Review*,

    70, 341–374. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s41464-018-0053-3

Kallio, H., Pietilä, A.-M., Johnson, M., & Docent, M. K. (2016). Systematic methodological

    review: Developing a framework for a qualitative semi-structured interview guide.

    Journal of Advanced Nursing, *72*(12), 2954–2965. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/jan.13031

Kark, R., Van Dijk, D., & Vashdi, D. R. (2017). Motivated or demotivated to be creative: The

    role of self-regulatory focus in transformational and transactional leadership processes.

    Applied Psychology, *67*(1), 186–224. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/apps.12122

Keller, T., & Alsdorf, K. L. (2012). *Every good endeavor: Connecting your work to God's work.*

    Dutton.

Kezar, A., Gehrke, S., & Bernstein-Sierra, S. (2018). Communities of transformation: Creating changes to deeply entrenched issues. *The Journal of Higher Education*, *89*(6), 832–864. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00221546.2018.1441108

Khan, N. (2017). Adaptive or transactional leadership in current higher education: A brief comparison. *The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning*, *18*(3), 178–183. http://dx.doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v18i3.3294

Kivunja, C., & Kuyini, A. B. (2017). Understanding and applying research paradigms in educational contexts. *International Journal of Higher Education, 6*(5).

Korejan, M. M., & Shahbazi, H. (2016). An analysis of the transformational leadership theory. *Journal of Fundamental and Applied Sciences*, *8*(3), 452–461. https://doi.org/10.4314/jfas.v8i3s.192

Kuei, C.-h., & Lu, M. H. (2013). Integrating quality management principles into sustainability management. *Total Quality Management & Business Excellence*, 62-78.

Lamm, K. W., Carter, H. S., & Lamm, A. J. (2016). A theory based model of interpersonal leadership: An integration of the literature. *Journal of Leadership Education*, *15*(4), 183–205. http://dx.doi.org/10.12806/V15/I4/T2

Landsheer, J. A., & Boeije, H. R. (2010). In search of content validity: Facet analysis as a qualitative method to improve questionnaire design. *Quality & Quantity*, *44*, Article 59. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11135-008-9179-6

Lee, J. S. (2016). Cultural institutions, theatre and humanistic liberal education: Reconsidering "art" in liberal arts education. *Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, *28*(1/2), 152–171. https://doi.org/10.5840/jis2016281/28

Lepori, B., Usher, J., & Montauti, M. (2013). Budgetary allocation and organizational characteristics of higher education institutions: A review of existing studies and a framework for future research. *Higher Education*, *65*, 59–78. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10734-012-9581-9

Liao, H., & Hitchcock, J. (2018). Reported credibility techniques in higher education evaluation studies that use qualitative methods: A research synthesis. *Evaluation and Program Planning*, *68*, 157–165. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.evalprogplan.2018.03.005

Liberal arts colleges in the US. (n.d.). Liberal Arts Colleges: The Complete Guide to Liberal Arts Colleges. Retrieved May 22, 2020, from https://www.liberalartscolleges.com/states/

Liu, W., Dong, Y., Chiclana, F., Cabrerizo, F. J., & Herrera-Viedma, E. (2017). Group decision-making based on heterogeneous preference relations with self-confidence. *Fuzzy Optimization and Decision Making*, *16*, 429–447. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10700-016-9254-8

Lobo, M. A., Moeyaert, M., Baraldi Cunha, A., & Babik, I. (2017). Single-case design, analysis, and quality assessment for intervention research. *Journal of Neurologic Physical Therapy*, *41*(3), 187–197. http://dx.doi.org/10.1097/NPT.0000000000000187

Logan, J., & Curry, J. (2015). A liberal arts education: Global trends and challenges. *Christian Higher Education*, *14*(1-2), 66–79. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15363759.2015.973344

Lopez, V., & Whitehead, D. (2012). Sampling data and data collection in qualitative research. In D. Whitehead, G. LoBiondo-Wood, & J. Haber (Eds.), *Nursing and midwifery research: Methods and appraisal for evidence based practice* (4th ed., pp. 124–140). Mosby Australia.

