

EXPLORING THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF GRADUATE SCHOOL STUDENTS ON
DEVELOPING HUMAN CAPITAL THROUGH FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION AND
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

by Francis Ngulefac

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of graduate school students on developing human capital through family life education and leadership development in the Washington, DC Metropolitan Area. The theory that informed this study is the human capital theory, which postulates that human beings can improve upon their productive capacity by pursuing further education and acquiring more work-related skills and experience. Thus, this study explored the lived experiences of graduate school students in the Washington, DC Metropolitan Area concerning this theory. I recruited 12 graduate school students living in the Washington, DC Metropolitan Area in an accredited graduate school program in the United States. The data was collected through individual and focused-group interviews. A third approach of data collection used was journaling to triangulate the data. The interviews were audio-recorded, manually transcribed, and electronically stored in a laptop computer with a personal protective password. The transcribed data was then coded, and relevant themes and subthemes were developed. The findings from this study indicated that human capital development inevitably leads to a successful and more fulfilled life; family life education and leadership development enable individuals to become more successful in their families and careers; time, energy, and money are major investments in the pursuit of human capital development; the lack of money, the lack of adequate time, and the lack of personal motivation are major limitations that graduate school students face as they pursue human capital development; and that family members, the church community, and college professors are key support systems for graduate school students as they pursue human capital development.

Keywords: human capital, human capital development, family life education, leadership development, graduate school students

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my Heavenly Father, the Almighty God, to Jesus Christ the Son of God, and the Holy Spirit who all granted me divine health, grace, strength, wisdom, knowledge, and understanding to accomplish this great and noble task.

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I acknowledge the following people who helped me spiritually, financially, academically, and morally in my doctoral program.

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List of Abbreviations

Family Life Education (FLE)

Leadership Development (LD)

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Lived Experience Description (LED)

National Council on Family Relations (NCFR)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

This chapter of the dissertation covers the introduction of the whole study. The introduction is divided into several sections. The background of the study examines the most relevant literature and provides the historical context of how the problem evolved. The social context of the study discusses the relevance of the study to the community, education system, and society, as well as how these systems have been affected by the problem. The theoretical context discusses concepts that have advanced the concept under examination and the principles underpinning the research. The next section covers the problem and purpose statements within which the author states and briefly discusses the study's rationale. The significance of the study follows closely, which is a description of the study's contribution to human capital from a theoretical, empirical, and practical perspective. The central research question and three sub-questions are also stated and briefly discussed, as well as the definitions of significant terms in the study. The terms defined are supported by empirical and contemporary literature consistent with the study. The author concludes the chapter with a summary of the entire chapter.

Background

Ingrained in contemporary research about human capital, human capital development, family life education, and leadership development, this section of the study contains a summary of the most relevant literature to this study. I describe the historical context of the problem with an overview of how the problem has evolved over the past years. It also examines the social impact of the issue on the community, the education system, and society. The section ends with an overview of the theoretical concepts that have helped to develop the human capital theory and the principles underpinning the research.

Historical Context

Discussions and research about human capital caught the attention of researchers in the early 1960s when American economists Theodore Schultz and Gary Becker began to explore the concept (David et al., 2021; Nafukho et al., 2004; Schultz, 1993). The concept quickly evolved to gain prominence in the late 1960s and early 1970s when it was discussed as human resources accounting (Human Resource Accounting, 2021; Philips & Philips, 2015; Singh & Gulati, 2021). From the human resources accounting perspective (Human Resource Accounting, 2021; Singh & Gulati, 2021), employees of an organization are viewed as assets (Philips & Philips, 2015). While the value of human resources is not measurable like financial capital, human resource development scholars view employees as one of the most valuable assets that can lead the organization to success (Dirani et al., 2020).

While developing human capital became a focus of researchers (Orfield, 2017), job automation began reducing the need for human interaction regardless of acquired education, training, or skills (Chuang, 2021). This process became known as the Fourth Industrial Revolution (Hirschi, 2018; Rotatori et al., 2021). The fourth industrial revolution is an era when the world is experiencing one of the fastest changes in the work environment as most companies and educational institutions have made several changes regarding human interaction and workplace practices due to the outbreak of COVID-19 (Al-Riyami et al., 2023; Mogas et al., 2022; Rotatori et al., 2021). Higher education institutions faced significant changes that required administrative decisions to solve the complex problem of accelerating the development of online resources for distance learning (Goian et al., 2021). With the sudden changes in the technological industry, one would be curious to understand the importance of education and skill development to the present generation (Quinn & Buzzetto-Hollywood, 2019; Ruiz-Cabezas et al., 2020).

Despite automation, individuals continuously seek to acquire more skills and knowledge (Condron, 2019; Uriostegui et al., 2021) because human capital development is still integral in sustaining automated systems (Davenport, 1999; Philips & Philips, 2015). Even though recent advancements in technology, have enabled several organizations to go digital or automate their services (Philips & Philips, 2015), the place of people is still essential for organizations and society to function (Philips & Philips, 2015). Researchers continue to seek an understanding of the relevance of human capital development (Krieg et al., 2022; Yuan & Wang, 2018). As studies on human capital and human capital development evolved, other researchers developed an interest in examining the role of communities in the process of human capital development (Ballif-Spanv et al., 2005; Mamurovich et al., 2021; Zajda, 2005).

Despite all the advances in the development of human capital and its corresponding impacts on individuals, organizations, and society (Davenport, 1999; Krieg et al., 2022; Philips & Philips, 2015; Yuan & Wang, 2018;), there has been little research on the perceptions on human capital development through family life education (Benson & Donehower, 2020; Darling et al., 2020; Mancini et al., 2020) and leadership development (Acosta & Guthrie, 2021; Allen et al., 2022; Reed et al., 2019). This study approaches human capital development (Becker, 1964) from the family life education and leadership development perspective. Within the context of this study, the author also examines the other social, cultural, and educational elements that enhance the understanding of human capital and human capital development (Donald et al., 2019; Dlamini & Dewa, 2021; Valiente-Neighbours, 2020). Ten components of family life education are uncovered (Benson & Donehower, 2020; Darling et al., 2020) as well as three significant components of leadership development (Allen et al., 2022; Reed et al., 2019). Having examined the historical context of human capital, the social context will be examined next.

Social Context

Human beings are often described as social creatures (Gee & Esteban-Guitart, 2019; Sua et al., 2017), while human capital constitutes the type of intangible capital that human beings possess (Davenport, 1999; Philips & Philips, 2015). Thus, a study on human capital development would be incomplete without addressing its relevance in the social context. Social capital is a significant aspect of human capital in that social capital includes such aspects as student school social networks, parental involvement, family interactions, affiliations with professional organizations, and media platforms (Donald et al., 2019; Schlak, 2022). Human capital and social capital have so much in common. Social capital can be discussed from diverse perspectives; however, the operational concepts of social capital constitute such elements as trust, mutuality, trustworthiness, reciprocity, norm and value set, and the leveraging of these intangible assets (Schlak, 2022). Thus, just as human capital is intangible, so is social capital.

Within the social context, human capital constitutes the relational qualities that an individual possesses and how these are expressed concerning other individuals (Liu et al., 2023; Sorenson & Milbrandt, 2023). Exploring the perceptions of individuals on human capital development through family life education and leadership development would gain traction as these individuals relate and interact within their circles of influence in the communities. The concept of human capital affects everyone in society. Every organization and industry needs well-trained and developed professionals to function effectively (Shanableh & Albattat, 2022; Wesemann, 2022). Everyone needs to develop knowledge and understanding with the skills and talents needed to live and work. Community integration and a sense of belonging are also significantly and positively associated with the true meaning of life and work (Wenzel & La Motte-Kerr, 2023). Thus, building human capital is essential for everyone.

This study, which explores the lived experiences of graduate school students on developing human capital from the lens of family life education and leadership development, will be of great importance to graduate school students, their families, and those in their social network. Graduate school education is uniquely positioned to maximize the human capital potential of black professionals in the workplace, especially those graduating from graduate programs nationwide (Iheduru-Anderson et al., 2022). With the need for diversity and an increase in human capital development at every level, including academic leadership (Iheduru-Anderson et al., 2022), this study will be of great benefit to graduate students and will reveal other ways by which human capital could be harnessed. It will also help human capitalists to understand better how they can approach graduate students for human capital development.

Participants' responses on the willingness to pursue family life education and leadership development will enable training and development professionals to understand the need to offer those training programs within the nursing community. It has been acknowledged that leadership competency is required throughout every profession and that most graduate school students still have difficulty understanding leadership as integral to education and practice (Miles & Scott, 2019; Swearingen, 2009). This observation calls for robust leadership training programs within the practice of several professions. This study will reveal more about the strengths and weaknesses as well as the willingness of graduate school students to pursue leadership development. Studies have also revealed that new leaders may lack the foresight to understand ethical dilemmas within their professional environment, so leadership and professional development opportunities for new and evolving leaders are highly needed and should include robust opportunities to identify and resolve ethical dilemmas (Bleich et al., 2021; Swearingen, 2009). The next sub-section uncovers the theoretical context of this study.

Theoretical Context

While there have been several researchers and published studies that explore the human capital development concept, most researchers trace their work back to the American economists Theodore Schultz and Gary Becker in the early 1960s (David et al., 2021; Nafukho et al., 2004). Since the development of the human capital theory in the 1960s (Becker, 1964, 1993; Schultz, 1993), several other researchers have continued to explore the concept of human capital development (David et al., 2021; Nafukho et al., 2004). The human capital theory postulates that human beings can improve upon their productive capabilities through education and training (Becker, 1964, 1993; Schultz, 1993). With a clear focus on how to improve the productive capabilities of humanity, contemporary studies continue to explore the concept of human capital development, emphasizing its applications in vocational services (Gao et al., 2010). Most recent studies confirm that education and training have constituted significant ways of contributing to the growth of human capital (David et al., 2021).

Despite several studies exploring the human capital development concept (Becker, 1964, 1993; David et al., 2021; Nafukho et al., 2004; Schultz, 1993), only a few have been conducted on the lived experiences of graduate students on developing human capital (Amali et al., 2015; Cheong et al., 2021). Significant research has been conducted on human capital development through leadership development (Dopson et al., 2019; Holtzhausen & Botha, 2021). The leadership challenge model (Kouzes & Posner, 2023) has been a key player in human capital development. The leadership challenge model utilizes five practices: model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart (Amer, 2022; Kouzes & Posner, 2023; Irwin & Posselt, 2022; Stubin, 2021; Wase & Lull, 2021).

The proposed study draws from Davenport (1999) to discuss why people invest in human

capital. It is also inspired by Philips and Philips (2015) to discuss how human capital can be developed. While some scholars have explored topics such as post-secondary education and its impact on human capital development (David et al., 2021; Hermannsson & Lecca, 2016), other researchers have focused on the performance rewards of human capital development in the workplace (Wesemann, 2022) as well as the analysis of socio-economic spending and the human capital development nexus (Madueme et al., 2022; Vogel & Erickson, 2021). This research study lies at the intersection of human capital as proposed by Schultz (1961, 1993) and Becker (1964, 1993). Several studies have proven empirically that higher education is of great value to human capital development (Lopez Castellano; Prakhov, 2021; Walsh et al., 2021).

Problem Statement

The problem is family life education and leadership development are underrepresented in graduate students' human capital development. Human capital development is vital in diverse ways (David et al., 2021; Wesemann, 2022) and its benefits to individuals and families, as well as organizations and society, are enormous (Becker, 1993; Davenport, 1999; Philips & Philips, 2015). However, through empirical research, family life education and leadership development are underrepresented in graduate students' human capital development process (Conrey et al., 2020; van der Meer et al., 2019). Developing human capital through family life education has not been thoroughly explored by graduate students (Conrey et al., 2020; David et al., 2021). Existing literature reveals a significant amount of information about human capital development and its corresponding impacts on humanity and society (David et al., 2021; Lopez, 2022), but family life education is particularly underrepresented in graduate students' human capital development.

Human capital has been identified worldwide as one of the major factors that are responsible for the wealth of nations (David et al., 2021). Given that education and training are

vital in the development of human capital (Becker, 1993; David et al., 2021; Schultz, 1993), there is a great need to explore other educational settings or programs that could contribute to developing human capital. In a study to investigate the approaches to improving human capital, Kim (2021) asserts that other life skills education is beneficial for developing human capital, suggesting that other approaches to human capital development could be explored. Thus, this study will explore the lived experiences of graduate school students on developing human capital through family life education and leadership development. The effort to uncover graduate students' experiences in human capital development through family life education and leadership development will contribute to the presence of such literature in contemporary studies.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to explore the lived experiences of graduate school students on developing human capital through family life education and leadership development in the Washington, DC, Metropolitan area. At this stage of the research, the lived experiences of graduate school students on developing human capital through family life education and leadership development will be generally defined as the lived experiences on how through family life education and leadership development, individuals have improved upon their productive capacities to be able to function more effectively and efficiently at work and in society (Becker, 1964; Obeidat et al., 2021). Core factors such as time and effort, as well as human, financial, and material resources, are of great importance in the overall process of developing human capital. An adequate understanding of human capital (Becker, 1964, 1993), human capital development (Adekunle & Aghedo, 2015; Hanushek, 2013; Stephens et al., 2020), family life education (Benson & Donehower, 2020; Darling et al., 2020; Mancini et al., 2020), and leadership development (Lund, 2022; Vogel & Erickson, 2021) would enhance this study.

The immense importance of human capital (Becker, 1964), which is defined as the knowledge, skills, and abilities that are rooted in individuals (Wesemann, 2022), has been recognized throughout the scholarly literature (Becker, 1964; David et al., 2021; Obeidat et al. 2021). When individuals acquire knowledge, skills, abilities, and capabilities, they improve their productive capacities and, as a result, enjoy the benefits of human capital development. Current literature focuses on higher education's effects on human capital development (David et al., 2021) and the positive contributions of human capital development on economic growth (Hermannsson & Lecca, 2016).

Significance of the Study

The concepts of human capital and human capital development are fundamental to society's daily operations. The significance of this study is embedded in exploring the basic terms that inform the meaning of the study: human capital development, family life education, and leadership development. Individuals' capability to provide relevant solutions to their customers (Philips & Philips, 2015) is the fundamental concept of human capital. On the other hand, human capital development is the process whereby individuals improve their productive capabilities (Adekunle & Aghedo, 2015; Hanushek, 2013; Stephens et al., 2020). With the focus on the perceptions of graduate school students on developing human capital through family life education and leadership development, the significance of the study would be uncovered from theoretical, empirical, and practical perspectives.

Theoretical

From the theoretical understanding of the human capital concept, the completion of this study fulfills the concept because I will attain a higher level of education, I will acquire more knowledge, and my research, writing, and editing skills (Becker, 1964; Igwe et al., 2022).

Education has been posited over the years as a significant contribution to human capital development (David et al., 2021). Education and training are fundamental to economic growth (Becker, 1993). This study will help in the better understanding of how graduate school students perceive the development of human capital through family life education (Bogenschneider, 2020; Darling et al., 2020; Mancini et al., 2020) and leadership development (Acosta & Guthrie, 2021; Allen et al., 2022; Reed et al., 2019). Understanding these perceptions will add to the existing body of knowledge about human capital development and the various pathways practitioners can employ to facilitate effective and efficient human capital development among graduate students.

Empirical

From the empirical perspective, several studies have been conducted to explore concepts of human capital concept and human capital development (Becker, 1964; David et al., 2021; Obeidat et al., 2021). A related study explored doctoral students' perceptions of the relevance of their degrees (Conrey et al., 2020) and undergraduate students' self-perception of employability (Donald et al., 2019). These studies explore a similar concept to the current one but with a difference in the participants. Most studies also study the impacts of human capital development (David et al., 2021; Wesemann, 2022) and human capital strategies (Alam et al., 2021). This study will add to the body of existing literature by uncovering how graduate school students perceive the development of human capital through the lens of family life education (Bogenschneider, 2020; Darling et al., 2020; Mancini et al., 2020) and leadership development (Acosta & Guthrie, 2021; Allen et al., 2022; Reed et al., 2019).

Practical

This study's practical significance will benefit graduate students who desire to understand different strategic approaches to developing human capital (Kim, 2021). The capability approach

is a viable alternative to the human capital perspective, focusing on lifelong learning opportunities to build human capital (Poquet & Laat, 2021). Family life education and leadership development are capabilities development approaches (Allen et al., 2022; Mancini et al., 2020). This study will enable graduate students and professionals to apply these approaches and strategies to develop capabilities such as communication skills, leadership, interpersonal relationships, good ethical and moral values, and skills that can be applied across any work industry (Jonbekova et al., 2021; Poquet & Laat, 2021). The knowledge and understanding of these approaches would enable human capitalists to begin utilizing family life education and leadership development as key pathways to develop and sustain human capital.

Research Questions

The following are the research questions that guided the study. There is a central research question and four sub-questions. All sub-questions were framed to support the central research question, which conveys the primary purpose of the research study. These questions were utilized as a guide in developing both personal and focused-group interview questions.

Central Research Question

What are the lived experiences of graduate school students on developing human capital through family life education and leadership development?

Sub-Question One

What are the family life education experiences of graduate school students?

Sub-Question Two

What are the leadership development experiences of graduate school students?

Sub-Question Three

What are the investments of graduate school students in pursuing family life education?

Sub-Question Four

What are the investments of graduate school students in pursuing leadership development?

Definitions

1. *Economic growth* - An increase in the production of goods and services in an economy and is represented by variables like the gross domestic product and employment generation (Chennakrishnan et al., 2022; Chetthamrongchai & Chaimankong, 2022; Dutta, 2021).
2. *Family life education* - The professional practice of equipping and empowering individuals and family members to develop knowledge and skills that enhance well-being and strengthen interpersonal relationships through an educational, preventive, and strengths-based approach (Benson & Donehower, 2020; Darling et al., 2020; Mancini et al., 2020).
3. *Graduate student* - A student who is pursuing educational opportunities beyond an undergraduate degree in any of the master's or doctoral degree programs (Mandelbaum & Fuller, 2021).
4. *Human capital* - The education, training, experiences, knowledge, skills, and abilities that individuals possess and use in the production process. Human capital is the capability of individuals to provide solutions to customers indicates that it is a significant aspect of intellectual capital in any organization (Becker, 1964; Obeidat et al., 2021; Philips & Philips, 2015).
5. *Human capital development* - The process in which time, energy, and resources are invested in equipping the relevant knowledge, skills, and capabilities that are necessary

for social, health, and economic growth, with the possibility of increased earning potential (Adekunle & Aghedo, 2015; Hanushek, 2013; Stephens et al., 2020).

6. *Leadership development* - The process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it. In addition, the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives (Lund, 2022; Vogel & Erickson, 2021).
7. *Quality of life* - An individual's idea of where one stands regarding their culture and values, and their relationship to goals, expectations, standards, and concerns (Sukkarieh et al., 2023; Vernet & Saleh, 2022; Victor et al., 2022).
8. *Standard of living* - A measure of the utility of life or the economic provision that determines the quantity and quality of commodities that the individual is free to use (Barreiro-Gen, 2019).

Summary

The purpose of this study was to explore the lived experiences of graduate school students on developing human capital through family life education and leadership development. Family life education and leadership development are both capabilities development approaches (Allen et al., 2022; Mancini et al., 2020) that enable individuals to develop and sustain human capital effectively. In alignment with the purpose of the study, the problem that this study addressed was that family life education and leadership development are underrepresented in graduate students' human capital development. This study will provide insight for graduate students and human capital professionals to apply new approaches and strategies to develop capabilities such as communication skills, leadership, interpersonal relationships, good ethical and moral values, and skills that can be used across any work industry.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

This chapter contains a comprehensive literature review on the concept of human capital, human capital development, family life education, and leadership development. The chapter is divided into four separate but interconnected sections. The first section is the general overview of the chapter. The second section is the theoretical framework in which I discuss the theory relevant to studying human capital and how individuals can acquire and develop human capital. The theory that informs and shapes the study is the human capital theory proposed by Gary Becker and Theodore Schultz in the 1960s. The following section consists of a synthesis of contemporary literature relevant to human capital and how family life education and leadership development have contributed to sustainable human capital's effective and efficient development. Given that human capital is acquired mainly through education and training, I focus on exploring contemporary literature on the relevance of family life education and leadership training in developing and sustaining human capital. I conclude this chapter with a summary of the entire literature review.

Theoretical Framework

The human capital theory is the primary theory that informs and guides this study (Becker, 1964, 1993; Schultz, 1961, 1993). Human capital and human capital development are increasingly becoming the subject of interest among scholars and practitioners in the learning industry (Dokthaisong & Pinyonattagarn, 2021; Gachino & Worku, 2019; Stephens, 2020a). While scholars seek to understand the theories that underlie, inform, and shape human capital concepts (Christensen et al., 2020; Garcia Zea, 2020), practitioners desire to know how human capital theories could be effectively implemented to create a work environment that is

innovative, effective, and efficient at the delivery of suitable solutions to customers (Garcia Zea, 2020; Tommasi et al., 2022). Human capital is the capability of individuals to provide solutions to their customers (Philips & Philips, 2015) and acquire valuable abilities of all the inhabitants or members of society (David et al., 2021). Theodore Schultz and Gary Becker developed the human capital concept and established it as a theory in the early 1960s (David et al., 2021; Nafukho et al., 2004; Schultz, 1993). Ever since the initial development of this theory, there have been several advances to improve upon the concept and theory.

The human capital theory now adopts the philosophy that education determines labor's marginal productivity and that labor determines earnings (Marginson, 2019). Unlike in earlier studies when human capital was perceived as the acquisition of valuable abilities by members of society (David et al., 2021), the concept has developed to how these acquired skills can be applied to serve others (Philips & Philips, 2015; Jiang, 2019). Human capital has recently become more real as individuals cannot be separated from it. Human capital is the total stock of habits, social, and personality attributes, including creativity embodied in the ability to perform any work responsibility that contributes to the economic value of a person or society (Becker, 1993; Jiang, 2019; Schultz, 1993). Human capital is the total of all the skills, knowledge, attitudes, competencies, and experiences that are embedded in an individual (Becker, 1993; David et al., 2021; Jiang, 2019; Schultz, 1993). The theory of human capital and related concepts would be used as a fundamental guide in understanding how human capital can be developed through family life education (Allen, 2022; Ashford, 2022; Darling et al., 2020) and leadership development (Han, 2022; Hill et al., 2023; Vogel & Erickson, 2021). I will explore how individuals can contribute to the development of human capital (David et al., 2021; Nafukho et al., 2004; Schultz, 1993) through family life education and leadership development.

Related Literature

The purpose of this section is to provide a synthesis of the existing body of knowledge on human capital, human capital development, family life education, and leadership development. I use existing literature relevant to human capital, human capital development, family life education, and leadership development to justify the relevance of the study as well as the gap in the literature. The literature examination also contains intersections between human capital development and family life education, as well as human capital development and leadership development.

The Value of Human Capital

Every organization that exists on earth is sustained by three types of resources. These resources include human resources, which constitute the people in the organization (Annepu & Sowdamini, 2022; Sharma et al., 2022); material resources, which are the tangible assets owned by the organization (Philips & Philips, 2015); and financial resources, which is the money that the organization has (Khasanov et al., 2021; Philips & Philips, 2015). Among these three types of resources, the people in the organization manage and direct the use of material and financial resources (Mitra, 2022; Philips & Philips, 2015). Several scholar-practitioners have argued that human beings are the most important asset in the organization and society (Human Resource Accounting, 2021). This implies that in the absence of people, material assets and money will be meaningless in society. A human capitalist explains that human resources could be called the intellectual capital or human capital of an organization (Philips & Philips, 2015). Human capital is the knowledge, skills, and abilities possessed by an individual, group, or population, which can be used to produce positive organizational outcomes (Marulanda-Grisales & Dinora Vera-Acevedo, 2022; Philips & Philips, 2015; Wesemann, 2022). One can observe from the definition

above that human capital is a subject of discussion that focuses on human beings and how these people can function in society both effectively and efficiently. Thus, emphasizing that human beings possess the most valuable form of capital is not erroneous.

With automation (Kim & Scheller-Wolf, 2019; Wiblen & Marler, 2021) and the digital advancement in the contemporary marketplace (Kim & Scheller-Wolf, 2019; Wajcman, 2019), one may be tempted to think that people are no longer necessary in companies. However, Philips and Philips (2015) argue that people are still a vital component of any competitive organization. This assertion that people are still a vital component of any competitive organization is confirmed by Human Resource Accounting (2021), as it strongly argues that, even in this age of rapid technological advancement, it is people and people alone who can make a difference and propel any organization to greater and yet unconquered heights. The author continues to explain that talent innovation, creativity, business acumen, and capabilities of people are the single most dependable source of competitive strength to any organization (Human Resource Accounting, 2021). Thus, people are needed in every organization and society for it to function successfully. This notwithstanding, the presence of people in an organization or society does not make it successful automatically. Only people who have their productive capacities developed can be of any positive influence in the organization or society.

Arguments about the increasing trend of artificial intelligence and the downsizing of human capital continue to gain interest. In line with the argument, Bandameedi (2022) writes that artificial intelligence is emerging in different fields, despite the concerns about the possibilities of downsizing human capital. However, the human factor in an organization is still important because the participation of people in the workplace will still be necessary since there is no perspective of total replacement of them by artificial intelligence (Bandameedi, 2022; Luiz da

Silva et al., 2020). It should be noted that technology itself cannot function properly without people at the backend. Thus, technology cannot eradicate people. Other researchers have written extensively on the limitations of artificial intelligence, arguing that artificial intelligence is not as intelligent as some people think (Halpern, 2020; Hualiang, 2022; Tuomi, 2022).

The literature in this study is based on the premise that people are the most valuable asset or resource in every organization or society and deserve to be developed (Chauveron et al., 2021; Philips & Philips, 2015; Sherino & K Bhatta, 2021). Defining human capital as the capabilities of individuals to provide solutions to customers indicates that it is a significant aspect of intellectual capital in any organization (Philips & Philips, 2015). Following this trend of thought, Wesemann (2022) affirms this concept by asserting that human capital is one of the most vital assets an organization possesses. Having established that human beings are the most valuable assets in organizations (Keer, 2022) and that human beings can increase their productive capacity (Zukhra & Surayyo, 2022), it is vital to explore perceptions on building human capital through family life education and leadership development. However, an examination of the origin and evolution of human capital is necessary to frame this study.

Origin and Evolution of Human Capital Theory

The concept of human capital has been heavily examined by researchers beginning in the early 190s when American economists Theodore Schultz and Gary Becker began to explore the concept (David et al., 2021; Nafukho et al., 2004; Schultz, 1993). The concept quickly evolved into prominence in the late 1960s and early 1970s when it was discussed in the form of human resources accounting (Philips & Philips, 2015). From the perspective of human resources accounting, employees of an organization are viewed as assets that account for human capabilities and their value (Philips & Philips, 2015). As the concept evolved, organizational

practitioners, most particularly human capital researchers, became interested in developing the people who work for those companies (Marginson, 2019; Prakhov, 2021). While the value of human resources is not measurable like financial capital, human resource development scholars view employees as one of the most valuable assets that can lead the organization to success (Dirani et al., 2020; Human Resource Accounting, 2021; Philips & Philips, 2015).

Over several decades, contemporary human capital practitioners and researchers have emphasized the need for educational and societal investments in human capital (Carbonaro et al., 2022; Weinstein, 2022). Human capital in the contemporary marketplace has evolved from being just skill acquisition to how individuals can apply these skills to serve others more effectively and efficiently (Jose & Durai, 2022; López Castellano et al., 2019; Philips & Philips, 2015). Since the customer has become a key stakeholder in the successful application of human capital (Phudphuek et al., 2021), practitioners and researchers in most business organizations are now tasked with finding the customers' needs. From these evolutionary trends, the acquisition and implementation of human capital are even more demanding now than before, leading to more strategic planning within organizations and educational institutions (Inga et al., 2021; Osorio et al., 2020).

The human capital theory has established a productive research program in the economics of education, associated with many thousands of empirical studies (Marginson, 2019). As the theory develops, there has been a significant paradigm shift from the traditional perspective to the present view. A dominant metaphor of the late twentieth-century management of human capital was that workers are assets (Davenport, 1999). In a traditional view, human capital expenses are costs, while in a contemporary view, human capital expenses are seen as a source of value (Philips & Philips, 2015). This new knowledge about human capital has gained recognition

throughout every industry. Overall, the human capital theory has helped to understand management practices and demonstrate how differing natures of socio-economic management practices and demonstrates how differing natures of socioeconomic exchange can be observed across actors and stages in the business of sports (Hassan et al., 2022). Every industry now talks about talent development, which is the same as human capital development.

Human Capital Development

Education is an investment to accumulate human capital (Becker, 1964, 1993, David et al., 2021; Schultz, 1961), and it increases personal and personnel productivity, which eventually and inevitably increases wages in the labor market (Kim, 2021). This school of thought affirms that education is one of the main approaches to increasing human capital, a process called human capital development (David et al., 2021; Stephens et al., 2020; Wesemann, 2022). Even though education is a significant method to acquire human capital (David et al., 2021), focusing on education alone to develop human capital poses a major limitation because other vital elements of human capital as skills, ability, and other work-related qualities, are often neglected (Mamman et al., 2018). A comprehensive view of human capital development emphasizes how to fulfill the potential of people by expanding their capabilities through empowerment activities while allowing them to participate actively in their development process (David et al., 2021; Wesemann, 2022).

For it to be effective, human capital development should engage in processes that build the talents, skills, competencies, and other capabilities that people possess (David et al., 2021; Kim, 2021). Thus, educating individuals about personal, professional, and organizational efficiency and effectiveness is the primary focus of human capital development. In the simplest terms, human capital development is an effort to increase human knowledge, enhance human

skills, personal, professional, and organizational productivity, and stimulate resourcefulness (Alam et al., 2021; David et al., 2021). Similarly, an essential way human capital can be strategically managed is through the use of developmental techniques and practices such as training, continuing education, and mentorship (Wesemann, 2022). Thus, organizational leaders can influence the development and human capital by planning human capital investment initiatives.

Investments in Human Capital Development

Human capital development requires individuals and organizations to invest vast sums of money and a substantial amount of time. It has been argued extensively that education is the driving force for human capital development (David et al., 2021; Jung & Lee, 2019). However, several factors are involved in developing sustainable human capital. A comprehensive review of theoretical frameworks, including human and social capital theories (Jung & Lee, 2019), postulates that several academic and economic factors are involved in pursuing human capital development. Some of these factors often involve time, energy, financial, and material resources (Jung & Lee, 2019; Lim & Lee, 2022). To this effect, both individuals and institutional leaders ought to invest in the development of human capital. Enrolling students in college or vocational education programs and providing financial aid are just a few ways that individuals or organizations invest in human capital (Poplaski et al., 2019).

Most contemporary organizations have increased their investments in human capital (Michael et al., 2021). This increase in the investments in human capital is evident as employers are increasingly making investments in formal education to impart explicit knowledge to employees (David et al., 2021; Jung & Lee, 2019; Michael et al., 2021). The whole point is to increase the employees' productive capacity and, eventually, the organization. To boost human

capital, in the United States of America today, all federal and state government workers and a vast majority of employees in large- and medium-sized companies in the private sector have access to employee assistance programs (Attridge, 2019). These programs are designed to provide organizations and their employees with different services (Chen et al., 2021). Most common among these programs are tuition reimbursements and computer purchases for students (Poplaski et al., 2019). Other investments in human capital are made by private foundations and nonprofit organizations, where scholarships are offered to students to reduce the burden of completing a college degree (Jonbekova et al., 2021; Keer, 2022).

Benefits of Human Capital Development

Human capital development has a tremendous positive impact on individuals, the organizations they represent and work for, and the general economy. Contemporary literature provides a broad argument to support the significance of human capital development (Mamman et al., 2018; Rodrigues et al., 2020), even though it fails to show how and who should play the role of translating the human capital agenda into practice (Mamman et al., 2018). Admittedly, the entire benefits of human capital development go beyond the scope of this paper. However, this section examines two areas of human interaction that have immediate benefits from human capital development: economic growth and individuals' standard of living.

Economic Growth

Human capital development is a vital force in the development of any economy (Alam et al., 2021; Bedekar, 2022). The significance of human capital accumulation as a major engine of economic growth and development has been broadly acknowledged by both human capital scholars and practitioners because no single nation has achieved sustainable economic growth without significant investment in human capital (David et al., 2021). Many researchers have

argued extensively that deliberate investment in human capital in the form of education and training is a precondition for the growth and development of any economy (Alam et al., 2021; Bedekar, 2022; David et al., 2021). Therefore, education, which is paramount to human capital development, remains a tool for any nation to use to boost its economy. The return on investment of high education on the economic health of parents in China underwent a rapid economic reform when they recognized the value of human capital development through education (Jiang, 2019). Education aids in creating human capital by making individuals more productive and increasing the possibility for them to get higher wages for their services (David et al., 2021; Kim, 2021; Stephens et al., 2020).

One of the significant ways by which the economy of a nation is improved is through the establishment of small and medium-sized enterprises. In this light, human capital has reemerged as a vital topic of discussion among policymakers, business owners, and managers (Mubarik et al., 2018). Businesses of all sizes consider human capital to be inseparable from economic growth because it enables firms to have a competitive advantage and become highly valuable, rare, non-substitutable, and non-imitable (Mubarik et al., 2018). Human capital development is a valuable resource for the economic development of any nation as well as its stability and consistency (Ma'dan et al., 2019). Three types of skills contribute greatly to the nation's economic growth. These factors are technical skills, interpersonal skills, and conceptual skills (Ma'dan et al., 2019). These three categories of skills are put together to create a valuable global economy (Luiz da Silva et al., 2020; Ma'dan et al., 2019). Thus, organizations should focus on developing their human capital since its contribution to the work is inevitably important and a source of competitive advantage, economic growth, and national development.

The Standard of Living

Human capital can be measured by evaluating the standard of living of individuals and families (Hao et al., 2023; Jiang, 2019). Contemporary studies show that investing in children's education in high-income countries could be an effective strategy to improve parental health in older age (Chrisendo et al., 2022; Jiang, 2019). Several studies have revealed that having college-educated children was associated with a 31% reduction in the hazard of parental death (David et al., 2021; Jiang, 2019). In their study, Jaiyeola and Bayat (2020) observe that among the non-income measures of poverty are indicators of living standards such as access to clean water, telecommunications, sound sanitation systems, and uninterrupted electricity. Thus, the standard of living is not just a function of income, even though income plays a significant role in acquiring and maintaining it. In most developed countries, these services are often available to almost every resident (Jaiyeola & Bayat, 2020). In developing countries, however, only the wealthy can afford such services (Chrisendo et al., 2022).

The Concept of Family Life Education

Family life education is the professional practice that equips and empowers individuals and family members to develop relevant knowledge and skills that enhance well-being and strengthen interpersonal relationships through an educational, preventive, and strengths-based approach (Benson & Donehower, 2020; Darling et al., 2020; Mancini et al., 2020). The skills and knowledge that are needed for individuals in a family to function optimally include strong communication skills, knowledge of human development, good decision-making skills, positive self-esteem, and healthy interpersonal relationships (Benson & Donehower, 2020; Darling et al., 2020; Mancini et al., 2020). Education and empowerment are the cornerstone of family life education (Darling et al., 2020). A key distinction of family life education is the

inclusion of techniques and approaches that teach knowledge and build skills so that individuals can function at their optimal level (Ashford, 2022; Darling et al., 2020).

The mode and delivery methods for family life education have changed over time, moving from the traditional–student classroom settings to include group work, individual instruction, coaching, and mentoring relationships, as well as online learning opportunities, but all attempt to strengthen families by sharing information and knowledge in an educational capacity (Darling et al., 2020; Mancini et al., 2020). Ten content areas constitute the full scope of knowledge in the field of family life education. These areas include families and individuals in societal contexts, internal dynamics of families, human growth and development across the lifespan, human sexuality, interpersonal relationships, family resource management, parent education and guidance, family law and public policy, professional ethics, and practice, family life education methodology (Benson & Donehower, 2020; Darling et al., 2020; Mancini et al., 2020). The following sections describe an overview of each content area.