Lundberg, C. A., Kim, Y. K., Andrade, L. M., & Bahner, D. T. (2018). High expectations, strong support: Faculty behaviors predicting Latina/o community college student learning. *Journal of College Student Development*, *59*(1), 55–70. http://dx.doi.org/10.1353/csd.2018.0004

Ma, X., & Jiang, W. (2018). Transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and employee creativity in entrepreneurial firms. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, *54*(3), 302–324. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0021886318764346

Maharaj, N. (2016). Using field notes to facilitate critical reflection. *Reflective Practice*, 114-124.

Majid, U. (2018). Research fundamentals: Study design, population, and sample size. *Undergraduate Research in Natural and Clinical Sciences and Technology Journal*, *2*(1). http://dx.doi.org/10.26685/urncst.16

Mannion, R., Freeman, T., Millar, R., & Davies, H. (2016). Effective board governance of safe care: A (theoretically underpinned) cross-sectioned examination of the breadth and depth of relationships through national quantitative surveys and in-depth qualitative case studies. *Health Services and Delivery Research*, *4*(4), 1–97. https://doi.org/10.3310/hsdr04040

Marland, A., & Esselment, A. L. (2019). Negotiating with gatekeepers to get interviews with politicians: Qualitative research recruitment in a digital media environment. *Qualitative Research*, *19*(6), 685–702. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1468794118803022

Marshall, B., Cardon, P., Poddar, A., & Fontenot, R. (2013). Does sample size matter in qualitative research?: A review of qualitative interviews in research. *Journal of Computer Information Systems*, *54*(1), 11–22. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/08874417.2013.11645667

Martin, J., Elg, M., & Gremyr, I. (2019). Fit for purpose? Exploring competence in quality

management. *International Journal of Quality and Service Sciences*, *11*(3), 317–333.

http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/IJQSS-06-2018-0054

Martínez-Mesa, J., González-Chica, D. A., Duquia, R. P., Bonamigo, R. R., & Bastos, J. L.

(2016). Sampling: How to select participants in my research study? *Anais Brasileiros de

Dermatologia*, *91*(3), 326–330. http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/abd1806-4841.20165254

McKnight, L., & O'Mara, J. (2017). Supervisory scratchings: Critical autoethnography

complicating "process" in doctoral supervision. *Journal of Curriculum and Pedagogy*,

14(2), 106–115. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15505170.2017.1312642

Medelyan, A. (2020). *Coding qualitative data: How to code qualitative research (Updated

2020).* Thematic. https://getthematic.com/insights/coding-qualitative-data/

Mittwede, S. K. (2012). Research paradigms and their use and importance in theological Inquiry

and education. *Journal of Education & Christian Belief*, 23-40.

Moser, A., & Korstjens, I. (2018). Series: Practical guidance to qualitative research. Part 3:

Sampling, data collection and analysis. *European Journal of General Practice*, *24*(1), 9–

18. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13814788.2017.1375091

Mrig, A. (2015, November 23). Improving diversity in higher education - Beyond the moral

imperative. *Forbes*. https://www.forbes.com/sites/amitmrig/2015/11/23/improving-

diversity-in-higher-education-beyond-the-moral-imperative/#1e9e95226dd6

Muluneh, G. S., & Gedifew, M. T. (2018). Leading changes through adaptive design: Change

management practice in one of the universities in a developing nation. *Journal of

Organizational Change Management*, *31*(6), 1249–1270.

http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/JOCM-10-2017-0379

Myszewski, J. M. (2018). Sustainable improvement in education. *Business Process Management Journal*, *24*(6), 1381–1392. http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/BPMJ-02-2018-0040

Newfield, C. (2009). Ending the budget wars: Funding the humanities during a crisis in higher education. *Profession*, *2009*(1), 270–284.

Noble, H., & Smith, J. (2015). Issues of validity and reliability in qualitative research. *Evidence-Based Nursing*, *18*(2), 34–35. http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/eb-2015-102054

Noor, K. B. M. (2008). Case study: A strategic research methodology. *American Journal of Applied Sciences*, *5*, 1602–1604.

O'Keefe, D. F., Messervey, D., & Squires, E. C. (2018). Promoting ethical and prosocial behavior: The combined effect of ethical leadership and coworker ethicality. *Ethics & Behavior*, *28*(3), 235–260. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10508422.2017.1365607

Onwuegbuzie, A. J., Leech, N. L., & Collins, K. M. T. (2010). Innovative data collection strategies in qualitative research. *The Qualitative Report*, *15*(3), 696–726. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2010.1171

Östlund, U., Kidd, L., Wengström, Y., & Rowa-Dewar, N. (2011). Combining qualitative and quantitative research within mixed method research designs: A methodological review. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, *48*(3), 369–383. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2010.10.005

Palinkas, L. A., Horwitz, S. M., Green, C. A., Wisdom, J. P., Duan, N., & Hoagwood, K. (2015). Purposeful sampling for qualitative data collection and analysis in mixed method implementation research. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*, *42*, 533–544. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10488-013-0528-y

Paoloni, P., Cesaroni, F. M., & Demartini, P. (2018). Relational capital and knowledge transfer in universities. *Business Process Management Journal*, *25*(1), 185–201. http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/BPMJ-06-2017-0155

Park, K. O. (2018). The relationship between BPR strategy and change management for the sustainable implementation of ERP: An information orientation perspective. *Sustainability*, *10*(9), Article 3080. http://dx.doi.org/10.3390/su10093080

Pedersen, B., Delmar, C., Falkmer, U., & Grønkjær, M. (2016). Bridging the gap between interviewer and interviewee: Developing an interview guide for individual interviews by means of a focus group. *Scandinavian Journal of Caring Sciences*, *30*(3), 631–638. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/scs.12280

Phillippi, J., & Lauderdale, J. (2018). A guide to field notes for qualitative research: Context and conversation. *Qualitative Health Research*, *28*(3), 381–388. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1049732317697102

Plenert, G. (2012). *Strategic continuous process improvement: Which quality tools to use and when to use them*. McGraw-Hill Education.

Qu, S. Q., & Dumay, J. (2011). The qualitative research interview. *Qualitative Research in Accounting & Management*, *8*(3), 238–264. http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/11766091111162070

Rabionet, S. E. (2009). How I learned to design and conduct semi-structured interviews: An ongoing and continuous journey. *The Qualitative Report*, *14*(3), 203–206. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2009.2850

Riccobono, F., Bruccoleri, M., & Größler, A. (2016). Groupthink and project performance: The influence of personal traits and interpersonal ties. *Production and Operations Management*, *25*(4), 609–629. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/poms.12431

Robson, C., & McCartan, K. (2016). *Real world research: A resource for users of social research methods in applied settings* (4th ed.). John Wiley & Sons.

Rodgers, J. L., & Jackson, M. W. (2012). Are we who we think we are: Evaluating brand promise at a liberal-arts institution. *Innovative Higher Education*, *37*, 153–166. https://doi.org/10.1007/S10755-011-9187-7

Rose, J., & Johnson, C. W. (2020). Contextualizing reliability and validity in qualitative research: Toward more rigorous and trustworthy qualitative social science in leisure research. *Journal of Leisure Research*, *51*(4), 432–451. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00222216.2020.1722042

Saldaña, J. (2015). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.

Sanchez-Ruiz, L., Blanco, B., & Diaz, E. (2019). Difficulty in implementing continuous improvement – Rasch measurement analysis. *Business Process Management Journal*, 1228-1250.