Individuals and Families in Societal Contexts

Individuals and families in a societal context constitute an understanding of individuals and families and how they relate to other institutions like the educational, governmental, religious, health care, and occupational institutions in society (Darling et al., 2020; Mancini et al., 2020). In this respect, family life education seeks to describe the characteristics, diversity, and impact of the local, national, and global social systems and structures on individuals and families (Darling et al., 2020). Family life educators explain the factors that influence individuals and families from both contemporary and historical perspectives (Mancini et al., 2020) as well as describe factors that influence the relationship between work, personal, and family life (Asanjarani et al., 2022; Day et al., 2020). They articulate social and cultural influences affecting

various aspects of family life (Benson & Donehower, 2020; Mancini et al., 2020) and demonstrate the reciprocal interaction between individuals, families, and various social systems (Darling et al., 2020; Day et al., 2020).

There is a strong significance in the investigation of family functioning and adolescent adjustment in multiple societal contexts (Asanjarani et al., 2022). Such investigations can be accomplished by examining multiple family processes, such as emotional security, parental depressive symptoms, interparental conflict, and adolescent change in divorced families, to name a few (Asanjarani et al., 2022). A related study on Mexican families suggested that to protect the self-esteem of Mexican immigrant adolescents, social work practitioners need to target individual, familial, and societal context factors associated with self-esteem (Lopez & Shen, 2021). Family cohesion appears to be most salient to the self-esteem of Latino adolescents, while bilingualism protects Mexican immigrant youth from the harmful effects of societal discrimination (Lopez & Shen, 2021). Overall, family life educators examine how individuals and families interact with one another and how they can function optimally.

Internal Dynamics of Families

An understanding of family strengths and weaknesses and how family members relate to and interact with each other (Darling et al., 2020). Family life educators recognize and describe healthy and unhealthy characteristics (Benson & Donehower, 2020; Mancini et al., 2020). Family life educators analyze family functioning using various theoretical perspectives (Watkins et al., 2022) while evaluating family dynamics from a systems perspective. Family life educators also compare and contrast family dynamics in response to normative and non-normative stressors (Benson & Donehower, 2020; Mancini et al., 2020). Family life educators assess family dynamics in response to stress, crises, and trauma; and facilitate and strengthen communication

processes, and conflict management (Benson & Donehower, 2020; Darling et al., 2020; Day et al., 2020).

The importance of understanding internal family dynamics cannot be overemphasized. It enables individuals and families to address various disorders in adolescents' lives (Watkins et al., 2022). Identifying the elements that make up an appropriate environment to educate individuals in citizen skills is paramount. Some of the elements are an insight into authority, limits, rules, and responsibilities in the family. Both self-reported and data-based instruments to assess internal family dynamics will facilitate their perception of family struggles, thus improving family operation (Mensi et al., 2022). Other studies on the relevance of understanding internal family dynamics have found that negative aspects of family dynamics marginally exacerbated the link between discrimination and depression and life satisfaction (Lazarevic et al., 2021), whereas family positivity significantly moderated the association between discrimination and both depression and life satisfaction for individual and family members (Lazarevic et al., 2021).

Human Growth and Development Across the Lifespan

The development of individuals and families is deeply interconnected because families are groups of interacting individuals that move through stages just like individuals (Darling et al., 2020). Based on knowledge of physical, emotional, cognitive, social, moral, and personality aspects of individuals, human growth and development across the lifespan is an understanding of the developmental changes and processes that take place in individuals within the family across the lifespan (Darling et al., 2020; Mancini et al., 2020). Family life educator in this content area seeks to explain different developmental stages, transitions, elements, and challenges throughout life, describe and exemplify the impact of individual health and wellness on families, assist individuals and families in effective developmental transitions, apply appropriate practices based

on theories of human growth and development to individuals and families, as well as compare and contrast various sociological influences on human growth across the lifespan (Benson & Donehower, 2020; Darling et al., 2020; Mancini et al., 2020).

As individuals grow and develop, so do their needs change over time. These changes affect an individual's relationship between the body, the mind, and the world (Marmeleira & Duarte Santos, 2019). The authors continue to argue that perception, cognition, emotion, human relations, and behavior are grounded in our bodies from the beginning of our lives (Marmeleira & Duarte Santos, 2019; Snyder et al., 2020) and as human beings grow and develop, these evolve. Knowledge of the concept also provides the means through which practitioners can better understand an individual's reality and how they relate to the environment (Ginn et al., 2019). Another key component of human development is understanding the different stages of the lifecycle. Within the lifecycle stages, various developmental tasks are proposed based on normative expectations for individuals and families (Darling et al., 2020).

Human Sexuality

Human sexuality deals with the understanding of the physiological, psychological, and social aspects of sexual development for individuals in the family context (Darling et al., 2020). An inclusive study in this content area will constitute an understanding of sexual functioning, reproductive health, family planning, sexually transmitted infections, the psycho-social aspects of human sexuality, characteristics of healthy and unhealthy sexual relationships, as well as interpersonal dynamics of sexual intimacy (Benson & Donehower, 2020; Darling et al., 2020; Mancini et al., 2020). Human sexuality is a critical aspect of family life education. There are several perspectives on sexual education, sexual risk, and sexual risk avoidance education, especially within the adolescent population. However, others argue that comprehensive sex

education from schools and parents can reduce adolescent sexual risk (Evans et al., 2020; Keiser et al., 2019). Sex education represents a significant period of learning, both in terms of sexual identity formation as well as instruction on safe sexual practices (Keiser et al., 2019); it provides a central platform to influence the adoption of healthy sexual practices (O'Sullivan et al., 2019).

Receiving sex education before engaging in intercourse was associated with an increase in birth control use among bisexual participants (Bodnar & Tornello, 2019). One can deduce that early sexual education prevents individuals from sexual risk. Thus, school psychologists and counselors should promote comprehensive sex education programs that fully address sexual issues among youth (Bodnar & Tornello, 2019; Kantor & Lindberg, 2020). Individual consent is a critical factor that impacts sexual outcomes. Adequate knowledge of how sexual consent is learned may be important for interventions to decrease sexual assault and ensure pleasurable sexual experiences (Richmond & Peterson, 2020).

Interpersonal Relationships

Interpersonal relationships represent the development, maintenance, and dissolution of relationships among friends, roommates, coworkers, neighbors, as well as family members (Benson & Donehower, 2020; Darling et al., 2020; Mancini et al., 2020). Within the context of families, interpersonal relationship experts seek to describe the impact of personality and communication styles (Darling et al., 2020). Family life educators explain the evolving stages of relationships (Mancini et al., 2020) and analyze interpersonal relationships using various theoretical perspectives (Benson & Donehower, 2020). They also develop, implement, and assess relationship enhancement and enrichment strategies, as well as communication skills, problem-solving skills, and conflict management strategies, and describe the impact of violence and coercion in interpersonal relationships (Darling et al., 2020; Mancini et al., 2020). Effective

listening, empathy, decision-making, conflict resolution, love, romance, respect, sincerity, and responsibility are some of the factors that impact interpersonal relationships within the family context (Beckmeyer & Jamison, 2021; Sheldon & Antony, 2019).

Another major factor that greatly impacts interpersonal relationships is mindfulness. Dynamic systems theory has proven to provide a useful framework for understanding how mindfulness organizes interpersonal interactions (Skoranski et al., 2019). A person-centered approach has also been used to identify how interpersonal relationships affect children in the family (Liu et al., 2023). An investigation of the relative suicidal rates among adolescents regarding their attachment to their parents found an indirect relationship, meaning that children with a high relationship attachment to their parents were less likely to be involved in suicidal activities and vice versa (Hunt et al., 2022). Thus, healthy interpersonal relationships are highly encouraged from childhood.

Family Resource Management

Every family develops and allocates resources that are used to run the affairs of their lives. In this context, family resource management mirrors the understanding of the decisions that individuals and families make about developing and allocating resources, including money, time, space, material and health assets, and networks of support to meet their goals (Darling et al., 2020; Mancini et al., 2020). Family life educators seek to explain the variety of resources that families need, acquire, and manage (Mancini et al., 2020). They recognize and facilitate the reciprocal relationship between individuals, families, and their communities (Clara et al., 2022). They also facilitate effective decision-making processes, including assessing individual and family needs, identifying and evaluating available options and resources, implementing decisions, and evaluating various outcomes (Clara et al., 2022; Darling et al., 2020). Family life

educators teach the impact of values and goals in the decision-making process and how to use organizational and resource management strategies in a variety of settings (Clara et al., 2022; Kulic et al., 2020).

The attention of experts on family resources management began several years ago, explaining that each family faces different ownership of resources but requires well-directed management to achieve the expected goals (Clara et al., 2022). With this diverse nature of family needs, family life educators are tasked with a high responsibility to educate families on the necessity of effective resource management and goal setting. A successful family resource management education program would include all forms of awareness, attitudes, and behaviors to plan, organize, implement, and monitor the achievement of predetermined goals (Abdulai & Roosalu, 2022). All parents should be provided with the necessary family resources and be trained on how to effectively manage the available resources, most especially parents who have teenagers in the United States.

Parent Education and Guidance

Parents are a vital part of every family, especially when the children are still young. The concept of parental education and guidance deals with an understanding of how parents teach, guide, and influence children and adolescents, as well as the changing nature, dynamics, and needs of the parent-child relationship across the lifespan (Benson & Donehower, 2020; Darling et al., 2020; Mancini et al., 2020). Family life education promotes healthy parenting as well as the developmental perspective of both parents and children (Mancini et al., 2020). Family life educators teach parents how to apply age-appropriate child guidance strategies and explain the different parenting styles and their associated psychological, social, and behavioral outcomes (Darling et al., 2020). Family life educators communicate the best practices that are associated

with high-quality parent education (Benson & Donehower, 2020; Gözü, 2019). Parenting styles can affect the academic achievement of children (Nwune et al., 2021). Family life educators further recommend that parents should be educated on the impact of the style of parenting and that they should use only styles that would lend themselves to the development of a child's cognitive, emotional, social, and academic competencies (Nwune et al., 2021).

Parental education has a tremendous benefit in the life of the family. To support this point, Roubinov et al. (2022) highlight the potential for long-lasting benefits of a brief psychosocial, group-based intervention for women during pregnancy, concluding that a modest investment during pregnancy may support well-being across two generations. Group parental education increases the effectiveness of parenting skills as peers interact together. Many researchers have pointed out that educational attainment directly affects children's reading ability (Williams et al., 2020; Zakaria et al., 2023). Enhanced parenting skills significantly improve the ability of families to remain together (Zeitlin et al., 2021). From this observation, one could argue that families with poor parenting skills are at high risk of not staying together.

Family Law and Public Policy

Family law and public policy deal with an understanding of legal issues, policies, and laws influencing the well-being of families (Bogenschneider, 2020). Family life educators teach individuals and families to understand family policy formation, policy implementation, policy assessment, and evaluation (Darling et al., 2020). Family life educators identify current and proposed laws, public policies, and initiatives that regulate and affect professional conduct and services and families and inform stakeholders about public policies, initiatives, and legislation that affect families at local, state, and national levels (Bogenschneider, 2020). Family life educators also facilitate opportunities for family and community members, professionals, and

policymakers to discuss family issues and propose possible remedies (Bogenschneider, 2020; Mancini et al., 2020). Effective community is another major task of the policymakers in family life education. Communication between knowledge producers and policy consumers can be improved by utilizing both the conceptual and logistical knowledge that honest knowledge brokers need (Bogenschneider, 2020).

An adequate understanding of family law and policy is necessary and would enhance the quality of professional practice and family relationships (Darling et al., 2020). Since there are a variety of families from diverse cultures (Ballard, 2020), understanding family laws and policies would enable family life educators to function effectively. Given that clear community is a vital component of family life education (Ballard, 2020), family laws and policies that encourage proper communication and prompt response to problems that may arise should be implemented. Since domestic violence is increasingly becoming common in families (Asker, 2022; Linhosrt et al., 2022), family victim advocates must be knowledgeable in such areas that enforce appropriate family behaviors (Young et al., 2019). Due to the complex nature of their assignments, family life advocates must continuously seek the appropriate education (Young et al., 2019).

Professional Ethics and Practice

Like most, if not all, other professionals, family life educators seek to understand and teach the character and quality of human social conduct and the ability to critically examine ethical questions and issues as they relate to professional practice (Ballard, 2020; Darling et al., 2020; Mancini et al., 2020). Professionals in the field demonstrate attitudes, values, behaviors, and responsibilities to clients, colleagues, and the broader community, that reflect ethical and professional standards and practice (Darling et al., 2020). Family life educators establish and maintain appropriate personal and professional boundaries within the practice of family life

education (Ballard, 2020). Family life educators develop and implement personal ethics plans that support the profession's standards and maintain current and relevant knowledge and skills within the scope of their practice (Ballard, 2020; Darling et al., 2020; Mancini et al., 2020).

The importance of ethical and professional practice standards cannot be overemphasized. Therefore, professionals must undergo continuous professional development programs to enhance their knowledge and skills (Lund, 2022). On the importance of professional practice in family life education, Darling et al. (2020) argue that the very nature of family life education content requires professionals to apply a relational ethics approach to their practice. Family life educators who pursue regular opportunities for professional development hone their facilitation skills, learn new strategies for effective programming, and improve cultural competence (Benson & Donehower, 2020). In the same view, Mancini et al. (2020) and Ballard (2020) agree that family life educators who constantly pursue professional development training are better able to design and implement relevant programs for their clients. Family life educators are, therefore, called upon to constantly seek relevant content knowledge.

Family Life Education Methodology

Family life education methodology is concerned with the proper understanding of the general philosophy and principles that guide the practice of family life education and the ability to plan, implement, assess, and evaluate such educational programs (Benson & Donehower, 2020; Darling et al., 2020; Mancini et al., 2020). Family life educators seek to employ suitable innovative techniques to create and promote learning environments that are respectful of individual weaknesses, needs, and learning styles (Darling et al., 2020). Program assessment and evaluation are integral to family life education, but program administrators face common barriers, including expense, lack of evaluation expertise, and fear of no-effects findings

(Hawkins et al. (2020). Family life educators must implement appropriate measures and strategies to overcome these barriers. These measures must align with the strengths-based family life education methodology (Walsh et al., 2020).

Most family life education efforts are on strengthening individuals and families by increasing knowledge and skills that enhance peak performance (Darling et al., 2020). For this reason, effective family life education programs are designed with this in mind. These programs are therefore designed to engage learners in the educational experience rather than the opportunity for the teacher to infuse knowledge into the student (Darling et al., 2020; Hawkins et al., 2020; Walsh et al., 2020). The strength-based aspect of family life education is critical in designing and implementing family life education programs. Greater emphasis should be placed on the growing importance of helping learners in academic and community contexts to discern how to distinguish among relevant sources of knowledge (Allen & Lavender, 2020). This concept is essential to helping family life educators become critically and culturally competent, sensitive, and respectful (Allen & Lavender, 2020).

The Intersection of Human Capital and Family Life Education

The human capital theory postulates that humans can improve their productive capacity by pursuing greater education and acquiring work-related skills (Becker, 1964, 1993; Schultz, 1961, 1993). On the other hand, family life education is an educational, preventive, and collaborative approach to enable individuals and families to increase knowledge and develop skills so that they can function optimally (Benson & Donehower, 2020; Darling et al., 2020; Mancini et al., 2020). Both concepts focus on improving the knowledge and skills of people. While human capital is the total of all knowledge, skills, and experiences (David et al., 2021), family life education seeks to increase knowledge and skills. Thus, family life educators work to

improve individuals' human capital. There is considerable overlap between human capital and family life education concepts.

Within the organizational development context, the interpersonal relationship has been held in high regard as a factor that enhances employee effectiveness at work (Nguyen et al., 2021). Within the scope of family life education, interpersonal relationships are a key component that enables individuals within the family to relate and function effectively (Benson & Donehower, 2020; Mancini et al., 2020). Since one of the principal ways to acquire or increase human capital is through education and training (Becker, 1993; David et al., 2021; Schultz, 1993), and family life education is the professional practice of equipping and empowering (Ballard, 2020; Mancini et al., 2020), one can deduce that family life education has a direct relationship and positive influence on the development of human capital. Some of the immediate benefits of building human capital are increased quality of life (Friedman, 2022) and the economy (Jiang, 2019). Family life educators work to ensure that individuals function optimally in society, increasing their quality of life and the economy.

The Concept of Leadership Development

Leadership development is no new concept in educational research. Leadership development is a field with a significantly extended and varied history (Allen et al., 2022). However, to explore this concept, it is necessary to uncover the meaning of leadership. Unfortunately, the concept and definition of leadership are in continuous debate as different scholars view and approach leadership from diverse perspectives (Acosta & Guthrie, 2021). Still, the idea that underlies leadership is the ability to inspire, motivate, and persuade people to take a particular course of action that achieves a particular goal (Acosta & Guthrie, 2021; Allen et al., 2022; Reed et al., 2019). Leadership also consists of a set of competencies that a person

possesses and demonstrates personally and professionally (Reed et al., 2019). Thus, leadership development is improving upon the competencies that identify an individual as a leader (Han, 2022; Irwin & Posselt, 2022).

The concept of leadership development has been a central goal in higher education (Irwin & Posselt, 2022). Leadership development is supreme to the future success of any profession, and every organization needs an effective and efficient leadership strategy to help meet goals, streamline the vision, and provide support to team members (Cole et al., 2023). Different leadership development practitioners may adopt unique approaches to improve upon the competencies that are the central focus. Three models of leadership development are paramount in improving upon the competencies that identify anyone as a leader, which include the social change model, the relational model, and the leadership challenge model (Irwin & Posselt, 2022). These three models can all be achieved by utilizing a strategic approach to leadership development that focuses on coaching (Vogel & Erickson, 2021). The next sub-sections examine the three leadership development models.

The Social Change Model of Leadership Development

This model of leadership development is the most widely used model of leadership development in high education and practice (Irwin & Posselt, 2022). Within the context of this model, scholars and practitioners define leadership as a purposeful, collaborative, values-based process that results in positive social change (Harper & Kezar, 2021; Irwin & Posselt, 2022). This model focuses exclusively on social change that is demonstrated by seven distinctive values, which are categorized into three. The first category consists of individual values of self-consciousness, personal commitment, and congruence; the second consists of group values of collaboration, the controversy of civility, and common purpose; while the third consists of the

community value of citizenship (Irwin & Posselt, 2022; Komives et al., 2020). These seven values are developed together to achieve two primary goals: the development of leaders in understanding self-knowledge and capacity and the facilitation of positive social change that enables society to function effectively (Komives et al., 2020; Tugas, 2019).

Created purposely for college students, the seven values that make up the social change model represent the individual's leadership knowledge and capacity that, when fully developed, would create a visible change in the community (Kim, 2021). Applying this model of leadership development, leaders are more community-oriented. They believe that individuals or groups should become responsibly connected to the community and society through some activity (Irwin & Posselt, 2022; Kim, 2021). Leaders who practice this model of leadership recognize that members of communities are not independent but interdependent (Kim, 2021). Leaders who adopt the social change model of leadership development believe in the importance of making a better world and a better society for oneself and others and that the collective effort of individuals and groups can make better communities and create the necessary change in society (Kim, 2021; Komives et al., 2020; Tugas, 2019).

The Relational Model of Leadership Development

The relational leadership model is a theoretical and aspirational model of leadership development that helps individuals use their experiences as a frame within which to understand leadership (Irwin & Posselt, 2022; Nhlapo & Hlalele, 2023). Within the lens of this model, leadership is a relational and ethical process where people work collectively to accomplish positive change (Irwin & Posselt, 2022). This model of leadership development supports a healthy, ethical, and effective group (Nhlapo & Hlalele, 2023). This leadership development model is ethical, purposeful, inclusive, and empowering, arguing strongly that relationships are

central to any leadership endeavor (Irwin & Posselt, 2022). The education system's interpersonal relationship is paramount to student achievement and teacher performance. Good student-teacher interpersonal relationships contribute greatly to academic performance and achievement (Tsigilis et al., 2023).

The relational leadership development model has four major elements. This model is purposeful, inclusive, ethical, and empowering (Irwin & Posselt, 2022). It is purposeful because individuals and groups commit to a goal or activity and can collaborate and find common ground with others to facilitate positive change (Irwin & Posselt, 2022; Weir et al., 2023). To be inclusive in this context means the leaders understand, value, and actively engage in diverse views (Irwin & Posselt, 2022; Nhlapo & Hlalele, 2023). The empowerment component of this leadership development model reveals a sense of self-efficacy and ownership and a set of eco-friendly conditions that promote the full participation of individuals by reducing the barriers that block the development of individual talent and involvement (Irwin & Posselt, 2022). The model is also very ethical and moral in that leaders are driven by values and standards that society accepts as good (Hydara & Arumugam, 2022; Irwin & Posselt, 2022; Shah et al., 2022).

The Leadership Challenge Model of Leadership Development

This model of leadership focuses on five key concepts or practices that leaders can implement to maximize their leadership impact (Kouzes & Posner, 2023). These five practices are: model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart (Amer, 2022; Kouzes & Posner, 2023; Irwin & Posselt, 2022; Stubin, 2021; Wase & Lull, 2021). The five practices are essential strategies that leaders can use to develop their leadership skills and areas of leadership necessary to effectively lead change (Amer, 2022; Stubin, 2021). The five practices have been utilized in diverse settings and industries, including

healthcare, education, and business (Wase & Lull, 2021). The leadership challenge model aims to challenge leaders to always improve their leadership skills. To ensure a better understanding of this model, Amer (2022) explains that performance improvement and learning are key elements of this leadership development model.

An overview of the five practices is essential. To model the way means that leaders establish principles and standards concerning the way people should be treated and the way they should pursue goals (Amer, 2022; Kouzes & Posner, 2023; Stubin, 2021). Inspiring a shared vision requires leaders to passionately believe they can make a difference, envision the future, and create an ideal and unique image of what the organization can become (Kouzes & Posner, 2023; Irwin & Posselt, 2022; Wase & Lull, 2021). Challenging the process calls for leaders to search for opportunities to change the status quo and look for innovative ways to improve the organization (Kouzes & Posner, 2023; Irwin & Posselt, 2022; Stubin, 2021). Leaders enable others to act by fostering collaboration and building energetic teams while actively involving others (Amer, 2022; Kouzes & Posner, 2023; Stubin, 2021). Leaders also encourage the heart by keeping hope and determination alive, recognizing individuals' contributions, and celebrating their followers' accomplishments (Kouzes & Posner, 2023; Irwin & Posselt, 2022; Stubin, 2021).

Approaches to Leadership Development

Leaders can improve upon their productive capacity in several ways. However, I uncover two approaches in this section: the instructional and the coaching approaches. These two approaches have been proven to be significant in leadership development and human capital.

The Instructional Approach to Leadership Development

The instructional approach to leadership development challenges leaders, individually or in group settings, to identify with certain beliefs about leadership outcomes like direction,

alignment, and commitment (Bloomquist & Georges, 2022). The approach utilizes learner-centered instructional techniques that connect cultural experiences and competencies, learner-centered tasks, and leadership practices that disseminate deliberate instruction, reflection, and feedback to develop important leadership skills and knowledge (Hill et al., 2023; Watkins, 2020). An effective and efficient instructional leadership development program should provide student leaders with courses that enable them to develop leadership competencies that enable them to be more effective in providing direction to others (Watkins, 2020).

A leadership development curriculum is developed, and common instructional strategies are employed to execute the program. Effective learning strategies incorporate both individual and group management techniques, social skills training, and learner-centered teaching methods (Chinedu & Akobi, 2022). All instructional leadership development strategies are developed to produce the desired leadership competencies, leadership concepts and applications, personal reflection, and peer feedback (Watkins, 2020). Pedagogical instructional strategies could also be utilized. These require the development of learning spaces that encourage active interaction and conversation through direct instruction, interactive instruction, experiential learning, and independent study (M & Sharma, 2022). A comprehensive conceptual instructional strategy would include blended instructional formats to allow for flexibility in structure, pace, relevance, activity, choice, relationships, explanations, and guidance (Heilporn et al., 2022).

The Coaching Approach to Leadership Development

Coaching is an empowerment approach in which a coach partners with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their potential and facilitate learning, development, well-being, and performance (Okpala et al., 2021; Wefald et al., 2021). Another researcher observes a vast need to develop effective school leaders to ensure

high-quality principals are equitably distributed (Mette, 2021). One of the most effective ways to do this is through leadership coaching, a process that increases the leadership capabilities of individuals through a combination of personalized learning, focused improvement, facilitation, and collaboration (Klar et al., 2020). Coaching is a valuable leadership training and development approach for emerging leaders (Mette, 2021; Okpala et al., 2021). This approach requires each leader to be assigned to a leadership coach, and a strong coach-client accountability system is also vital for the success of the coaching process.

Strengths-based coaching has become a prominent approach to leadership development (Petroni et al., 2023). The authors continue to explain that this type of leadership development coaching helps individuals identify, harness, and leverage their strengths to achieve personal and professional goals (Ousley et al., 2022; Petroni et al., 2023). In a study to determine the efficacy of leadership coaching, participants gained an increased ability to identify and value their leadership strengths as well as those of others (Petroni et al., 2023). A similar study also proved that organizations could increase affective commitment and individual performance by integrating more coaching skills into their leadership styles (Park et al., 2021; Ribeiro et al., 2021). This implies that managers and organizational leaders ought to adopt this approach and incorporate it into their everyday work lives. The fun part here is that managers themselves become effective by participating in leadership coaching programs, thus making managerial coaching an effective way to motivate, develop, and retain talents (Park et al., 2021).

The Intersection of Human Capital and Leadership Development

Human capital is the capability of individuals to provide solutions to their customers (Philips & Philips, 2015); it is the knowledge, skills, and experience that an individual has accumulated skills (Becker, 1993; Schultz, 1993), while leadership development is improving

upon the leadership knowledge, skills, and competencies that one has (Han, 2022; Irwin & Posselt, 2022). While human capital development deals with the acquisition of a comprehensive body of knowledge, skills, and experience in any aspect of life (David et al., 2021), leadership development deals with improving the knowledge, skills, and experience that enables a person to function more effectively as a leader (Irwin & Posselt, 2022). From this observation, one can say that leadership development is an aspect of human capital development. In a study that examined the direct and indirect influences of school leadership on the human capital development of in-service teachers, the results showed that a professional learning-teaching environment strongly influences the teachers' human capital development (Belay et al., 2021).

One of the direct benefits of human capital development is economic growth (David et al., 2021; Mubarik et al., 2018). When leaders improve their leadership knowledge, skills, and competencies, they can lead the organization and their employees to become more productive, thus increasing economic growth. A common practice for most corporations is to invest in human capital, especially in leadership development programs, which have become the focus of many corporations (Lantu et al., 2021). This observation implies that leadership development is an aspect of improving upon the productive capacity of leaders, which is the theoretical emphasis of human capital (Becker, 1993; Schultz, 1993). The connection between human capital and leadership development could be described in the following mathematical expression: all investments in leadership development initiatives are a subset of human capital investments.

Summary

Human capital development is the process by which individuals improve upon their productive capabilities. It is the process that enables the employees of an organization to hone the knowledge, skills, and experiences they have to make them more effective and efficient at

what they do. This chapter focuses predominantly on the human capital theory, and two other future concepts: family life education and leadership development. The literature review also examined these concepts independently in a broad way. Since the entire research focused on individual perceptions of building human capital through family life education and leadership development, it became necessary to examine the intersections between human capital and family life education as well as human capital and leadership development. Having done so, the literature reveals that there is a considerable relationship between human capital, family life education, and leadership development. Investments in both family life education and leadership development are all investments in human capital.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Overview

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of graduate school students on developing human capital through family life education and leadership development in the Washington, DC, Metropolitan area. In this chapter, I describe the research design, list the research questions, and describe the setting where the study was conducted, as well as the participants who took part in the study. I also discuss my position as the researcher, including the interpretive framework and philosophical assumptions. Finally, I discuss my role as the researcher, procedures, data collection, data analysis, data synthesis, and the study's trustworthiness, examining the development of human capital for graduate school students through family life education and leadership development.

Research Design

This study utilized a qualitative research design to explore graduate student human capital development through family life education and leadership development. Often, researchers use a qualitative research design if the problem requires a comprehensive understanding, if a literary and flexible style of reporting is appropriate, if an understanding of the contexts in which participants address the study is warranted, and if a theory to address gaps in the understanding is developed (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yadav, 2022). A high-quality qualitative study should focus on worthiness, ethics and morality, relevance, practicality, and significance (Yadav, 2022). With this understanding, this dissertation topic, which explores graduate school students' experiences in developing human capital through family life education and leadership development, fits well within a qualitative research design (Creswell & Poth, 2018; van Manen, 2016).

More specifically, this study's type of research design is phenomenology (Creswell & Poth, 2018; van Manen, 2016). Phenomenology was appropriate for this study because it was an explorative study, and I explored participant's lived experiences on developing human capital through family life education and leadership development. Within phenomenology, I used a hermeneutic phenomenology design (van Manen, 2016) because this research design type was tailored toward understanding the lived experiences of an individual or the shared experiences of several individuals and the interpretation of the text of life (Creswell & Poth, 2018; van Manen, 2016). It is a research method of moderate reflection on the basic structure of the lived experiences of human life (van Manen, 2016). An in-depth understanding of the phenomenon is expected of the researcher, a process that requires the researcher to collect and integrate several forms of data via individual and focused-group interviews (Creswell & Poth, 2018; van Manen, 2016).

This specific research design was used to conduct this study because there was a lived experience of an individual or a shared experience by a group of individuals that needed to be explored (van Manen, 2016). In this study, I explored the experiences of graduate school students on developing human capital through family life education and leadership development. One central research question and four sub-questions were considered and discussed to uncover this study fully. Identifying and developing a research topic consisted of two significant tasks: I formulate the research question and then create a conceptual framework to support the study (Johnson et al., 2020). The research questions were framed to be phenomenological (van Manen, 2016). When I asked the participants these questions, it prompted them to pause and reflect on their experiences (van Manen, 2016). The ability to pause and reflect on their lived experiences enabled them to share as more and detailed information as they could recall.

Research Questions

The following are the research questions that guided the study. To fully capture my study, I formulated one central research question and four sub-questions. The research question and sub-question all align with the theory that informed my study. All the sub-questions were framed to support the central research question, which in turn conveyed the primary purpose of the research study. These questions were utilized as a guide in developing individual interview questions, focus-group questions, and journal prompt questions.

Central Research Question

What are the lived experiences of graduate school students on developing human capital through family life education and leadership development?

Sub-Question One

What are the family life education experiences of graduate school students?

Sub-Question Two

What are the leadership development experiences of graduate school students?

Sub-Question Three

What are the investments of graduate school students in pursuing family life education?

Sub-Question Four

What are the investments of graduate school students in pursuing leadership development?

Setting and Participants

The purpose of this section is twofold. I will describe the setting in which the research took place. I also describe a brief profile of the participants who participated in the study. Each of these elements is elaborated on in subsequent sections.

Setting

Even though the proposed research study did not have a physical location or institution as its chosen site, it had a central focus from where the participants were selected. The study involved graduate school students who resided in the Washington, DC, Metropolitan Area. The rationale for selecting this setting was that the participants were represented well in this region and connecting with participants contributed to the feasibility of the study. Also, participants in this area could find it easy to explain or describe their experiences on developing human capital through family life education and leadership development because they all have had some experience with family life education and leadership development and how that contributed to human capital development.

Participants

All the participants in the study were graduate school students, either master-level or doctoral-level students, who were enrolled in any accredited university in the United States. Since participants were graduate-level students, married, with at least one child, all of them were at least 30 years old. All participants in this study identified as either male or female. Since the study explored the lived experiences of graduate school students on developing human capital through family life education and leadership development, all participants had at least five years of professional work experience or were in a professional or graduate school program that has enabled them to acquire at least five years of professional knowledge in their career. Every participant in the study had also obtained at least a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university. The participants were professionals from any career. A significant aspect of the research study was the family life education aspect. So, all participants also had an established family with a spouse and at least one child.

Recruitment Plan

A purposeful sampling technique (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2018) was used in this study to recruit all the participants. This method intentionally chooses a group of participants because they constitute the appropriate pool of individuals with the experience needed for the current research problem (Creswell & Poth, 2018). A total of 12 participants were recruited for this study. These participants were graduate school students enrolled in any accredited graduate school program in the United States and resided in the Washington, DC, Metropolitan Area. I carefully identified and contacted these participants by phone. The initial contact was through a network of friends and colleagues. A sample verbal script that I used to recruit the participants is found in Appendix B. When a participant gave verbal consent, I sent an information sheet via email or handed it to each participant before the interview began.

Researcher's Positionality

The researcher positionality section provides valuable insights into the stance that the researcher assumes concerning a perceived issue, and it informs both the researcher and the reader of the potential biases (Pope & Patterson, 2019). Thus, this section consists of my motivation to conduct the study. It is divided into two parts: the research paradigm or interpretive framework, in which case I am drawn to the social constructivism frameworks, and three philosophical assumptions, which are ontological, epistemological, and axiological (Creswell & Poth, 2018; van Manen, 2016).

Interpretive Framework

The interpretative framework that guided this research study is the social constructivism framework (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Within this framework, individuals seek to understand the world in which they live and work, and people develop subjective meaning to their life

experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Since individuals develop varied and multiple meanings based on their experiences, researchers tend to look for the complexity of views rather than narrow the meanings to a few ideas (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This framework ties directly to the research design and the theory that my research was based on, which is the human capital theory. A phenomenological design explores the lived experiences of individuals as they apply to the topic under investigation (Gaete Celis, 2019). The human capital theory examines the capabilities of individuals to provide solutions to customers (Philips & Philips, 2015). This framework enabled me to explore participants' lived experiences on how they have developed human capital through family life education and leadership development over time.

Other researchers have explained that human capital is the sum of all the education, skills, talents, and experience that employees in any organization possess (David et al., 2021; Nafukho et al., 2004; Schultz, 1993). It has also been extensively argued that education and training are fundamental ways to improve human capital (David et al., 2021; Schultz, 1993). Thus, one of the most effective ways to transform a community is to train the inhabitants to gain skills and knowledge that they can apply to boost their economy while improving their standard of living and quality of life. It is on this note that I engaged in a study that involved the participants in the research process. This approach enabled me to better understand their experiences and how individuals could improve their productive capacities through family life education and leadership development.

The biblical worldview that inspired my research process is rooted in Romans 12:2, which states, “Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what the will of God is, what is good and acceptable and perfect” (English Standard Bible, 2001/2016). According to this Bible verse, transformation is a

process that begins from the mind as the center that supports all reasoning in humans. This worldview is directly related to the human capital theory. When someone is transformed, the person is better placed to know the will of God for their life, which the scripture says is good, acceptable, and perfect (English Standard Bible, 2001/2016). It should, therefore, be common reasoning that a good, acceptable, and perfect life is a life that has a high quality and, thus, a good standard of living and quality of life. Another scripture that supports the human capital theory and the transformative framework is 2 Timothy 2:15, “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth” (English Standard Bible, 2001/2016). Anyone who engages in the active process of genuine transformation through education, training, and skill acquisition inevitably becomes someone who practices what is good and acceptable. “Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things” (English Standard Bible, 2001/2016, Philippians 4:8). This scripture conveys the highest standard of living.

Philosophical Assumptions

Philosophical assumptions affect how researchers view and interpret the results. The following discussion explains three philosophical assumptions relevant to this qualitative research study. They are ontological assumption, epistemological assumption, and axiological assumption.

Ontological Assumption

Ontological assumptions relate to the nature of reality and its associated characteristics (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Within this context, a researcher seeks to understand the different views of individuals about their reality, as it is believed that reality is subjective. Qualitative

researchers intend to present the results of their observations as reported by the perceived realities of the participants in their research study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). As a qualitative researcher with ontological assumptions, I believe success is relative. Different individuals may view success differently. For some individuals, it could be having a good job and money; for others, it is having a united family.

Epistemological Assumption

Epistemological assumptions promote the use of subjective evidence by a researcher (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Researchers who adopt this ideology ask how one justifies knowledge claims while seeking to understand the relationship between the researcher and the subject matter under investigation (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In essence, these researchers try to find out the true meaning of knowledge and understand it by individuals without the influence of another person. As a qualitative researcher, I seek to create and establish relationships with different people to know their thoughts and views. I value face-to-face conversations and desire to spend quality time with people I relate with so I can understand how they feel.