Saunders, B., Sim, J., Kingstone, T., Baker, S., Waterfield, J., Bartlam, B., Burroughs, H., & Jinks, C. (2018). Saturation in qualitative research: Exploring its conceptualization and operationalization. *Quality & Quantity*, *52*, 1893–1907. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-017-0574-8

Savin-Baden, M., & Howell Major, C. (2013). *Qualitative research: The essential guide to theory and practice*. Routledge.

Seethamraju, R. (2012). Business process management: A missing link in business education. *Business Process Management Journal*, *18*(3), 532–547. http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/14637151211232696

Shah, P., Thornton, I., Turrin, D., & Hipskind, J. E. (2020). *Informed consent*. StatPearls.

Simon, M. K., & Goes, J. (2013). *Dissertation and scholarly research: Recipes for success*. Dissertation Success.

Skjott Linneberg, M., & Korsgaard, S. (2019). Coding qualitative data: A synthesis guiding the novice. *Qualitative Research Journal*, *19*(3), 259–270. https://doi.org/10.1108/QRJ-12-2018-0012

Sorsa, M. A., Kiikkala, I., & Åstedt-Kurki, P. (2015). Bracketing as a skill in conducting unstructured qualitative interviews. *Nurse Researcher*, *22*(4), 8–12. http://dx.doi.org/10.7748/nr.22.4.8.e1317

Spiers, J., Morse, J. M., Olson, K., Mayan, M., & Barrett, M. (2018). Reflection/commentary on a past article: "Verification strategies for establishing reliability and validity in qualitative research." *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *17*(1), 1–2. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1609406918788237

Starbird, D., & Cavanagh, R. (2011). *Building engaged team performance: Align your processes and people to achieve game-changing business results.* McGraw-Hill.

Stollman, J. A. (2010). America's financial future, civic engagement. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, *43*(2), 343–346. http://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096510000259

Suleiman, Y., Hanafi, Z. B., & Tanslikhan, M. (2017). Private universities and development of higher education in Nigeria: A mixed methods approach. *The Qualitative Report*, *22*(7), 1848–1879. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2017.2668

Sullivan, J. R. (2012). Skype: An appropriate method of data collection for qualitative

    interviews? *The Hilltop Review*, *6*(1), Article 10.

    https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/hilltopreview/vol6/iss1/10

Sutton, J., & Austin, Z. (2015). Qualitative research: Data collection, analysis, and management.

    The Canadian Journal of Hospital Pharmacy, *68*(3), 226–231.

    http://dx.doi.org/10.4212/cjhp.v68i3.1456

Taherdoost, H. (2016). Sampling methods in research methodology; How to choose a sampling

    technique for research. *International Journal of Academic Research in Management*,

    5(2), 18–27. http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3205035

30 best liberal arts colleges in the Midwest. (n.d.). Great Value Colleges. Retrieved May 16,

    2020, from https://www.greatvaluecolleges.net/rankings/liberal-arts-midwest/

Tufford, L., & Newman, P. (2012). Bracketing in qualitative research. *Qualitative Social Work*,

    11(1), 80–96. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1473325010368316

Turner, D. W., III. (2010). Qualitative interview design: A practical guide for novice

    investigators. *The Qualitative Report*, *15*(3), 754–760. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-

    3715/2010.1178

Turner, S. F., Cardinal, L. B., & Burton, R. M. (2017). Research design for mixed methods: A

    triangulation-based framework and roadmap. *Organizational Research Methods*, *20*(2),

    243–267. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1094428115610808

Universities.com. (2021). Retrieved from Best Liberal Arts colleges in North Dakota 2021:

    https://www.universities.com/find/north-dakota/best/liberal-arts-and-sciences-liberal-

    studies-degrees.

van Deventer, J. P. (2009). Ethical considerations during human centred overt and covert

    research. *Quality & Quantity*, *43*(1), 45–57. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11135-006-9069-8

van Rijnsoever, F. J. (2017). (I can't get no) saturation: A simulation and guidelines for sample

    sizes in qualitative research. *PLoS ONE*, *12*(7), Article e0181689.

    http://dx.doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0181689

Wheeldon, J., & Faubert, J. (2009). Framing experience: Concept maps, mind maps, and data

    collection in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *8*(3), 68–

    83. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/160940690900800307

Willis, B. (2014, July 5). *The advantages and limitations of single case study analysis*. E-

    International Relations. https://www.e-ir.info/2014/07/05/the-advantages-and-limitations-

    of-single-case-study-analysis/

Woodworth, W. (2016). Globalizing and humanizing higher education: Disruptive strategies for

    business school leadership from the bottom up. *The Business and Management Review*,

    8(2), 55–63.

Xu, F., & Wang, X. (2019). Transactional leadership and dynamic capabilities: The mediating

    effect of regulatory focus. *Management Decision*, *57*(9), 2284–2306.

    http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/MD-11-2017-1151

Yazan, B. (2015). Three approaches to case study methods in education: Yin, Merriam, and

    Stake. *The Qualitative Report*, *20*(2), 134–152. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-

    3715/2015.2102

Yi, E. (2018, July 23). *Themes don't just emerge — Coding the qualitative data*. Medium.

    https://medium.com/@projectux/themes-dont-just-emerge-coding-the-qualitative-data-

    95aff874fdce

Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods* (6th ed.). SAGE

    Publications.

Appendix A: Informed Consent- Research Participant

Title of Project: Traditional & Nontraditional Leadership in Higher Education

Principal Investigator: Jihna R. Jenkins, Doctoral Candidate, Liberty University, School of Business

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. In order to participate, you must be a university leader at a liberal arts institution in the Midwest. University leaders are qualified to contribute to this research as their experience, perceptions, and perspectives are appropriate to satisfy the posed research questions. Demographics such as gender, age, race, socioeconomic background, or ethnicity are not factors to be considered of participants. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research project.

What is the study about and why is it being done?

The purpose of the study is to add to the body of knowledge by exploring the reasons behind traditional leaders in higher education's adaptation to change in the current educational climate, which is impeding organizational enrollment and revenue. This concept invokes an exploration into the predominant changes occurring and how these changes impact a leader's adaptation.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:

1. Complete an electronic questionnaire which should take approximately 5 to 7 minutes.
2. Participate in an interview, which should take approximately 30 minutes to 1 hour, through a technological medium. The interview will be recorded audibly and visually, using video conferencing technology.
3. Conduct a 30 minute interview transcript review.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study. Benefits to society include an addition to the body of knowledge by exploring the reasons behind traditional leaders in higher education's adaption to change in the current educational climate, which can impede their leadership capabilities.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- The researcher will protect research participants' information by using codes to label data instead of using names and by maintaining a separate list of code-to-name matchups.
- All questionnaires and field notes will be secured in subfolders on the researcher's personal computer since the researcher is responsible for the unique location for storing digital files and transcripts. The personal computer will have a two-step authentication to access folders containing data.
- The researcher's personal computer will be secured by lock in a drawer at the researcher's home office, where only the researcher will have access. The personal computer, a laptop, will be password-protected, as it is customary to protect the privacy and integrity of data collected with a password. After a three-year retention period, the electronic files will be deleted.

Is study participation voluntary?

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

What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is Jihna Jenkins. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor.

Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu.

Your Consent

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the researcher using the information provided above.

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

☐ The researcher has my permission to audio-record/video-record me as part of my participation in this study.

_____   _____

Printed Subject Name   Signature & Date

Appendix B: Recruitment Letter

November 1st, 2020

Dear Administrator,

      As a graduate student in the School of Business at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Business Administration degree. The title of my research project is Traditional & Nontraditional Leadership in Higher Education, and the purpose of my research is to add to the body of knowledge by exploring the reasons behind traditional leaders in higher education's adaptation to change in the current educational climate, which is impeding organizational enrollment and revenue. This concept invokes an exploration into the predominant changes occurring in higher education and how these changes impact a leader's adaptation to these changes. I am writing to invite eligible participants to join my study.