Axiological Assumption

These assumptions inform the researcher that research is value-driven, so they seek to understand the meaning and roles of values (Creswell & Poth, 2018). They seek to understand and discuss the values shaping their research study and biases (Creswell & Poth, 2018). As a qualitative researcher, I often bring these assumptions into my research. However, I also desire values and easily create biases on controversial subjects. I ask questions about the importance of education and provide relevant answers to the questions to find the meaning behind a possible action. I explore concepts about human capital, human capital development, family life education, and leadership development, and the relationship that exists between them.

Researcher's Role

As a human instrument in the study, my role in this research process was to identify and recruit participants and conduct personal and focused-group interviews with them, as well as journal prompts. As a qualitative researcher, I ought to listen properly, communicate effectively, and document responses appropriately (Yin, 2018). Most, if not all, researchers begin their research study with pre-existing biases, perceptions, and expectations; thus, it was essential that, as a researcher, I remain as transparent as possible about my intentions to exert any personal control over the participants (Yin, 2018). With a strong background knowledge of graduate education and myself being a doctoral student, I made sure not to allow this knowledge to influence my interpretation of the results. I also maintain a cordial yet professional relationship with the participants throughout the research process. The hermeneutical phenomenology design required me to interact with several participants from different academic and cultural backgrounds. This interaction process required me to keep an open mind and be able to listen to my participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018). I also needed to embrace diversity, approach each participant differently, and communicate with them independently.

Procedures

This study was conducted by following a set of required steps as established by the institution. The first step was to complete the IRB application and obtain their approval notice and an exemption letter from Liberty University. A detailed explanation of the IRB permission and other participants' protections are discussed under the trustworthiness. After the IRB approval, I carefully identified and contacted 12 participants by phone. A detailed description of how the participants were recruited is found under the sub-heading "Recruitment Plan. Three approaches were used to collect the data, which was then transcribed and analyzed. Before the

data was collected from the participants, I handed in an informational sheet that participants were not required to sign to each participant for their review. The following sub-sections discuss a detailed process of the data collection process, the data analysis plans, and how the study achieved triangulation.

Data Collection Plan

I employed three data collection approaches for this research study. These three approaches included individual interviews, focus group interviews, and journal prompts. These approaches were most appropriate for this study because they collectively provided me with the most comprehensive information to enable me to make an informed decision after conducting detailed data analysis. The rationale for the individual interview data collection method was that I needed to document diverse variations from different participants. Individual interviews were appropriate as they allowed me to interact with the participants to collect and record relevant information for the study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The focused-group interview data collection method had a significant advantage because group interaction generated more comprehensive and diverse opinions (Jeon et al., 2021). The focused-group interview moment brought graduate school students from different career paths to discuss their lived experiences on developing human capital through family life education and leadership development. Finally, journal prompts were the third method of data collection. The rationale for this data collection method was that valuable information was documented that would be of great use to the study.

Since this research study employed three data collection approaches for this research process, data analysis also followed the approaches as well. Thus, I analyzed the data collected from individual interviews, focused-group interviews, and journal prompts. Qualitative data analysis calls on the researcher to organize the data, conduct an initial read-through of the

database, code and organize themes, represent the data, and form an interpretation of the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Finally, I displayed the data, watched for promising patterns and concepts, developed a comprehensive analytic strategy, and addressed rival explanations (Yin, 2018).

Individual Interviews

I conducted in-person and virtual individual interviews with 12 participants (van Manen, 2016) and used the Microsoft Teams platform to conduct the virtual interviews. These interviews were completed using 15 semi-structured open-ended interview questions (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The interviews were recorded using the Microsoft Teams recording application on the platform and another smartphone using the Easy Voice Recorder application. The data that was collected from the interviews was stored electronically in a secure location accessible only to me (Creswell & Poth, 2018; van Manen, 2016). The data was then electronically transcribed, stored securely, and prepared for a detailed analysis.

Table 1

Individual Interview Questions

1. Please describe your experience developing human capital through family life education and leadership development. CRQ
2. How do you integrate family life education programs into your life? SQ1
3. What five key elements have you learned through family life education programs? SQ1
4. What challenges have you encountered in your effort to pursue family life education?
SQ1
5. How do you integrate leadership development programs into your life? SQ2

6. What five key elements have you learned through leadership development programs in your career? SQ2
7. What challenges have you encountered in your effort to pursue leadership development? SQ2
8. What are some of the major investments that you have made in pursuing family life education? SQ3
9. How have your investments in pursuing family life education affected your life? SQ3
10. When considering these investments, what challenges have arisen as you pursued family life education? SQ3
11. What are some of the major investments that you have made in pursuing leadership development programs? SQ4
12. How have your investments in pursuing leadership development affected your life? SQ4
13. What are some of the challenges you have encountered in your investment in leadership development? SQ4
14. What are the key support systems and resources you have utilized over the years to develop human capital through family life education and leadership development? CRQ
15. Is there anything else you would like to add to our discussion today that we have not already communicated about? CRQ

The problem is family life education and leadership development are underrepresented in graduate students' human capital development, while the purpose of the study is to explore the lived experiences of graduate school students on developing human capital through family life education and leadership development in the Washington, DC, Metropolitan area. Given the problem and purpose of the study, all interview questions were developed to address the problem

and fulfill the purpose of the study. To achieve this goal, the interview questions were framed to answer the central research question and all four sub-questions. The research questions also had a direct relationship with the theoretical framework because all the questions were framed and developed to explore the participants' lived experiences as they developed human capital through family life education and leadership development.

Focus Groups

This data collection approach was completed with one focus group consisting of seven participants. I set up a virtual meeting with this group of participants where we met and conducted a group interview as a follow-up interview to the individual interviews. I developed 11 semi-structured and open-ended questions which were utilized for this data collection approach. The focus group interview was recorded using a smartphone with an Easy Voice Recorder application installed. The data collected from the focus group interview was stored electronically in a secured location only accessible to me. The data was then electronically transcribed, stored securely, and prepared for a detailed analysis. The following are eleven focus group interview questions that were utilized during the focus group interview session.

Table 2

Focus Group Questions

1. Describe your best experience developing human capital through family life education and leadership development. CRQ
2. What has been the most valuable aspect of family life education programs to you? SQ1
3. What is the most memorable moment in pursuing a family life education? SQ1
4. What has been the most treasured aspect of leadership development programs to you?
SQ2

5. What has been the most remarkable moment in your pursuit of leadership development?
SQ2
6. What is your motivation to invest in family life education? SQ3
7. How has investing in leadership development programs improved your effectiveness as a person? SQ3
8. Discuss two obstacles you have experienced that prevent you from investing in family life education. SQ4
9. What are the two most difficult moments that limit your ability to invest in leadership development programs? SQ4
10. What is one recommendation you will give for individuals who desire to pursue human capital development through family life education and leadership development? CRQ
11. Is there anything else you would like to add to our discussion today that we have not already communicated about? CRQ

As with the individual interview questions, all focus group interview questions were developed to address the problem and fulfill the purpose of the study. The focus group interview questions were framed to answer the central research question and all four sub-questions. All the research questions were directly related to the theoretical framework because they were framed and developed to explore the participants' lived experiences as they develop human capital through family life education and leadership development.

Journal Prompts

The third method of data collection was journaling. In recent years, researchers have found new forms of data collection to be useful for their studies. Journaling is a new and emerging data collection method in qualitative research (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Participants

responded in detail to five journal prompts guided by the theoretical framework and research questions. The journal entries provided a record of the participants' experiences and how they reacted emotionally (Mavric & Medic, 2022). As the participants responded to each question, it aimed to bring clarity to the research that put things in perspective (Mavric & Medic, 2022; Vujnovic et al., 2022). This data collection method was a reflective process for the participants where they could share their real-life experiences in their own words (Vujnovic et al., 2022). Relevant information was extracted, carefully recorded, and stored electronically for analysis.

Table 3

Journal Prompts

1. Describe some of your most valuable moments in participating in family life education programs. SQ1
2. Describe some of your most valuable moments in participating in leadership development programs. SQ2
3. Explain five significant investments that you have made to pursue family life education. SQ3
4. Explain five significant investments that you have made to pursue leadership development. SQ4
5. Explain three benefits you have had due to human capital development. CRQ

As with the individual and focused-group interview questions, all journal prompts were developed to address the problem and fulfill the purpose of the study. Accordingly, the journal prompts are framed to answer the central research question and all four sub-questions. All the research questions were directly related to the theoretical framework because they were framed

and developed to explore the participants' lived experiences as they develop human capital through family life education and leadership development.

Data Analysis

All data analysis procedures are explained in this section. I utilized three different data collection forms to collect data in this study. These three forms of data collection include individual interviews, one focus group interview, and journal prompts. I discuss a detailed data analysis from each of these three data collection approaches in the following paragraphs. This section ends with a synthesis of all three data collection approaches.

Individual Interviews Data Analysis

Analysis of individual interviews began with the electronically transcribed and stored information that was recorded during the interviews. This study utilized the thematic data analysis technique described by van Manen (2016). Next, a proper phenomenological question guided the analysis and was performed on pre-reflective experiential material (van Manen, 2016). Thematic data analysis is the process by which the researcher recovers the structures of meaning that are expressed and dramatize the human experience as represented in the text (van Manen, 2016). To explore themes and insights fully, I applied three approaches to reading the LED: the holistic reading approach, the selective reading approach, and the detailed reading approach (van Manen, 2016). I converted the data from the full LED into an anecdote and then applied the three approaches to generate meaningful themes from the text. The last stage in the data analysis was the reflective writing of the themes that emerged from the experiential material (van Manen, 2016). The process started with the initial data and moved on to the discovery of meanings, grouping them into patterns, and writing the conclusions of themes relevant to the research goal (Quinto, 2022).

Focus Group Data Analysis

The analysis of the focus group interview began with the electronically transcribed and stored information that was recorded during the focus group interview. To fully explore themes and insights from the focus group interview data, I applied three approaches to reading the LED: the holistic reading approach, the selective reading approach, and the detailed reading approach (van Manen, 2016). From the full LED, I converted the data into an anecdote and then applied the three approaches to generate meaningful themes from the text. The last stage in the data analysis was the reflective writing of the themes that emerged from the experiential material (van Manen, 2016). The process started with the initial data and moved on to the discovery of meanings, grouping them into patterns, and writing the conclusions of themes relevant to the research goal (Quinto, 2022).

Journal Prompts Data Analysis

A phenomenological framework for journal prompts was used in this study. This framework's key concepts include intrinsic and extrinsic information (Gorichanaz & Latham, 2016). I applied three approaches to reading the lived experience of participants as documented: the holistic reading approach, the selective reading approach, and the detailed reading approach (van Manen, 2016). I did a reflective writing on the themes that emerged from the document (van Manen, 2016). The process started with the initial data and moved on to the discovery of meanings, grouping them into patterns, and writing the conclusions of themes relevant to the research goal (Quinto, 2022).

Data Synthesis

Qualitative data from all three data collection sources was synthesized to generate a single set of themes that convey the overall information about the participant's lived experiences

(Creswell & Poth, 2018; van Manen, 2016). Most often, the researcher begins the data synthesis by using the data from all the sources to identify common patterns or concepts that align with the study's purpose (van Manen, 2016). I carefully looked for common themes from the three sources and examined, categorized, and organized them in a single table (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Data from individual and focus group interviews were reviewed; relevant themes were noted and compared with those from journal prompts to triangulate the data and develop common themes that were documented in the findings. Finally, the findings and implications of this study explored all the themes that were collected from the individual data analysis, focus group data analysis, and journaling data analysis.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is a critical and rare virtue in the contemporary world. It is the state of being trustworthy, credible, reliable, and dependable. The foundational concepts and terms that establish the trustworthiness of a study are credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Several scriptures communicate relevant evidence on how Christians ought to conduct their affairs in life. Philippians 4:8-9 admonishes us to think and practice whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, whatever is excellent, and anything worthy of praise (English Standard Bible, 2016). The same author also admonishes that we should show ourselves in all respects to be a model of good works, and in our teaching, that we should show integrity, dignity, and sound speech that cannot be condemned so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us (English Standard Bible, 2001/2016, Titus 2:7-8). Yin (2018) highlights the importance of high-quality analysis. High quality here would mean that every protocol needed to produce a trustworthy study is sought after. This research design section

consists of five trustworthy components: credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, and ethical considerations. These five components of trustworthiness are examined independently in the following sub-sections in conjunction with the current research study and how they contribute to the trustworthiness of the study. Permissions and other participants' protections are covered under ethical considerations.

Credibility

Credibility is confidence in the truth of a study's findings or the extent to which the findings accurately describe reality (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I demonstrated a high level of accurate data in my study. Every aspect of my study was original, true, and traceable. I engaged all the participants in my study during the interview process for a considerable time to establish trust so that everything communicated was factual. I also observed the protocols needed to produce a credible study. I utilized triangulation and peer debriefing. Researchers are encouraged to spend considerable time in the early stages of planning their study to consider what types of sources they intend to use (Langtree et al., 2019). Thus, all the sources needed to support my study were carefully selected and were all credible.

Transferability

Transferability shows that the findings have applicability in other contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Transferability refers to the ability for findings from the context of your study to be applied to another context or within the same context at another time (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). It should be noted that content and context have a great role in any research study. An adequate understanding that research findings may be applicable in other contexts is essential for all research studies. Transferability determines whether the findings potentially apply to another individual, group, time, context, or setting (Langtree et al., 2019). Thus, my study evaluated the

potential of transferability by decontextualizing and abstracting the concepts and theories emerging from other studies. Most concepts and theories in my study were drawn from the literature about human capital, human capital development, family life education, and leadership development. These concepts and theories were then applied as relevant to the research study that I have conducted and made this study relevant for future studies.

Dependability

Dependability shows that the findings are consistent and could be repeated (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), which can be demonstrated through an effective description of the procedures undertaken for the study. I ensured that my research study and the findings were dependable. Dependability indicates the stability or consistency of the research processes used during the study (Langtree et al., 2019). This was achieved by a careful evaluation of the decisions that the researcher makes and the steps that are taken during the research process (Langtree et al., 2019). Thus, I made wise and sound decisions to ensure that the findings in this study were dependable. Every action and step needed to select the participants, interview them, transcribe the interviews, and conduct a detailed analysis was very clear.

Confirmability

Confirmability is the extent to which the findings of a research study are shaped by the respondents and not researcher bias, motivation, or interest (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Most researchers have personal biases, assumptions, and worldviews that guide their studies. However, confirmability validates that the findings of a research study are not influenced by the researcher's personal characteristics, personal assumptions, or biases (Langtree et al., 2019). I did not allow my personal biases and assumptions to affect my study. I allowed the participants to discuss their experiences without interference. To ensure the confirmability of my study, I

subjected the study to confirmability audits, audit trials, triangulation, and reflexivity. The data collected was checked multiple times in the data collection and analysis process to ensure that other researchers could repeat the results (Langtree et al., 2019).

Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues are a significant aspect of the qualitative research process that researchers must address. These issues span the time before conducting a study, data collection, data analysis, data reporting, and publishing the study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This section discusses key ethical considerations, including permissions, confidentiality, and safety in data collection, transcription, storage, and analysis.

Permissions

The first permission I obtained was the IRB approval notice and an exempt letter from Liberty University (see Appendix A). However, since institutions or organizations do not legally bind the participants in the study, no further permissions were required to contact participants except for their consent. Participants were given an informational sheet that explained the data collection procedures and how their participation was needed. The IRB approval letter stated that my study did not require a formal consent form. Instead, the study needed an informational sheet that participants were not required to sign. I sent each participant the informational sheet before the interview. The information sheet specified the rights and responsibilities of the participants and their willingness to participate in the research study (see Appendix C).

Other Participant Protections

After the IRB's approval letter, I proceeded to obtain official verbal consent from the participants before engaging them in the research process. The general purpose of the study was adequately explained to the participants, and their participation in the study was strictly

voluntary (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Discussions on how data and information collected from the participants will be stored and transmitted were not neglected in the process. I used pseudonyms to maintain the privacy of all the participants in my study. Data that was stored in a physical location and hard copies were secured with a lock, and all electronic data had a secure password that was only available to me. I also did not put any bias with the participants in data analysis to disclose only positive results (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Copies of the published work will be provided to the participants if requested (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Summary

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of graduate school students on developing human capital through family life education and leadership development in the Washington, DC, Metropolitan Area. A purposeful sampling technique was utilized to select 12 participants who were enrolled in accredited graduate school programs in the United States. Three types of data collection methods were used to triangulate the study. First, individual interviews were conducted with 12 participants and analyzed for themes and emerging patterns. Next, a focus group with seven participants was conducted. Finally, journaling was the third method of data collection. Data collected was analyzed for themes and codes and then synthesized to answer the research questions. Since trustworthiness was a vital aspect of the study, I discussed four components of trustworthiness which include credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. An overview of ethical considerations and how they were applied in this study was also covered in this section.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of graduate school students on developing human capital through family life education and leadership development in the Washington, DC, Metropolitan area. This chapter includes participants' descriptions, data in the form of narrative themes, the research question responses, a presentation of the study's findings, and the chapter summary. Data was collected through individual and focus group interviews and journaling. Data collected from the study are categorized and presented in tables and themes. Van Manen (2016) is the main text guiding data presentation.

Participants

I used purposeful sampling (Creswell & Poth, 2018) to select 12 graduate school students who were participants in this study. Five of them identified as males, while seven identified as females. All participants in the study met the criteria described in the procedure section. The demographic information collected for all participants is in the following categories: gender, age, educational level, career, and years of marriage experience. I selected 12 participants because of the use of a limited number of participants in qualitative phenomenological studies (Creswell & Poth, 2018; van Manen, 2016). All 12 individuals participated in the individual interviews and journal prompts. However, only seven of the 12 participated in the focus group interview due to the participants' scheduling constraints. All the 12 participants identified as Black, African, or African American. Pseudonyms were used to identify the individuals during the data collection process to keep the identity of the participants confidential. Table 4 below is a concise summary of the participants' demographics.

Table 4*Participants' Demographics*

Name	Gender	Age	Current Education Level	Major Career	Years in Marriage
Angela	Female	38	Masters	Christian Ministry	10
Brittany	Female	35	Doctoral	Pharmacy	10
Charity	Female	32	Doctoral	Nursing	6
David	Male	42	Doctoral	Christian Ministry	11
Evelyn	Female	53	Doctoral	Education	22
Frank	Male	43	Doctoral	Chaplaincy	14
Gillian	Female	45	Doctoral	Nursing	25
Henry	Male	38	Masters	Accounting/IT	8
Isabel	Female	39	Masters	Nursing	10
Jack	Male	50	Doctoral	Pastoral/Counseling	20
Kingsley	Male	44	Masters	Nursing/Pastoral Ministry	12
Leah	Female	34	Doctoral	Pharmacy	9

Angela

Angela was a 38-year-old female with a career in public health education and Christian ministry. She had worked in her ministry career for over seven years and was beginning her public health education career. She had a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing and a Master of Education in Discipleship for Ministry and was pursuing an MPH in Public Health Education and Promotion. This participant had been married for 10 years and had two children. She indicated that human capital development was a critical aspect for everyone and that developing

human capital through family life education and leadership development was just the right thing to do. Her passion is to develop and blend a career in public health education and Christian ministry, particularly educating women on healthy lifestyles while working with her husband to create honorable and sustainable marriage relationships for individuals and couples.

Brittany

Brittany was a 35-year-old female who was pursuing a career in pharmacy. She was a fourth-year pharmacy school student at the time of the interview. After obtaining a Bachelor of Science in microbiology, she worked for a few years in a research laboratory. With the desire to acquire more knowledge and establish a more profitable career, she decided to pursue a career in pharmacy. She has been married for 10 years and has three children. Her passion was to develop her career in the clinical pharmacy while serving her community through the ministries in her church that provide toys and gifts to children to enable them to celebrate and enjoy Christmas with their families. She also holds her family in high esteem and works hard with her husband to enrich their marriage through family life education programs.

Charity

Charity was a 32-year-old female who had a career in nursing. She had a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing and a Master of Science degree in Nursing with a focus on Family Nurse Practitioner, and she was wrapping up her Doctor of Nursing Practice degree. She has worked as a registered nurse for eight years and as a nurse practitioner for two years. This participant has been married for five years and has three young children. Her desire for human capital development compels her to invest quality time and resources in her personal and professional development, and doing so through family life education and leadership development has been an excellent experience for her. Her passion is to develop a career in

family nursing and serve her community and other nations via medical missions while creating an honorable and sustainable marriage relationship with her husband and a well-balanced family.

David

David was a 42-year-old male who had a career in Christian ministry, particularly in training and development. He had worked in his ministry career for 12 years. He had a Bachelor of Science degree in Organizational Management, a Master of Art in Practical Theology, a second Master of Art in Organizational Leadership, and was pursuing a Doctor of Philosophy in Education: Organizational Leadership. This participant had been married for 11 years and had two children. He affirmed that human capital development is the most significant way to make human beings more relevant on the earth, and doing so through family life education and leadership development is a brilliant approach that has worked for him for over two decades. His passion is enabling individuals and couples to create honorable and sustainable marriage relationships to lead a successful family life.

Evelyn

Evelyn was a 53-year-old female who had a career in education. She had a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry, and after teaching for over a decade, she decided to advance her career in educational administration. She has a Master of Science in Educational Administration and is pursuing a Doctor of Education in Educational Technology. This participant has been married for 22 years and has four children. She values formal education and professional training, which she said are key ways to develop human capital. She noted that acquiring family life education is also her greatest desire, and participating in such and related programs has been enriching. Her deepest desire is to have a family established on the principles of the word of God, even as she works closely with her husband to enable others to do the same.

Frank

Frank was a 43-year-old male with a military career, pastoral ministry, and chaplaincy. After serving in the United States Navy for eight years, he pastored a church and now works as a full-time chaplain. He had a Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting, a Master of Divinity with a concentration in Chaplaincy, and a Doctor of Ministry degree. This participant had been married for 14 years and had three children. His pastoral role and chaplaincy duties have enabled him to acquire much human capital through family life education and leadership development. He says the journey has been a tough but rewarding one. His passion helps other pastors and couples in the church to develop adequate skills for their work and marriage life.

Gillian

Gillian was a 45-year-old female who had a career in nursing. She has a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing and a Master of Science in Nursing, focusing on psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner. She was pursuing a Doctor of Nursing Practice in the same specialty. This participant has been married for 22 years and has one young adult and two teenage children. She had a significantly rich family life and career advancement experience that she was so happy to share during the data collection process. Her passion was to develop a career in business by starting an independent psychiatric mental health practice while nurturing a family that loves and serves God. She is also passionate about serving her community and other nations via Christian missions while creating an honorable and sustainable marriage relationship with her husband and a well-balanced family.

Henry

Henry was a 38-year-old male with a career in accounting and IT auditing. After obtaining his Bachelor of Science in Accounting and working in corporate America for eight

years, he received his Master of Science in Information Technology with a specialty in IT Audits. Henry is pursuing other graduate certificates to advance his career in Accounting and Audits. He had been married for eight years and had two children. His passion is to develop his career in accounting and IT audits while training his children to become exemplary children among their peers. He also desires to create an honorable and sustainable marriage relationship with his wife.

Isabel

Isabel was a 38-year-old female who had a career in nursing. She had two Bachelor of Science degrees, one in Microbiology and one in Nursing. After working as a nurse for five years, Isabel desired to advance her career in nursing. She is currently pursuing a Master of Science in Nursing, with a focus on Family Nurse Practitioner. This participant has been married for 10 years and has five children. Her passion is to develop a career as a family nurse practitioner while serving her community in outreach programs that enhance both the spiritual and social life of children, not leaving out her children whom she desires to have the best education, get married to responsible spouses, and have lucrative careers.

Jack

Jack was a 50-year-old male who had a career in Christian pastoral ministry. He had two master's degrees and was pursuing a doctorate. After obtaining his Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology and Counseling and a master's in theology and biblical studies, Jack taught in a Bible institute for over a decade. He later desired to pursue another master's in psychology, which he completed and is currently completing his doctorate in organizational leadership. This participant has been married for 20 years and has two children. His mission is to develop strong

and healthy families while developing leadership for effective ministry. He is passionate about human capital development, primarily through family life education and leadership development.

Kingsley

Kingsley was a 44-year-old bi-vocational male. He had established a career in nursing and pastoral ministry. Kingsley had two Bachelor of Science degrees, one in Zoology and one in Nursing, and after working as a nurse for four years, he desired to advance her career in nursing. She is pursuing a Master of Science in Nursing, focusing on Nursing Administration. This participant has been married for 12 years and has four children. His passion is to develop a career as a nurse administrator while serving in his capacity as a pastor of his local congregation. He also leads many community outreach programs to advance the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom of God. He desires to develop and lead a family that serves God and is relevant to their community in every aspect of humanity.

Leah

Leah was a 34-year-old female who had a career in pharmacy. Having had a Bachelor of Science degree in business and economics and working for about five years, she chose to blend her business and economics career with pharmacy practice. She got a job as a pharmacy technician and worked at this job while going to school. She enrolled in a pre-pharmacy program, and she eventually went to pharmacy school where she chose a dual degree option: The regular Doctor of Pharmacy path and an MBA, with an entrepreneurship concentration. She graduated from the Pharmacy program and works as a registered pharmacist while completing her master's in business administration. She has been married for eight years and has two children. Her passion was to be a business leader in the pharmaceutical industry while raising their children. She actively seeks opportunities for growth as a leader in her career.

Results

Data was collected from 12 graduate school students through individual interviews, focused-group interviews, and journaling. The data collected through both interview approaches were manually transcribed, manually coded, and analyzed to identify common themes and patterns. To triangulate the data, data from journal entries was coded and analyzed to identify themes and patterns. To analyze the data collected from all three methods effectively, I applied three approaches to reading the LED: the holistic reading approach, the selective reading approach, and the detailed reading approach (van Manen, 2016). I converted the data from the full LED into an anecdote and then applied the three approaches to generate meaningful themes from the text. The thematic data analysis technique described by van Manen (2016) categorized the data to align with the research questions. The findings from all three data collection methods were categorized into common themes and patterns based on the similar themes that emerged from the analyses. The codes and patterns from all the data collection methods were developed into five major themes and 19 sub-themes. Table 5 below summarizes open codes, five major themes, and 19 sub-themes.

Table 5

Themes and Sub-Themes

Theme	Subthemes				
A Successful Life	Career Advancement	Financial Increase	Family Time	Interpersonal Relationships	Parenting Skills
Successful Families and Careers	Family Bonds	Family and Career	Communication Skills	Time Management	Problem-Solving Skills

Time, Energy, and Money	Time Commitment	Emotional Energy	Financial Investment
The Lack of Money, Time, and Motivation	Lack of Money	Lack of Time	Lack of Motivation
Family, Church, and Professors	Family Members	The Church	College Professors

A Successful Life

Human capital development as a significant component of a successful and fulfilled life was consistent in all the data collection approaches. All participants acknowledged that their efforts to pursue human capital development have resulted in a more successful and fulfilling life. Charity's response states:

Human capital development represents the process of enhancing one's knowledge, skills, and personal attributes. It involves continuous learning, self-improvement, and skill-building to navigate the complex challenges of balancing various roles effectively.

Human capital development is not just about acquiring knowledge but about using it to enrich one's personal and professional life.

Most participants also noted that their participation in family life education and leadership development programs has enhanced individual capabilities to provide solutions to customers (Philips & Philips, 2015).

David explained, I see my wife and children every day as my customers and desire to provide the best services for them as much as I can. This makes me consistently seek family life education programs to attend.” Kingsley responded:

The good thing about most of these family life education programs is that personal and professional skills such as communication and interpersonal relationships are taught,

which I have applied to my life, family, and work to create a more successful and fulfilled life.

Even though most participants indicated that success and fulfillment are subjective matters in life, 10 out of 12 participants mentioned three common sub-themes that they used to determine their success and fulfillment due to investment in human capital. The three sub-themes include career advancement, financial increase, and family time.

Career Advancement

The first sub-theme, career advancement, emerged from 10 out of the participants who indicated in their journal responses that they had a significant career advancement or were looking forward to it upon completing their academic program. Charity wrote, “The development of leadership skills has opened opportunities for career advancement. I have been able to take on more significant roles and responsibilities at work.” On a similar note, Leah, when asked if there was anything she would love to add that was not yet mentioned, said:

I think I developed a significant amount of human capital during my pharmacy school program because I can serve my clients well. In every single class that I took, I acquired a lot of knowledge that has enabled me to become a young professional today. I also participated in many leadership development programs through my school and do the same for family life education programs at my church. All these combined have enabled me to get a job as a staff pharmacist, which is far more fulfilling than what I have had in the past. This is a significant career advancement for me.

Leah further explained how her MBA program also consisted of several leadership development courses, which have prepared her immensely, adding, “as we speak, I am looking forward to advancing into another higher role when I complete the MBA program in December this year.”

There were five Christian ministry and chaplaincy participants in this study, four of whom had advanced seminary degrees. During all data collection approaches, these four participants indicated how their seminary education was a form of human capital that they acquired, and it had paid off in how they now do ministry work. Jack stated:

My seminary education several years ago was very pivotal to my success in the ministry. I learned both pastoral counseling and leadership skills and tools that have helped me for over two decades to become a successful minister of the gospel.

Frank responded:

After serving in the U.S. Navy for eight years, I wanted to become a military chaplain, but at least a Master of Divinity was required. I spent three years acquiring knowledge and practical skills to serve as a chaplain. Now, I have a very nice and fulfilling career as a chaplain serving in the military.

Frank also explained how he was looking to advance to the director role immediately after his doctorate was completed. On the same note, David said, “I acquired significant knowledge and leadership skills through my seminary education that helped me to develop a career in ministry leadership training and development for other Christian leaders around the world.”

Financial Increase

All participants asserted that one of the benefits of developing human capital for them has been a significant increase in their income, which led to a more fulfilling and prosperous life for them. Henry stated:

I worked for over eight years as an accountant with my undergraduate degree and barely lived a fulfilled life. However, when I completed a master's degree in IT Audit, it landed

me a well-paid remote job. I have been working from home now for four years and have a good salary.

Evelyn's input here was impressive as she explained her journey in pursuing human capital:

I have worked as a middle school teacher for over a decade but did not within any significant increase in my income. However, when I completed a master's in educational technology, I immediately had a salary increase, and I am looking forward to another increase when I complete my doctorate.

A more interesting view is how they related a significant increase in their finances to a successful and fulfilled life. Isabel said, "With my BSN, I do not have to work so hard to make good money for my family. I work an average of four days a week and have three days to spend exclusively with my children.

On the same experience, Kingsley said:

It was quite relieving for my family when I could finally work fewer hours after several years, but still make a salary big enough to take care of my household. I also have more time to spend serving in the church, which is what gives me more satisfaction.

Family Time

Most participants associated a more successful or fulfilled life with quality time for themselves and their families. Family time was a significant point that 11 of the 12 participants mentioned. Angela said:

I quit working several nights a week and could get a job that I work in the day while our children are in school. My entire family spends our evenings and nights together, especially when we must be in church.

Brittany, even though she was still a pharmacy school student, said, “I know that I will have a good job after school that would enable me to work fewer hours and still have significant time to spend with my husband and children.” These participants all share common values, especially when it comes to being with their families. Jack said:

I measure how successful I have become in life by the positive impact that I create in the lives of my children. Spending time with my children is more important than money. So, having a job that allows for flexibility in my schedule and enough time to spend with my family is all I even sort for.

As they shared their experiences in the focus group interview, Charity expressed that becoming a family nurse practitioner was one of the best things that had ever happened to her:

As a mother of two children and waiting for the 3rd, utilizing telemedicine platforms to work from home has been very fulfilling. I spend more time with my children and husband when he returns from work. It allows me to strengthen my family bonds by participating in family-focused discussions. I feel more satisfied when I am available for our children. This is a lot more different compared to when I was an RN. I used to work all sorts of shifts as an RN and barely had time for my spouse and one child.

Successful Families and Careers

Participants in this study were enthusiastic about the topic and freely shared how family life education and leadership development programs have enabled them to become who they are. All 12 participants indicated that, even though it has been very challenging and cannot claim to have arrived at the ultimate satisfactory point in their lives, they can at least attest that they have relatively stable and prosperous families and careers. Isabel stated:

One may think that it is a waste of time to participate in some of these family life and leadership development programs, but it is worth it. The knowledge I have gained just by participating in the family life seminars and retreats through our church has been very helpful in my personal and professional life.

All participants listed some of their most valuable moments and how family life education and leadership development programs have enabled them to become as successful as they are in their families and careers. Seven powerful subthemes were extracted from the data collected from all three data collection approaches. As participants expressed, these subthemes are key contributing factors to the success of their family lives and careers. These skills were either learned in a family life education program, a leadership development program, or both.

Interpersonal Relationship

Interpersonal relationships are a skill every human needs to learn to function effectively in society. This subtheme emerged from all participants, but Angela was passionate about sharing this aspect of her experience:

I remember when I just arrived in the United States in 2015 to meet my husband. It was very challenging for me to effectively relate with my husband and his friends, plus the cultural differences at work. Eventually, I started learning this skill. I sought every opportunity to nurture this aspect of my life, both from marriage and relationship seminars and from professional development programs at work. I listened to YouTube videos on how to improve interpersonal relationship skills, both in my family and at work. Eight years later, I have learned so much from participating in those programs.

Kingsley shared a similar experience in his undergraduate nursing program journey:

When I first started nursing school, as an immigrant, I needed to learn the special skills to relate with people in the United States. I can only look back and thank God for helping me back then. This special skill of interpersonal relationships has enabled me to become a successful pastor today.

Many others expressed that participating and learning from family life education and leadership development programs greatly enhanced their skills.

Parenting Skills

Parenting is a major aspect of every man or woman who desires to have children; given that all participants had children, this point featured in all the responses. Participants expressed the invaluable need to learn how to be a parent in the United States. Charity clearly expressed her mind when discussing the benefits of family life education programs:

Family life education has provided me with valuable insights and strategies to enhance my parenting skills. I have learned effective communication techniques with my husband and children, child development knowledge, and conflict resolution strategies among children, all of which have helped me create a harmonious family environment. For example, I learned about the importance of age-appropriate expectations and how to adapt my parenting style to my toddler's developmental stage. This helped me to implement more patience and empathy in my interactions with my toddlers. I started to break tasks into smaller, manageable steps, making completing them easier.

Frank expressed a similar opinion about parenting in the United States:

I needed to be more intentional about how I raise my children. So, I told my wife that we needed to pick a church where we could fellowship frequently with the kids. What is amazing about this church is not just what our children learn, but what we as parents

learn. We attended seminars and parenting workshops about three times a year to learn the leadership and parenting skills that have made us both successful as parents and employees.

Family Bonds

Strong family bonding was another subtheme under this theme. Nine of the 12 participants mentioned that through family life education, they have learned how to create family time that strengthens the bonding between everyone in the family. Evelyn stated, “Through family life education, I have had opportunities to strengthen my family bonds. Participating in group discussions with other parents has allowed me to share experiences and learn from others, ultimately improving my family dynamics.” Brittany affirmed that as a young woman who married at a relatively younger age, family life education programs became her favorite because she needed to learn the dynamics of a young family:

My husband and I consistently sought mentors and counselors who could enable us to navigate the rough waters in our early days of marriage. I learned how to create significant time for my family, how to communicate with my husband and children, and how to identify their needs, to name a few. I mean, those mentors and pastors helped us a great deal.

Henry was exceedingly excited to share his experience for the past decade as he started planning for his family, “I learned from the very beginning through marriage seminars that I should take my family seriously, and that is what I have done to date.”

Family and Career

Balancing family and career was another strong point that most participants recalled learning from family life and leadership development programs. Leah said, “I have learned time

management and organization skills that have been invaluable in balancing my roles as a mother and a graduate student. This has enabled me to fulfill my academic commitments while still being present for my children.” While acknowledging that it is easy to be carried away by one and quickly forget about the other responsibilities, Gillain said:

Our church has an annual convention that focuses exclusively on family dynamics, and balancing family and work has been a major point of emphasis in the past years. Those conventions help my husband and I to properly structure our time to be able to pursue our unique careers while not neglecting our responsibilities as parents.

Everyone in the focus group panel discussion shared the need for balancing family and career and acknowledged that they have learned how to navigate these two areas over time as they learn from failures as well as from family life education and leadership development programs that they have been a part of over the years.

Communication Skills

Communication seems to be another hot point that every participant mentioned. It was another point during the focus group interview. Jack, David, and Charity shared very similar experiences. Communication was also a skill that participants confirmed that they learned from both family life education and Leadership development programs. Charity said, “Participating in leadership development programs over the years has equipped me with improved communication and interpersonal skills. This has been instrumental in my professional role, enabling me to lead effectively, collaborate with colleagues, and advocate for my team.” Gillian said:

It has also helped me discover my leadership style, which is that of a transformational leader. This newfound understanding has been instrumental in both my personal and

professional life, especially working as a Nurse Practitioner in an outpatient primary care clinic. I have learned to become a more effective and empathetic communicator.

Following the conversation, David added that “as a transformational leader, I understand the importance of active listening, fostering open dialogue, and providing constructive feedback.”

Frank said:

One of the major skills that has enabled me to become a successful chaplain and father is the ability to communicate with clarity of purpose. I learned this through family life education and leadership development programs while serving in the military and as the lead pastor of a church.

Time Management

Effective time management is a subtheme that every participant mentioned as a skill learned from family life education and leadership development seminars. Angela said, “Leadership development programs have emphasized the importance of time management and prioritization, a skill that has been essential in balancing my responsibilities as a full-time employee, graduate student, and family caretaker.” David said, “I will never forget when I used to be a victim of perpetual procrastination until started taking on significant leadership roles in my family and career. It was then that I understood the importance of proper time management.”

Problem-Solving Ability

Enhanced problem-solving emerged from 10 out of 12 participants in all three data collection approaches. Leah articulated that:

As a busy mother, wife, student, and employee, I encounter a multitude of challenges daily. Through continuous learning and skill-building through leadership development programs, I have developed the ability to approach problems more strategically and find

creative solutions. Human capital development has improved my problem-solving skills, enabling me to address challenges more effectively.

Time, Energy, and Money

“Time, energy, and money” was another major theme that emerged from the interviews, particularly from research questions SQ3 and SQ4. For both family life education and leadership development, graduate students identified time, personal effort, and money as major investments that they have made. Angela articulated:

I remember when my husband and I drove for over three hours from Virginia Beach to Baltimore to catch our flight to Dallas for a three-day ministry leadership conference. That trip involved a lot of sacrifices, the sacrifice of time, energy, and money. Now, seven years later, we have become much better in ministry.

In the same line with Angela, David recounted:

I have spent over ten years in school and more than two hundred thousand dollars to acquire my education, and I must also say that it cost me a lot of sleepless nights. Most of those nights have been very exhausting, especially when I have also spent the entire day at work.

Different individuals explained their sacrifices or investments in the pursuit of human capital development through family life education and leadership development, but most of what they said could be summarized in three significant words: time, energy, and money. Table 8 below displays this theme and subthemes.

Time Commitment

Time investment was a subtheme that emerged from every participant when asked to explain some of the investments they have made in their effort to pursue family life education

and leadership development. Leah said, “I have invested a significant amount of time to attend family life education and leadership development classes, workshops, seminars, and conferences which has required balancing my school, work, and family responsibilities.” Henry, who was completing a graduate certificate in executive leadership, said, “ I spend an average of 10 hours a week to complete my coursework in the leadership certificate that I am currently doing.” While Brittany said:

By the time I graduate from my pharmacy school program, I would have invested a total of six solid years, a training and education process that has equip me to become a better leader or person than I was six years ago.

Doctoral students admitted that it took them an average of two years to acquire their master's degrees, and Jack said, “It would take every one of us a minimum of four years to obtain a doctorate. That is a lot of time to sacrifice.”

Emotional Energy

“Emotional energy,” as Charity puts it, was another subtheme that all seven participants in the focused-group interview admitted having consistently invested in their quest for human capital. Charity said:

Pursuing family life education and leadership development (or I would say human capital development in general) often involves delving into personal emotions and experiences. I have invested emotional energy in reflecting on my family dynamics, career options, and just how my life would become in the future.

Angela, filled with emotions at this point, reflected on how much personal emotional energy she had invested in figuring out the challenges that often presented before her as a student. She said,

“It can be very exhausting at times when you need to juggle several tasks within the week, every week, for several years.”

Financial Investment

Financial investment was another significant subtheme that all 12 participants mentioned in all three approaches of data collection. Evelyn stated, “Enrolling in family life education programs often incurs costs for materials, resources, and courses. This financial commitment has been made to ensure quality education.” Without money, Kingsley said, “One cannot accomplish much in this age and time.” Adding, “I have spent so much money out my pocket to pay my way through school, attend marriage and family seminars and conferences, as well as ministry leadership development programs.” To support a similar view, Henry said:

Executive leadership development programs are not cheap. A five-day course for some programs could cost as much as \$6000. But that is what it takes to become an excellent leader who is relevant to the people. I invest an average of \$ 5,000.00 every year to increase my professional worth through leadership development programs. Also, my wife and I put it in our budget to spend about \$2000.00 on marriage seminars every year.”

The Lack of Money, Time, and Motivation

Some of the interview questions required participants to discuss major challenges in their pursuit of human capital development through family life education and leadership development. From these questions, another major theme emerged: The lack of money, the lack of adequate time, and the lack of personal motivation are major limitations that graduate school students face as they pursue human capital development. All participants mentioned that these three factors were their major limitations. Isabel said:

I would love to continuously add value to myself through human capital development programs, but there are a few challenges because I do not have the money that is needed all the time. Also, my school, work, and family demands leave me with little or no time to attend those personal development programs.

To buttress this theme, Angela said, “I think I need a coach because I do not have the personal motivation to attend those programs.” This theme and subthemes are displayed in Table 6 below.

The Lack of Money

Every participant reported that one of the major limitations for them to pursue human capital development was the lack of money. Frank said:

I have four children, I am a student, and I have all these student loans to work and pay for. Plus, my household and personal challenges. These factors contribute to the lack of sufficient funds for me to take trips and seminars that would enrich my life.

Brittany added to this point by recalling:

It has been very financially challenging for my husband and for the past six years that I have been a full-time student. He takes on all the financial responsibilities and at the end of the day, we are left with nothing to invest in personal, family, and leadership development programs. I hope that our financial situation will soon change when I graduate from pharmacy school and get a job.

The Lack of Time

Another factor mentioned by 10 of the 12 participants was that the lack of adequate time prevented them from actively pursuing family life education and leadership development programs. Henry explained the nature of work, family, and school demands and said, “This

would not just be a good timing for me to take on additional activities because I do not have the time.” Evelyn did not give a reason far from those of the others as she said:

I work five days a week, I have teenagers to deal with, with this crazy Ph.D. program to finish under tight timelines. We do plan to create time for family life education and leadership development programs as soon as I am done with this degree program.

All others just wished they had more time to participate in more related programs and events.

The Lack of Motivation

The lack of motivation was another point that emerged. Angela seemed to be more focused on the present benefits of everything she does. She said:

At this point in my life and family, I am working on getting established financially and in my career, so I do not feel motivated to take up any activities or programs that are not adding that value immediately to me. Do not get me wrong, human capital development through family life education is very good, but right now, I do not feel motivated because I have other things that a more pressing.

Gillian said:

Even though I acknowledged the importance of human capital development through family life education and leadership development, I do not feel motivated enough to pay money to attend family life education programs that would add no immediate increase to their paychecks. I would rather attend programs that are free and offered by my church.

Family, the Church, and Professors

The theme that family members, the church community, and college professors are key support systems for graduate school students as they pursue human capital development emerged

when participants were asked to discuss the key support systems that have enabled them to pursue human capital over the years. As participants responded to this question and shared their other experiences, three elements kept resurfacing: their spouses and some siblings, their church congregations, and their college professors. Angela and Leah used the same words, “My husband has been very supportive.” While Gillian recounted her experience with her husband, “My husband has been exceptionally supportive of my educational endeavors, especially going through nursing school from undergraduate through master’s and even now in my doctorate program. I think that I would never have done this without him.” All participants also acknowledged that as graduate school students, their professors have been very helpful as well. The church community input was much more on the family life education programs. Table 7 below is a summary of this theme and subthemes.

Family Members

The subtheme of family members emerged first as the key support system for graduate school students as they pursue human capital development. All participants were happily married individuals who spoke highly of their immediate family support. Isabel said, “I have five children and without the constant support of my husband, I would not be in school.” Jack said, “My school and work have been very challenging. If my wife was not though, I would not have accomplished much going through school.”

The Church

The church community was another subtheme. All participants also identified as being members of a church that supported them in one way or another. Leah said, “Before we got married, our church offered us free pre-marital counseling and education classes which were led by the pastors of the church. Those sessions helped us to understand the dynamics of Christian

marriage and family.” On this point, David said, “We have a whole department in our church responsible for all marriage and family affairs. That department was very helpful to us and has continuously been helpful through the family life education programs that they offer.”

College Professors

College professors as a key support system was also another subtheme. All 12 participants indicated that their professors have been of great help in their academic journey. Kingsley said, “Education is a major way to develop human capital, and our college professors have been in the front lines to make this a reality in my life.” On this same point, Henry said:

Take college professors out of the equation and there will be bankruptcy of knowledge.

Human capital development cannot be complete without college professors. Even though

I do not have them in my life after taking their classes, their impact on my life remains.

Outlier Data and Findings

It is often expected that most research studies of this magnitude present data that is not consistent with the research questions. Even though this is considered unlikely, none of the 12 participants gave a response that was not related to any of the research questions. Thus, from the analysis of data from all three data collection methods, this study had no major outlying findings.

Research Question Responses

After the analysis of data from the three methods of data collection: individual interviews, focused-group interviews, and journaling, I coded the data to establish relevant themes that emerged. I further compared the emerging themes to all the research questions to determine any meaningful relationships between the research questions and the themes that were generated. All the themes were found to match the corresponding research questions.

Central Research Question

What are the lived experiences of graduate school students on developing human capital through family life education and leadership development? All 12 participants in the study stated that family life education and leadership development have been positive experiences filled with many challenges and sacrifices. Participants admitted that human capital development was vital to their lives because it gave them the capabilities needed to excel in life. All of them held the family in high esteem and added that family life education and leadership development programs had gone a long way to enable them to become more successful couples and parents, as well as more fulfilling careers. Charity stated:

As a 32-year-old mother, wife, full-time employee, and graduate student in a DNP program, my participation in family life education and leadership development programs has significantly shaped and enhanced my abilities to effectively navigate all these roles and work in different capacities by providing valuable skills and insights that have improved my personal and professional life.

Sub-Question One

What are the family life education experiences of graduate school students? All 12 participants indicated an overall positive experience with family life education programs except for a few occasions when some did not have a very good experience, mainly because of the program focus. However, they all held family in high esteem and explained that family life education programs have enabled them to become more successful couples and parents to their children. Angela stated, “Family life education programs have provided me with valuable knowledge, tools, and strategies to enhance my marriage relationship as well as improved my parenting skills, given that I am a mother of two young boys.”

Sub-Question Two

What are the leadership development experiences of graduate school students? All 12 participants admitted that they have had some very good moments and some not very good moments in their leadership development journey. However, they expressed an overall positive outcome in their pursuit of leadership development. Henry said:

With over a decade in professional accounting and now IT Audits, I cannot trade my experience for anything else because it has taken me several years and energy to develop the level of human capital I have now, especially through both professional and academic leadership development programs.

Sub-Question Three

What are the investments of graduate school students in pursuing family life education? All 12 participants in this study were married individuals with at least one child. Participants indicated that family has been of immense importance to them and that they have spent a significant amount of time, energy, and financial and material resources to pursue family life education programs. Jack said:

As a husband, father, and pastor, I have invested over 30 years and a significant amount of financial and material resources to develop myself in every way so that I can continue to be a loving husband, responsible father, and relevant pastor who ministers to other couples and families as well.

Sub-Question Four

What are the investments of graduate school students in pursuing leadership development? All the participants observed formal education as a significant way to develop human capital. As graduate students, all noted that leadership development is an important aspect

of their education and career. Time, money, and other resources have been critical elements of their investments. Leah said:

I have sacrificed a lot of time, money, and energy to acquire education and professional development training. I have participated in several student leadership development programs and even served as the vice president of the students' association in my school. There are several times that I have paid money to attend leadership development seminars, just so that I can improve upon my productive capabilities.

Summary

This chapter covered the results and data analysis from three methods of data collection: individual interviews, focused-group interviews, and journalling of 12 graduate school students who were all married individuals with at least one child. The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of graduate school students on developing human capital through family life education and leadership development. I answered one central research question and four sub-questions using the LED model postulated by van Manen (2016) to analyze the responses from individual interviews, focused-group interviews, and journalling data collection methods. Detailed data analysis and coding resulted in five major themes and 19 sub-themes from all three data analysis methods. These themes are: Successful life; successful families and careers; time, energy, and money; the lack of money, time, and motivation; and family members, the church, and college professors. None of the 12 participants gave a response that was not related to any of the research questions. Thus, from analyzing data from all three data collection methods, this study had no major outlying findings.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Overview

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to explore the lived experiences of graduate school students on developing human capital through family life education and leadership development in the Washington, DC Metropolitan Area. This chapter presents a detailed discussion of the study's results in six subsections: a summary of thematic findings, interpretation of findings, implications of the results for policy and practice, empirical and theoretical implications, limitations and delimitations, and recommendations for future research. The chapter ends with a conclusion summarizing the study from chapters one through five.

Discussion

This section contains a discussion of the findings concerning the themes that were developed in chapter four. This discussion about the emerging themes is based on my ideas, some of which are supported by empirical and theoretical literature and sources. This section is organized in the following order: a summary of thematic findings, interpretation of findings, implications for policy and practice, empirical and theoretical implications, limitations and delimitations, and recommendations for future research.

Summary of Thematic Findings

Five major themes and 19 subthemes emerged from the findings of this study. The first theme is a successful life. This theme emerged from responses to the central research question: What are the lived experiences of graduate school students on developing human capital through family life education and leadership development? This theme had three subthemes that participants used to express how they viewed a successful and fulfilled life. They are career advancement, financial increase, and family time. The second theme is successful families and

careers. The theme emerged from sub-question one: What are the family life education experiences of graduate school students? and sub-question two: What are the leadership development experiences of graduate school students? This theme was further explained by using seven sub-themes: interpersonal relationships, parenting skills, family bonds, family and career, communication skills, time management, and problem-solving ability.

The third theme is time, energy, and money. This theme emerged from responses to sub-question three: What are graduate school students' investments in pursuing family life education? And sub-question four: What are the investments of graduate school students in pursuing leadership development? The theme is further discussed in three sub-themes: time commitment, emotional energy, and financial investment. The fourth theme is the lack of money, time, and motivation. This theme emerged from interview questions developed to explore sub-questions three and four. The theme also has three sub-themes, which are the lack of money, the lack of time, and the lack of motivation. The fifth theme that emerged is family members, the church, and college professors. This theme was also discussed in three sub-themes: family members, the church, and college professors.

Interpretation of Findings

Five major themes and 19 subthemes emerged from the findings of this study. These findings further generate four major interpretations, which are: human capital development is inevitable for the success and fulfillment of individuals in life, organizations would benefit more from investing in human capital development, family life education and leadership development are significant approaches to developing human capital, the church community plays a significant role in human capital development, and spouses who collaborate help each other acquire human capital easily. These interpretations are discussed in more detail.

A Successful and Fulfilled Life

Human capital development is the process of acquiring education, training, and skills that enable individuals to become more productive in organizations and society (Berker, 1964, 1993; David et al., 2021; Schultz, 1961, 1993). From this observation, any form of education and training that enables an individual to acquire relevant skills is human capital development. It would also be safe to say that human capital begins from early childhood and continues throughout the individual's life. Therefore, the knowledge and skills that individuals acquire in life aid in becoming successful and more fulfilled. The findings of this study indicated that human capital inevitably leads to a successful and more fulfilled life as individuals advance in their careers, have a significant financial increase, and have more time to spend with their families. Conversely, when individuals fail to acquire the necessary education, knowledge, and skills that would enable them to advance in their careers or have a significant financial increase, they remain less fulfilled. A possible inference from this observation is that human capital development facilitates a successful and more fulfilled life.

Organizational Benefits

Organizations that have understood the importance of human capital development would benefit immensely. The literature review recorded that most contemporary organizations have increased their investments in human capital (Michael et al., 2021). This increase in the investments in human capital is evident as employers are increasingly making investments in formal education to impart explicit knowledge to employees (David et al., 2021; Jung & Lee, 2019; Michael et al., 2021). Human capital development enables employees of an organization to be more effective and efficient at their jobs. Most employers desire teams that exhibit a high level of interpersonal relationships, communication skills, better time management, and problem-

solving ability. This study's findings indicated that family life education and leadership development enable individuals to develop these skills and more. Thus, organizations that promote family life education and leadership development would eventually benefit from their employees because they would become more productive at work.

Significant Approaches

Family life education and leadership development are significant approaches to human capital development. The findings from the study indicate that human capital development inevitably leads to a successful and more fulfilled life and that family life education and leadership development enable individuals to become more successful in their families and careers. The inference from these two themes is that family life education and leadership development inevitably lead to increased human capital. This increase in human capital can be seen from the subthemes. Philips and Philips (2015) state that human capital is the capability of individuals to provide solutions to customers. The seven subthemes that emerged from family life education and leadership development are enhanced interpersonal relationships, improved parenting skills, strengthened family bonds, balanced family and career, enhanced communication skills, better time management, and enhanced problem-solving ability. These capabilities are those that enable individuals to serve their customers better; thus, the conclusion is that family life education and leadership development are significant approaches to developing human capital.

The Church Plays a Significant Role

The church community plays a significant role in developing human capital. Several churches have robust family life education programs that couples and family members can benefit from at a relatively cheaper rate or even free for some churches. Most church

organizations have well-developed curricula for children of all ages, youth, and young adults. They also have premarital education, marriage enrichment programs, and parenting programs. All participants in this study indicated that their churches have been a robust support system for them to acquire human capital, primarily through family life education. Most of them also pointed out that their churches have organized leadership training programs that benefit them in many aspects of life, particularly in their families and careers. As one who has been at the frontline of leading youths, young adults, premarital, and marriage enrichment programs in churches for over a decade, one of the most popular scriptures used to inspire participants has been Hosea 4:6, which states, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because you have rejected knowledge, I reject you from being a priest to me. And since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children” (English Standard Bible, 2001/2016). So, the church emphasizes the need for people to acquire relevant knowledge (human capital) in every aspect of life to do well and be fulfilled.

Spousal Collaboration Helps

Spouses who agree to work together in running their lives' affairs help each other to acquire human capital easily. All participants in this study indicated that their spouses have been of tremendous help in their pursuits of human capital development. Most of these individuals explained that their spouses had been supportive because of their collaborative efforts within the family unit. This supporting role of spouses aligns with the scripture: "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him" (English Standard Bible, 2001/2016). Thus, as it is the mind and will of God for spouses to work together, even so, those who collaborate enable each other to advance in human capital more efficiently. Another key scripture that discusses the benefits of working together is Ecclesiastes 4:9-12, which states:

Two are better than one because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him! Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken (English Standard Bible, 2001/2016).

This scripture explains the overwhelming benefit of teamwork. There are a lot of benefits for spouses who work as a team to coordinate their family's affairs. All the participants in this study expressed their joy from the support of their spouses through college and as they work to advance in their careers. In support of this view, Jesus Christ gave a resounding promise on the importance of agreement. Matthew 18:19 states, “Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven” (English Standard Bible, 2001/2016). This scripture comes into practice for the participants in this study because, as expressed, they agreed with their spouses in the things they do.

Implications for Policy and Practice

Even though this study was more practice-oriented than policy, there are implications for both policy and practice. Thus, this section discusses the implications for policy and the practice of human capital development through family life education and leadership development. This part of the chapter will focus on how leaders in human capital organizations and practitioners, as well as human capital students, could enhance the implementation of the policies that shape the practice of human capital development through family life education and leadership development.

Implications for Policy

Several leadership development degrees or certificate programs exist in colleges and universities and across higher learning institutions. Still, there are very few, if any, graduate school programs that focus on family life education. Unless a student signs up for such a degree

program, it is difficult to find family life education programs included in university curricula, as with leadership development programs. Thus, graduate school administrators should begin to think about having courses that will help all graduate school students acquire the necessary knowledge and skills that would enable them to be successful in their families. Key limitations for participants in this study were the lack of money, adequate time, and personal motivation. If educational organizations develop a policy that all graduate school students should take a couple of elective classes on family life education, it will yield a better student output. The graduate students would sign up for the classes, use their already awarded financial aid to pay, and have no choice but to be personally motivated to take the course. So, stakeholders in higher education are called upon to take this responsibility and encourage policymakers to develop and implement policies that will favor the development of human capital through family life education and leadership development for all graduate school students. The motivation to sign up for classes would positively impact the acquisition of human capital for graduate school students.

Implications for Practice

The practice of human capital development incorporates various activities that are intended to improve human resources. Such activities or processes include education, training, mentorship, and skill-building programs. The findings from this study indicated that participants had three significant limitations in their pursuit of human capital through family life education and leadership development. These are the lack of money, lack of adequate time, and lack of personal motivation. Thus, the cost of family life education and leadership development programs should be significantly subsidized. Participants should pay a considerably smaller fee to acquire such knowledge and skills. In this case, churches and nonprofit organizations should create a budget for such programs and train a large pool of volunteer workers to facilitate such

programs for participants. Colleges, universities, and other institutions of higher learning should offer those classes and make them available for all students who are enrolled in any degree program. This approach will enable more graduate students to take part in the programs.

The limitation of time and motivation can be ameliorated by offering non-practical aspects of the programs virtually. This way, students can attend from the comfort of where they are, mostly from their homes. This model, which most organizations have already adopted, helps reduce the time constraints of already busy participants. Family life educators and leadership development experts should intensify sensitization efforts to the target audience, making them aware of the necessity and importance of developing human capital through family life education and leadership development programs. People are generally motivated to participate in anything that would benefit them. So, instead of just designing more training programs, institutional leaders and practitioners should invest significant time and resources to make their target audience see and appreciate the importance of such programs.

Empirical and Theoretical Implications

This section aims to address the empirical and theoretical implications based on the findings of this study. Five themes emerged from the results. All five themes described the lived experiences of graduate school students on developing human capital through family life education and leadership development. These themes also corroborate the human capital theory as postulated by Becker (1964, 1993) and Schultz (1961, 1993), which was the theory that guided the study. The empirical and theoretical implications are described below.

Empirical Implications

The findings from this study indicated that human capital development inevitably leads to a successful and more fulfilled life; family life education and leadership development enable

individuals to become more successful in their families and careers; time, energy, and money are major investments in the pursuit of human capital development; the lack of money, the lack of adequate time, and the lack of personal motivation are major limitations that graduate school students face as they pursue human capital development; and that family members, the church community, and college professors are key support systems for graduate school students as they pursue human capital development. The first two of these five themes directly support the literature review. From the literature on human capital development, education was found to be an investment to accumulate human capital (Becker, 1964, 1993; David et al., 2021; Schultz, 1961), and it increases personal and personnel productivity, which eventually and inevitably increases wages in the labor market (Kim, 2021).

Two subthemes that emerged from the first theme directly support this view. All 12 participants in the study indicated that they experienced a significant career advancement and significant financial increase from investing in education. This experience led them to have significant time for their families and, thus, a better standard of living, according to the literature. Human capital can be measured by evaluating the standard of living of individuals and families (Hao et al., 2023; Jiang, 2019). Several studies have revealed that having college-educated children was associated with a thirty-one percent reduction in the hazard of parental death (David et al., 2021; Jiang, 2019). Jaiyeola and Bayat (2020) observe that among the non-income measures of poverty are indicators of living standards such as access to clean water, telecommunications, sound sanitation systems, and uninterrupted electricity. From the literature, education is one of the main approaches to increasing human capital, a process called human capital development (David et al., 2021; Stephens et al., 2020; Wesemann, 2022). The study showed that family life education and leadership development equipped participants to enhance

interpersonal relationships, balance family and career, enhance communication skills, better time management, problem-solving ability, and parenting skills.

The following two themes: time, energy, and money are major investments in the pursuit of human capital development; the lack of money, the lack of adequate time, and the lack of personal motivation are major limitations that graduate school students face as they pursue human capital development are corroborate with the literature as well. Human capital development requires individuals and organizations to invest vast sums of money and a substantial amount of time. It has been argued that education is the driving force for human capital development (David et al., 2021; Jung & Lee, 2019). However, several factors are involved in developing sustainable human capital. A comprehensive review of theoretical frameworks, including human and social capital theories (Jung & Lee, 2019), postulates that several academic and economic factors are involved in pursuing human capital development. Some of these factors often involve time, energy, financial, and material resources (Jung & Lee, 2019; Lim & Lee, 2022). The literature affirms the findings of the study that it takes significant time, energy, and money to acquire an education, which, according to the literature, is one of the main approaches to increasing human capital, a process called human capital development (David et al., 2021; Stephens et al., 2020; Wesemann, 2022). Lack of time, energy, motivation, or money would prohibit an individual from achieving the desired education, thereby limiting the pursuit of human capital development. The fifth theme, that family members, the church community, and college professors are key support systems for graduate school students as they pursue human capital development, is also true from the literature. The literature explains that a comprehensive review of theoretical frameworks, including human and social capital theories (Jung & Lee, 2019), is needed for human capital development.

Theoretical Implications

The theory that informed this study is the human capital theory, which postulates that human beings can improve upon their productive capacity by pursuing further education and acquiring more work-related skills and experience (Becker, 1964, 1993; Schultz, 1961, 1993). This theory means that if individuals get more education and acquire more work-related training and experience, they will inevitably function better, perform their tasks better, achieve more, and earn more. The findings from the study support the theory in every aspect. Two of the five themes directly support the theory. These two themes are that human capital development inevitably leads to a successful and more fulfilled life, and that family life education and leadership development enable individuals to become more successful in their families and careers. Family life education and leadership development are both aspects of human capital development. All 12 participants in this study indicated that they become better in several aspects of their families and careers after participating in relevant family life education and leadership development programs.

The human capital theory holds the perspective that, for human capital development to be effective, practitioners and human capital students should engage in processes that build the knowledge, talents, skills, competencies, and other capabilities that people possess (David et al., 2021; Kim, 2021). The findings from this study showed that individuals who participated in family life education and leadership development programs acquired relevant skills such as interpersonal relationships, family and work balance, communication skills, time management, problem-solving ability, and parenting skills. Thus, the findings from the study corroborate the postulated theory that explains how human beings can increase their productivity by acquiring education, knowledge, and work-related skills.

Limitations and Delimitations

There were some limitations and delimitations in this study. This section will discuss these limitations and delimitations. Limitations are weaknesses of the study that researchers cannot control. At the same time, delimitations are purposeful decisions that the researcher made to define the study's boundaries, thereby limiting the full scope of the study.

Limitations

A significant limitation of this study was the sample size stipulated by the institution for qualitative research studies. This study had 12 participants, which is a relatively small number. There are thousands of graduate school students in the Washington, DC Metropolitan area, so drawing a rigid conclusion from 12 participants would not represent the population fairly. A second limitation of the study was the use of one focus group of seven participants. My ideal choice for this study was two focus groups of six participants each. However, since all 12 participants could not be present for the focus group interview, I settled with one group of seven. A third limitation of this study can be attributed to the response time of the participants. Graduate school students were interviewed using open-ended questions which allowed them to discuss their experiences. However, I think that most of the participants did not have enough time to review and process the questions before responding. This relatively small processing time was a limitation that made them not give several points that exhausted their experiences.

Delimitations

The first delimitation in this study was that the pool of participants was all African American or Black, some of whom were immigrants or Africans living in the Washington, DC Metro area. Another delimitation was the restriction that participants must have at least one child. Undoubtedly, many individuals in the Washington, DC Metro area do not have children but have rich experience in developing human capital through family life education and

leadership development. Also, the delimitation of participants must be married. In this case, I know of an excellent young professional who has participated in several family life education and leadership development programs. However, she could not be part of the study because she was still single. Another delimitation was the requirement to focus the study only on graduate school students. This decision excludes several undergraduate students who have been married for several years, have children, and have accumulated substantial human capital through family life education and leadership development programs.

Recommendations for Future Research

For future research, a key consideration would be utilizing a quantitative methodology so that a large sample size can be captured as opposed to the qualitative method, which usually, as in the case of this study, requires a relatively small sample size. The use of a quantitative method would capture a large population of graduate school students through which a broader understanding of the participants' experiences can be obtained. Another consideration could be applying the multiple case study research design where several institutions of higher learning are thoroughly explored. That way, multiple graduate schools would be selected, and a detailed study would be conducted with students from those institutions. This model would also yield more precise findings about the graduate school students from a particular institution.

The current study explored family life education and leadership development in human capital development pursuits. The results obtained, therefore, were spread out. A more focused and detailed result could be obtained by exploring the lived experiences of graduate school students in developing human capital using only one parameter: family life education or leadership development. In such a case, all themes would be focused on one parameter instead of multiple, as with this study.

Conclusion

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of graduate school students on developing human capital through family life education and leadership development in the Washington, DC Metropolitan Area. The human capital theory developed by Becker (1964) and Schultz (1961) was the theory that guided the study. A hermeneutic research design was utilized to explore the lived experiences of 12 participants who were enrolled in an accredited graduate school program in the United States. Data was collected from all 12 participants using open-ended individual and focus group interview questions. A third approach of data collection used to triangulate the study was journalling. The data was analyzed using the thematic analysis approach proposed by van Manen (2016) by applying the LED model. The findings of this study indicated that human capital development is vital for a successful and fulfilled life and that family life education and leadership development enable individuals to become more successful in their families and careers. Graduate school students also encounter a few limitations that inhibit them from effectively pursuing human capital development, specifically through family life education and leadership development programs.

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Appendix A

IRB Approval

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

September 8, 2023

Francis Ngulefac
Heather Strafaccia

Re: IRB Exemption - IRB-FY22-23-1779 EXPLORING THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF GRADUATE SCHOOL STUDENTS ON DEVELOPING HUMAN CAPITAL THROUGH FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Dear Francis Ngulefac, Heather Strafaccia,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under the following exemption category, which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:104(d):

Category 2.(ii). Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met: Any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research would not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, educational advancement, or reputation; or

For a PDF of your exemption letter, click on your study number in the My Studies card on your Cayuse dashboard. Next, click the Submissions bar beside the Study Details bar on the Study details page. Finally, click Initial under Submission Type and choose the Letters tab toward the bottom of the Submission Details page. Your information sheet and final versions of your study documents can also be found on the same page under the Attachments tab.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any modifications to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty University IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by completing a modification submission through your Cayuse IRB account.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible modifications to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,
G. Michele Baker, PhD, CIP
Administrative Chair
Research Ethics Office

Appendix B
Recruitment Letter

Hello Potential Participant,

As a Doctoral Candidate in the School of Education at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Ph.D. degree. The purpose of my research is to explore the lived experiences of graduate school students on developing human capital through family life education and leadership development, and if you meet my participant criteria and are interested, I would like to invite you to join my study.

Participants must be:

1. Be at least 25 years old.
2. Graduate students
3. Must have participated in a leadership development program (either through work or school)
4. Must have participated in a family life education program (either in their church, seminars, or workshops)
5. Married individuals who have at least one child

Participants, if willing, will be asked to participate in:

1. A personal interview with me
2. A focused group interview with 6-8 other participants
3. Complete long-answer journal questions

It should take approximately 60 minutes to complete the personal interview, 90 minutes for the focused group interview, and 60 minutes for the journal questions.

- ✓ Names and other identifying information will be requested as part of this study, but the information will remain confidential.
- ✓ Would you like to participate? If yes, that would be great. Can we set up a time for an interview? If not, understand. Thank you for your time.
- ✓ An information sheet will be given to you at the time of the interview. The information sheet contains additional information about my research.
- ✓ Thank you for your time. Do you have any questions?

Appendix C

Informational Sheet

Title of the Project: Exploring the Lived Experiences of Graduate School Students on Developing Human Capital through Family Life Education and Leadership Development.

Principal Investigator: Francis Ngulefac, a Doctoral Candidate in the School of Education, Liberty University

Invitation to be part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be:

1. Be at least 25 years old.
2. Graduate students
3. Must have participated in a leadership development program (either through work or school)
4. Must have participated in a family life education program (either in their church, seminars, or workshops)
5. Married individuals who have at least one child

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.

What is the study about and why is it being done?

The purpose of the study is to explore the lived experiences of graduate school students on developing human capital through family life education and leadership development.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following:

1. Participate in an in-person, audio-recorded interview that will take no more than 60 minutes.
2. Participate in a focus-group, audio-recorded interview that will take no more than 90 minutes.
3. Participate in a journal question that will take no more than 60 minutes.

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 knowledge and understanding of the importance of family life education and leadership development. Also, the student will add to the body of knowledge in the field of human capital development.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The expected risks from participating 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. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- Participant responses will be kept confidential by replacing names with pseudonyms.
- Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in focus group settings. While discouraged, other members of the focus group may share what was discussed with persons outside of the group.

- Data collected from you may be used in future research studies and/or shared with other researchers. If data collected from you is reused or shared, any information that could identify you, if applicable, will be removed beforehand.
- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.
- Recordings will be stored on a password-locked computer for three years and then deleted. Only the researcher will have access to these recordings.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision on 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 or phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you, apart from focus group data, will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study. Focus group data will not be destroyed, but your contributions to the focus group will not be included in the study if you choose to withdraw.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is Francis Ngulefac. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him at [REDACTED]. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Heather Strafaccia, at [REDACTED].

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 IRB. Our physical address is Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA, 24515; our phone number is 434-592-5530, and our email address is irb@liberty.edu.

Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.

Appendix D

Individual Interview Questions

1. Please describe your experience developing human capital through family life education and leadership development. CRQ
2. How do you integrate family life education programs into your life? SQ1
3. What five key elements have you learned through family life education programs? SQ1
4. What challenges have you encountered in your effort to pursue family life education?
SQ1
5. How do you integrate leadership development programs into your life? SQ2
6. What five key elements have you learned through leadership development programs in your career? SQ2
7. What challenges have you encountered in your effort to pursue leadership development?
SQ2
8. What are some of the major investments that you have made in pursuing family life education? SQ3
9. How have your investments in pursuing family life education affected your life? SQ3
10. When considering these investments, what challenges have arisen as you pursued family life education? SQ3
11. What are some of the major investments that you have made in pursuing leadership development programs? SQ4
12. How have your investments in pursuing leadership development affected your life? SQ4
13. What are some of the challenges you have encountered in your investment in leadership development? SQ4

14. What are the key support systems and resources you have utilized over the years to develop human capital through family life education and leadership development? CRQ
15. Is there anything else you would like to add to our discussion today that we have not already communicated about? CRQ

Appendix E

Focus Group Questions

1. Describe your best experience developing human capital through family life education and leadership development. CRQ
2. What has been the most valuable aspect of family life education programs to you? SQ1
3. What is the most memorable moment in pursuing a family life education? SQ1
4. What has been the most treasured aspect of leadership development programs to you?
SQ2
5. What has been the most remarkable moment in your pursuit of leadership development?
SQ2
6. What is your motivation to invest in family life education? SQ3
7. How has investing in leadership development programs improved your effectiveness as a person? SQ3
8. Discuss two obstacles you have experienced that prevent you from investing in family life education. SQ4
9. What are the two most difficult moments that limit your ability to invest in leadership development programs? SQ4
10. What is one recommendation you will give for individuals who desire to pursue human capital development through family life education and leadership development? CRQ
11. Is there anything else you would like to add to our discussion today that we have not already communicated about? CRQ

Appendix F
Journal Prompts

1. Describe some of your most valuable moments in participating in family life education programs. SQ1
2. Describe some of your most valuable moments in participating in leadership development programs. SQ2
3. Explain five significant investments that you have made to pursue family life education. SQ3
4. Explain five significant investments that you have made to pursue leadership development. SQ4
5. Explain three benefits you have had due to human capital development. CRQ