      Participants must be 18 years of age or older. Participants for this study will include university leaders at liberal arts institutions in the Midwest. University leaders are qualified to contribute to this research as their experience, perceptions, and perspectives are appropriate to satisfy the posed research questions. Demographics such as gender, age, race, socioeconomic background, or ethnicity are not factors to be considered of participants.

      Participants, if willing, will be asked to complete an electronic questionnaire and sit for an electronic interview. The electronic questionnaire should take approximately 5 to 7 minutes to complete. The interview should take approximately 30 minutes to 1 hour to complete. A review of the interview transcript for accuracy will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. If you would like to participate, please contact me via email for more information.

      An informed consent document is attached. The consent document contains additional information about my research. If you choose to participate, you will need to sign the consent document and return it to me prior to or at the time of the interview.

Sincerely,

Jihna Jenkins
Doctoral Student at Liberty University
Phone Number:
Email Address:

Appendix C: Interview Guide

The researcher will collect data directly from the research participants through conducting semi-structured interviews and develop field notes associated with the interviews. The interview guide can improve the interview experience as it supports the researcher's ability to pose questions (Kallio, Pietil€a, & Johnson, 2016; Pedersen, Delmar, Falkmer, & Grønkjær, 2016). The thematic dimension of the interview guide includes broad questions related to the research questions and the dynamic dimension of the interview guide, specific questions that promote natural conversation.

The interview questions will be designed by the researcher to address the posed research questions named in Section 1 of this single-case study and will vary in format, with the first question an opening or introduction to the research study. Interview questions will begin with a combination of who, what, when, where, how or why. The questions will be characteristic of the researcher's experience, pre-understandings, and conceptual knowledge described in the research framework. The quality of the interview guide impacts the implementation of the interview and analysis of the data and will include primary themes and follow-up questions carefully constructed by the researcher.

Part A- Research Participant Verification

1. Please assist me in verifying the following information for purposes of interview protocol:

    a. Do you have any questions prior to the official start of our interview? If so, have I adequately answered your questions?

Part B- Interview Questions & Follow-Up Questions

2. What are the predominant changes impacting institutions within the current educational climate?

3. How has change adaption, or lack thereof, impacted your professional experience with your institution?

4. How does change adaption, or lack thereof, impact the institution's ability to serve organizational constituents?

5. Please describe in detail how these changes impact a leader's ability to adapt to the current educational climate?

6. Please describe in detail what leadership behaviors contribute to the success or failure to adapt to change in the current educational climate?

   a. (Follow-Up) What leadership style do you believe is essential in the current educational climate?

7. What cultural elements exist within institutions that aid or impede successful change adaptation?

   a. (Follow-Up) What implications does this have for liberal arts institutions?

Part C- Interviewer Debriefing

8. Were you happy with your communication style?

9. Were you able to build a strong rapport with the research participant?

10. Was the time allotted for the interview sufficient?

11. Were the technologies functioning as intended?

12. How might the interview guide be modified before the next interview?

At the conclusion of interviews, the interviewer will conduct a debriefing to identify any improvements or modifications to be made to the interview process. The researcher will use open

coding to identify emergent themes during the data organization phase of the research study and stored to ensure privacy. Upon transcription of the data collected, a summary of the transcripts will be sent to research participants for review.

Appendix D: Participant Questionnaire

1. Are you a traditional or nontraditional leader in higher education?

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. How long have you worked in an educational institution?

   _____

   _____

   _____

3. How long have you worked outside of an educational institution?

   _____

   _____

   _____

4. How has your professional experience affected your approach to leadership?

   _____

   _____

   _____

5. How would you describe your leadership style?

   _____

   _____

   _____

Appendix E: Field Notes Template

Participant Number:
Date: **Interview Site:**
Summary:
Questions: