

UNDERSTANDING LEADERS' EXPERIENCES OF A LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE: A  
COMBINATION OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP, CROSS-SECTOR  
COLLABORATION, AND CHARITABLE FOUNDATIONS AS CATALYSTS

by

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigated the integrated impact of Transformational Leadership (TFL), Cross-Sector Collaboration (CSC), and Foundations as Community Catalysts (CFC) within a Salem-based leadership institute. Through a qualitative case study involving 12 leadership institute attendees from 2020-2023, I explored the perceived presence of each of the three components, as well as their transformative potential in organizational and community change. I also examined participants' perceived strengths and weaknesses of the leadership institute. All participants were able to see the presence of TFL, CSC, and CFC, and their combination resulted in collaboration, deep relationships, and a change in mindsets. The findings suggest that the TFL component of the programming fostered positive culture change and trust; that CSC aspects provided a space for trust and vulnerability, which facilitated meaningful and impactful changes in the community; and are all facilitated by the philanthropic approach of CFC involving deep and pure intent, a solid reputation and influence in the community. Among the most prominent community changes include the development of a behavioral health program within a career technical high school in the area, and the revitalization of a community-wide youth festival that had ended and lost funding several years ago. Participants also acknowledged that long-lasting impact takes time, but they were excited about the potential. Participants considered the strengths of the Leadership Institute to be valuable vulnerability/relationships, accountability, the ability to address community problems, the impactful retreat and monthly sessions, and alumni involvement/opportunities. Weaknesses included the desire for more time/going deeper, requesting greater demands on participants, a more specific organizational focus, concerns over long-term sustainability, and improved mentoring/coaching.

This study lays the groundwork for future research, emphasizing the transformative potential of collaborative leadership, community engagement, and philanthropic initiatives. It underscores the impactful role of integrated leadership strategies in societal progress, advocating for ongoing research and application in varied settings to foster profound societal change.

**Keywords:** *Transformational Leadership, Cross-Sector Collaboration, Charitable Foundations, Community Catalysts, Organizational Change, Community-Based Change, Leadership Institute, Integrated Leadership Strategies, Qualitative Case Study,*

### **Dedication**

I dedicate this manuscript to leaders everywhere who desire to be transformational. I dedicate it to philanthropists who push their limits in what they can do for others and their communities. I dedicate this to communities far and wide who are frothed with darkness and confusion, may the ideas herein provide even glimmers of light to the potential that exists. I dedicate this to the work of Groundwork Leadership and the Rooted Institute, for being the literal catalysts of what this research espouses. I dedicate this to the community of Salem Oregon, a home away from home for me, and a place I have come to love deeply. Foremost, the leaders I have had the privilege to work with and get to know during my time here. Your contributions to this research, my thinking, and what will become of all this is unmatched. You are the secret ingredient of catalyzing transformation within communities and organization. Stay humble, committed, vulnerable, and consistent in your efforts. They may seem like small ripples, but I can assure you they will turn into waves of impact.

Lastly, I dedicate this manuscript to any and everyone mentioned in the following section, acknowledgments, without each of you this body of work does not happen. This is only the beginning.

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ABSTRACT ..... ii

Dedication ..... iv

Acknowledgments ..... v

List of Figures ..... xi

List of Tables ..... xi

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY ..... 12-33

    Introduction and Background ..... 12-24

    Problem Statement ..... 24

    Purpose of the Study ..... 26

    Research Questions ..... 27

    Assumptions and Limitations of the Study ..... 27

    Definition of Terms ..... 28

    Significance of the Study ..... 29

    Summary ..... 31

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW ..... 34-71

    Overview ..... 34

    Description of Research Strategy ..... 34

    Review of Literature ..... 35-56

    Biblical Foundations of the Study ..... 56-69

    Summary ..... 70

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHOD ..... 72-81

    Overview ..... 72

    Research Questions ..... 72

Research Design .....	73
Participants .....	73
Study Procedures .....	74
Instrumentation and Measurement .....	75
Data Analysis .....	77
Delimitations, Assumptions, and Limitations .....	78
Summary .....	81
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS .....	82-115
Overview .....	82
Descriptive Results .....	83
Study Findings .....	85-114
Summary .....	114
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION .....	116-147
Overview .....	116
Summary of Findings .....	116
Discussion of Findings .....	120-140
Implications .....	140
Limitations .....	142
Recommendations for Future Research .....	144
Summary .....	146
REFERENCES .....	148
APPENDIX A: Consent .....	157
APPENDIX B: Interview Script and Questions .....	160

**List of Figures and Tables**

Figure 1. Using Your Suffering Well ..... 58

Figure 2. Facing Fears ..... 60

Figure 3. The Fundamental Relationship: Transformational vs Transactional ..... 63

Figure 4. Collective Leadership Structures Embedded Within a Social Systems Network..  
..... 64

Figure 5. The Space Between: Healthy vs Toxic Community ..... 65

Figure 6. Understanding Relationships: Different Lenses ..... 66

Figure 7. Depiction of a Participants Drawing Describing the Combination of Study Elements  
..... 87

Table 1. Study Sample Demographic Information ..... 84

Table 2. Themes From Research Questions One, Two, and Four ..... 86

Table 3. Themes From Research Questions Three and Five ..... 101

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

### **Introduction**

“You can get a lot done when you don’t care about who gets the credit.” This statement hangs on the entryway at the office of a local philanthropist in Salem, Oregon. This individual has dedicated the latter half of his life to improving his community. In the last two years, the philanthropist’s community improvement efforts took a new turn: supporting the development and implementation of The Rooted Institute program to train organizational leaders and community influencers in transformational leadership and cross-sector collaboration. These leaders represented six sectors: non-profit, business, government, faith, education, and the general public. Rooted leaders were encouraged to return to their organizations to enact what they have learned, and they also met monthly in cross-sector collaboration to discuss ideas to help make a difference in tackling the big issues in Salem, such as homelessness, developing the future workforce, mental health, and city livability. The philanthropist provided the financial support and resources needed to facilitate such collaboration and collective learning in order to address the above issues. The Rooted Institute combined three established components: transformational leadership (TFL), cross-sector collaboration (CSC) and charitable foundations as catalysts (CFC) for change in the leaders’ organizations, as well as in the community of Salem. Although each of these components individually have been associated with organizational or community-based change, the combination of these three constructs has not been evaluated for its influence on organizational and community-based change. I propose that these three constructs work synergistically to create the conditions needed for and facilitate organizational and community change. Anecdotally, these improvements have been noted.

However, the purpose of the current study was to take a deeper look at participants' perceptions of the integration of TFL, CSC and CFC on leaders' organizations and the Salem community.

The community of Salem has its share of people in need. Over 1500 reported individuals experiencing homelessness. Salem is also home to the second largest school district in the state and has two of the historically lowest performing schools in the state, at one point they were at the absolute bottom in terms of graduation rates (<https://www.oregon.gov/ode/reports-and-data/students/pages/cohort-graduation-rate.aspx>). Salem suffers from both mental and physical health issues within families and organizations. High schools had record-setting (not in a good way) teen suicides just a couple of short years ago, seven out of forty-nine teen suicides in Oregon were from the Salem area (Lynn, 2018). Child abuse and malnourishment are more common than we think as a society. Amongst the dozens of senior homes and transitional care facilities in our city the elderly experience high levels of loneliness, and on top of it all the community is politically and economically divided. The literature refers to these challenges as "wicked problems," meaning they are problems lacking quick and/or easy solutions, and problems that lead to the worst outcomes in our society (Caufield & Brenner, 2019).

I share all of this to introduce myself as the researcher and why the context of this study is important to me. I have learned of these data points firsthand as I have saturated myself in the community of Salem for the past several years. With a background in peacebuilding and conflict resolution, I was recruited by a local philanthropist to assist them in what we now call, "community transformation work." This philanthropist has traditionally had giving priorities directed toward children and the elderly, however, he proposed that investing in community leaders, who combined are responsible for the overall well-being of a community, moves philanthropy beyond writing checks. Our belief is investing in leaders in this way has the

potential to impact communities in profoundly deeper ways. Therefore, the work we have done has been largely aimed at engaging and supporting our community in any way that lifts, inspires, and positions people and organizations to fundamentally change for the better. This is how we, as a philanthropic organization, focus transformation efforts —fundamental shift(s) toward positive potential. These fundamental shifts involve repairing dysfunction within the organization to create workplace conditions that encourage transformational leadership principles of authenticity, respect, interdependence, creativity, and collaboration (Maufi et al., 2019; Peng et al., 2018). Further, the fundamental shifts also involve making a secure foundation of authenticity, respect, interdependence, creativity, and collaboration among leaders within the community to create fertile ground for cross-sector collaboration to brainstorm programming to take on larger social issues and long-term challenges (Rei et al., 2019). Then, the financial backing and positive reputation of the charitable foundation serve as a catalyst to bring about the community programming efforts identified by cross-sector collaboration. The result should be improved organizations and an improved community, all trickling down from improvements in leadership. I will now review TFL, CSC and CFC in more detail.

### **Transformational Leadership**

TFL is centered around transformational-type change that leads to individuals being ready and willing to change as part of a collective transformation (Peng et al., 2020). The four elements of TFL are universal to leadership and have been found in multiple studies on the impact of TFL on relationships and outcomes (Gui et al., 2020).

The four elements of TFL that are essential in one's ability to lead in transformational ways are: Idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Busari et al., 2019). Faupel and Süß (2018) described these four

elements clearly. Idealized influence is regarded as the charisma of a leader which leads to respect and trust in part of the followers—the leaders are seen as role models (Faupel and Süß, 2018). Inspirational motivation is when leaders can clearly articulate a desirable future and goal for their followers. Specifically, how to potentially reach that future or goal, and the deeper meaning or need for the change (Faupel and Süß, 2018). Intellectual stimulation invites creativity and encourages the discovery of new ways to solving problems (Faupel and Süß, 2018). Lastly, individualized consideration is when the leader functions as a mentor to help followers manage their individual needs, challenges, and goals. The leader becomes invested in the personal growth of their followers and sees them as people (Faupel and Süß, 2018; Busari et al., 2019). Based upon the above examples, I am suggesting these four elements can transform organizations to be places of authenticity, respect, interdependence, creativity, and collaboration, which are fertile ground for productivity and performance (Chun et al., 2015; Gui et al., 2020). Authenticity, respect, trust, creativity, and collaboration are all assumed to indirectly be a part of the lived experiences of leaders in the proposed case study.

### **Cross-Sector Collaboration**

CSC is when sectors come together across business, nonprofit, education, government, and faith boundaries to share information and link capabilities and activities for the general public (Bauer et al., 2020; Reid et al., 2019). CSC is a community-based approach among various sectors to leverage talents, insight, resources, and perspectives to address large-scale and complex societal problems. While the general public is not technically a *sector*, they are an essential part of a community and are treated as a sector in the literature when it comes down to collaborative attempts within a community (Caufield & Brenner, 2019).

Building off the review of transformational approaches to leadership, leadership is an essential element to collaborative efforts. Often, the quality of collaboration reflects the quality of leadership. Poor leadership often means empty collaboration. Caufield and Brenner (2019) pointed out early in their research on applying a collaborative model to solving “wicked” problems (societal problems that are large-scale and complex) at the community level, that leadership is vital. Too often sectors compete for resources, attention, and neglect potential partnerships that can be formed (Brown et al., 2019). However, complex/wicked problems, require a multi-sector approach from a strategic and practical level. Having leaders come together consistently to learn and grow from one another, in addition to tackling these problems is why a theory like TFL is a compelling construct of this espoused research design, and why philanthropic entities can catalyze collective action (Brown et al., 2019; Hwag & Young, 2019).

Proverbs 11:14 describes that when there is no guidance from an abundance of counselors, people will fall (King James Bible, 1769/2015). Ultimately, having many counselors can be likened to CSC, which invites a multiplicity of “counselors.” Proverbs also uses the word “safety” in many counselors and CSC would agree that safety amongst a community is conceived when leaders from all parts of a community come together in the spirit of collaboration. CSC can involve the designing of new and collective approaches to having an impact within communities (Brown et al., 2019; Bryson et al., 2015). This is essential because the literature is scattered when it comes to consistency in successful CSC, the missing piece is a constant and universal methodology and framework. The leadership institute claims to have discovered a methodology and created a framework in response to these gaps. Further, CSC involves integrated belief systems based upon sectors, and a sense of formality in the process (Bauer et al., 2020; Malin & Hackmann, 2018). Meaning, each sector and/or contributor brings



something to the table they can contribute with from their perspective and experience, and that acting on CSC requires a formalization of purpose and objectives. It remains my opinion as a practitioner that collaboration for the sake of collaboration alone is not enough.

### **Charitable Foundations as Catalysts**

Charitable foundations may have the unique potential to impact communities. There are moral foundations upon which charitable giving is grounded, such as values, fairness, caring for the weak and poor, respect, etc. (Nilsson et al., 2020). CFCs engage these morals as they step up to make a difference in their communities. CFCs are uniquely positioned within their communities due to leadership influence, knowledge, and financial resources; foundations can convene people and expedite trust building (Fehrler & Przepiorka, 2013). CFCs are not only the mechanisms of empowerment, but they provide needed resources to get things done where ideas and passion alone are not enough.

As much potential for community change as CFCs hold, I posit that it is the combination of CFCs with TFL and CSC that holds the most potential. CFCs are typically part of, or connected to their communities in some way, as such they have a vested interest in their communities to thrive and improve. Whether interested in policy, the environment, vulnerable populations, education, research, etc. they have a unique relationship with communities unlike any other (Toepler, 2018). CFCs bring that vision and passion to inspire change. When they exercise TFL, it can create a secure foundation of authenticity, respect, interdependence, creativity, and collaboration among leaders within the community, forming a collective effort to better solve problems (Haase & Franco, 2020; Wu, 2021). Different sectors coming together in the name of collaboration have been seen as an important element of change within a community, as different expertise and perspectives provide a more thorough approach to tackle

issues. But the mobilization of sectors within a community begins with the leaders (Zhu et al., 2019). There can be challenges inhibiting cross-sector collaboration such as the geographic dispersion, and different logic that each sector brings. However, this is the importance of those instigating the collaboration and their ability to not only change themselves first and lead the charge, but to operate with TFL having a shared vision in mind like the leaders of United Way in the in Milwaukee, WI as they addressed their communities' number of high teen pregnancy (Caufield & Brenner, 2019). Therefore, it starts with leadership, one leader at a time—transformational leadership.

The idea is that charitable foundations and/or philanthropists can leverage their influence to act as transformational leaders within their community as they bring together leaders from various sectors. This cross-sector collaboration has been shown to improve complex social and cultural problems as listed in the opening paragraph (Caufield and Brenner, 2019). However, within CSC, there must be an intentionality to emphasize the need to invite teamwork, work through conflict, and generate a readiness for change (Bryson et al., 2015; Caldwell et al., 2008). Therefore, the integration of TFL seems especially appropriate to create those conditions. Although evidence exists for TFL, CSC, and CFC individually to impact organizational and/or community change, no studies exist examining the combination of these components as it relates to organizational and community change. Therefore, the main purpose of this research is to examine leaders' perceived impact of the combination of TFL, CSC and CFC on organizational and community change.

The leadership institute is as a representative program that integrates TFL, CSC, and CFC. The institute provides leadership programing, free to the community, and typically invites 20-30 leaders from across all sectors to participate each year. The program trains leaders in TLF

and CSC in an intensive initial three-day leadership retreat followed by monthly sessions for the span of 12 months. Each month leaders participate in leadership development training, learn from various speakers/panelists/presenters, engage in relevant activities etc. in addition to building relationships with one another. Also, during the monthly meetings, there is intentional cross-sector collaboration that takes place to address organizational and community challenges. As community improvement projects are determined, they are funded by the charitable foundation, and implemented within the community.

The leadership institute is less than three years old and has not been formally evaluated to assess its strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, the second purpose of this study is to assess leader participants' perceptions of the leadership institute's strengths and weaknesses. This feedback will help finetune the institute's programming to inform best practices.

### **Biblical Foundation**

The concept of moral responsibility that unites the three constructs of TFL, CSC and CFC reflects Biblical concepts. The ideals to be helpful to your fellow man, love your neighbor, and go about creating social good, are fundamentally Christian and point directly back to the Bible (King James Bible, 1769/2015; Macdonald & Howorth, 2017; and Yeung, 2018). The leadership institute stands on the belief that transformation as Zion as a concept and community, is a worthwhile endeavor to build. As will be discussed later in chapter two, Zion is a living fluid and becomes a process the children of God go through, it is not only a destination (King James Bible, 1769/2015, Psalms). Therefore, the transformation of "wicked problems" previously mentioned can be interpreted from a biblical lens as "kingdom work." Those engaged in the work are the leaders working across sectors with the CFCs – they are the "religious people" that Yeung (2018) describes as participating in volunteer work of being helpful to mankind. The

CFCs are assumed to be the mechanism of empowerment for all other leaders across sectors in a community to catalyze the readiness for change, the change that I am claiming leads to transformation (Maufi et al., 2017).

As addressed in the introduction, communities suffer with a myriad of challenges around the globe from mental health, poverty, lack of education, abuse, crime, and many other ailments not listed—wicked problems. The word “wicked” has obvious biblical roots, it is a term connected to other words such as, evil, and sin. The Bible suggests these types of challenges our communities face is due to the fall. When Adam and Eve sinned and were banished from the garden, that brought about pain, sickness, and suffering in all forms (Hah, 2019; King James Bible, 1769/2015, Genesis 3:24). Therefore, we are all in need of a Savior, not only to cleanse us from our sin, but succor us in our infirmities. As Christians we know this to be true, yet our world continues to suffer at all levels. The Bible says that we should bare one another’s burdens and love one another as He has loved us, even so much that the Lord describes no greater love hath man have, than to lay down his life for his brother (King James Bible 1769/2015, Galatians 6:2; John 3:34; and John 15:13) It is this same love that can unite communities in the way that God describes His children being of one heart and one mind in 1 Peter 3:8 (King James Bible, 1769/2015). There are not enough people coming together to solve their problems in transformative ways both organizationally and as communities.

People will struggle to come together collectively without strong leaders utilizing their power and influence in a helpful way (Dijke, 2020; Pieterse et al., 2009). There is no better example than Jesus Christ at being a transformational leader in this manner. From birth Jesus provided purpose to mankind not only in spirit, but even through a physical star in the east representing that we find Him—that we follow Him (KJV, 1769/2015, Matthew 2:2). As a boy,

He was found teaching priests in the temple, as record shows He was always leading and teaching (KJV, 1769/2015, Luck 2). He invited average people, fishermen, to follow Him and be as He was. He even invited tax collectors and those who chose to oppress to follow Him, there was no difference to in His eyes. He spent time with the forgotten and despised to demonstrate His unwavering love, He even spent time with sinners. “Let he who is without sin cast the first stone,” are His words to the pharisees as they brought Him a woman found in adultery (KJV, 1769/2015 John 8:7). At times, even His own disciples questioned His methods and behavior, from ministering on the sabbath to going into Samaria to teach (KJV, 1769/2015, Acts). Jesus gave His entire ministry as a servant leader teaching of transformation and providing a new purpose for mankind.

His final days were spent washing the feet of His apostles, suffering in a garden for the sins of the world, and ultimately left to die on a cross in the name of His father for all mankind. His life was enamored with transformational examples leading us to understand we can be transformed through Him. All that He has asked is that we turn our hearts to Him and feed His sheep. After his literal transformation of resurrection and rising on the third day and having ascended to His father, He again appeared to His disciples found fishing on the sea of Tiberius. After everything they had witnessed and been a part of, they still did not understand, much like we often do not understand what He wants from us. They went fishing. After having no catch in the day and telling them to cast their nets on the other side, they knew of whom they were speaking to. Peter swam into His master before the others as any of us would for a warm embrace. Yet, it was there on the seashore Christ asked him three times, “lovest thou me?” “Yeah Lord, thou knowest I love thee...” “Then feed my sheep.” Otherwise interpreted, if you love me then stop fishing! Stop prolonging what I have not only asked you to do, but what I have

shown you and sealed with my own blood! Go forth and teach! Be the transformation that I have called you to be (KJV, 1769/2015, John 21:16).

This decree has not expired for His children, any follower of Christ knows the beckoning come unto Him and spread His love. Christ is not only a great example of transformational leadership, He *is* transformational leadership. As the researcher and through my experience as a practitioner, I believe that our organizations and communities are in dire need for leaders of this caliber. While we may never be as perfect as He was, we certainly must try to become a leader as He was and is. Leaders who see beyond themselves see humanity and help catalyze an environment where others can meet one another in a reciprocating openness that invites creativity, connection, and love—the opposite of self-serving leadership we often see (Breslauer, 2018; Peng et al., 2018). Perhaps there is a responsibility within our communities to step up, bring people together, and exercise transformational leadership to bring about needed change.

The proposed research espouses the belief that those with substantial resources have the responsibility to engage philanthropically in their communities to catalyze change. The Bible teaches that we are to spare the poor and the needy, that we are to even defend them and bring justice to the sick and afflicted (KJV, 1769/2015, Psalms 72:13 and Psalms 82:3). The Lord does not speak in a matter of this being a choice, rather a commandment. There is instance after instance of Him condemning the proud and rich if they but keep it for themselves in nearly every one of the gospels. In kind, He connects the rich and poor by making statements that both the *low* and *high*, and the *rich* and *poor* ought to be together (KJV, 1769/2015, Psalms 49:2). He contrasts that when we are only rich with money that we may be poor in spirit, and those that may be poor with money are rich in spirit. He beckons us to not be afraid of wealth and riches, so long as we first seek the kingdom of God (KJV, 1769/2015, Matthew 6:33). Ultimately, one of

the most profound examples that when we have been given much, we to must give, is the story of the widow and the mite. In Luke 21 (KJV 1760/2015) it entails a story of everyone giving of their tithes and offerings as the Lord commands, some quite generous in their contributions the story details. It was the most unlikely among them the Savior used to teach a profound lesson, a lowly widow who gave the most. She contributed but one mite to the offering, which perceptually was nothing in comparison to others, but the Lord said that she casted in more than they all. She gave the most because she gave all that she had; her sacrifice was the greatest. It is this attitude that the Lord implores of us to exhibit in our lives and is a form of action to His commandment to love one another addressed previously.

Not only do foundations have an excess of resources whereby they are designed to give away, but they also have a unique opportunity to be like the widow and her mite, which is to give all that they have. Not just financially, but emotionally and socially as well. They have an influence to do good in their communities beyond writing checks, they can leverage their resources to develop new and innovative ways of sustained impact, they can gather people and leaders of all kinds together for collaborative problems solving, and they can teach transformation (Nilsson et al, 2020 & Harvey et al., 2020). Riches from a dollar perspective alone can simply be band aids to wicked problems in our communities, they may only cloak the real underlying issues that foundations have a strategic opportunity to address alongside their community (Roberts, 2018). Principles of faith, hope, and charity are not only essential to Gods gospel, but these elements of religiosity are contributors to people's desire to be more helpful (KJV, 1769/2015, Corinthians 13:13 and Yueng, 2018). Charitable foundations and philanthropists are embedded in the inherent beliefs of hope, charity, and faith. Whether they are

religious or not, I have personally never come across a foundation/philanthropist that did not inherently have those attributes.

Therefore, charitable foundations, and/or any philanthropic person(s), are assumed to be the entities within communities best positioned to catalyze transformation through their ability to utilize their “riches” financially and socially to *convene* the community and provide necessary influence and resources all in an effort to create God like change—transformational change (Sloan, 2020). While they are not the only ones who can catalyze change, this research will argue they are the best.

People have a long history of socially thinking beyond themselves reaching back to biblical times. We see this sentiment through parables such as the Good Samaritan, a story of the most unlikely person helping another out of “other interest,” and resisting “self-interest.” Research has also shown that people looked at *charity* as something of philanthropic importance as early as the 1600s, which goes to say that it is very much a part of society and cultures; people want to help other people (MacDonald & Howorth, 2018). This study will look at how charitable foundations have an essential role in bringing sectors together in a community to invite transformational change—through transformational type leadership. The type of leadership that the Savior Himself exhibited through His last words on the cross, as He even then put the needs of others above His own, “Forgive them Father, for they know not what they do” (King James Bible, 1769/2015, Luke 23:34).

### **Problem Statement**

Although the constructs of TFL, CSC and CFC have individually been associated with organizational (Busari et al., 2020) or community-based change (Brown et al., 2019), the combination of these three constructs has not been evaluated for its influence on organizational



and community-based change. The leadership institute combined the three established components to train organizational and community leaders to promote change in the leaders' organizations, as well as in the community. Specifically, the leadership institute was designed to train business leaders and community influencers in transformational leadership and cross-sector collaboration. These leaders represented six sectors: non-profit, business, government, faith, education, and the general public. Rooted leaders are encouraged to return to their organizations to enact what they learn, and they also meet monthly in cross-sector collaboration to discuss ideas to help make a difference in tackling the big community issues, such as homelessness, mental health, city livability, and developing the future workforce. All of which were chronic challenges in Salem that have no easy solution, and the leaders were not asked to solve them, they were simply asked to apply the institute's framework and see where it takes them as a group of collaborating leaders. The philanthropist provided the financial support needed to help the leaders implement the community programs. For example, one group focused on mental health decided to focus on youth, whereby they identified a gap in our community to educate and develop youth in behavioral health professions. Therefore, they partnered with a career technical (CTE) school and designed a behavioral health program for high school aged kids from seven different high schools to access as a CTE program. Another group focusing on city livability, also decided to focus on youth and revitalized a large community event that had sat dormant for several years called the "Awesome 3000," which is a running event that involved thousands of kids and their families.

We know from previous research three important things. First, transformational leadership has an impact upon followers, change, performance, and culture (Busari et al., 2019; Faupel & Süß, 2018; Ghasabeh & Provitera, 2017). Transformational leadership is manifested by

leaders who help others see a purpose beyond themselves and moved beyond what is expected (Faupel & Süß, 2018; Ghasabeh & Provitera, 2017). Second, CSC can have a tremendous impact on problem solving, sharing of resources/knowledge, and ultimately community outcomes such as the “wicked problems” discussed in the opening paragraph (Bauer et al., 2020; Brown et al., 2019; Caufield & Brenner, 2019). Third, charitable foundations/philanthropists have the potential and moral responsibility to catalyze transformational change and collaboration in their community, because of their influence and ability of neutrality (Bushouse & Mosley, 2018; Easterling et al., 2019; Schmitz & McCollim, 2021; Roberts, 2018).

Although each of the three components has been individually associated with organizational or community change, there are no studies examining their combination on said change. The leadership institute showed promise as a new conceptual model for organizational and community change. Therefore, the purpose of the current study was to take a deeper look at the perceived impact the leadership institute has on leaders’ organizations and community, as well as the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the institute. The knowledge gained from this study may contribute to understanding how to enact transformation at the community level. What was learned from this study may also have implications to the literature, as well as in the real world.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to understand how the constructs of transformational leadership, cross-sector collaboration and charitable foundations in combination influence organizational and community-based change, as well as understand leaders’ perceived strengths and weaknesses of the leadership institute. To achieve this purpose, this study considered the experience of individual leaders across six different sectors. The leaders

participated in a cross-sector leadership institute funded by a local philanthropist within the community of Salem Oregon.

### **Research Questions**

**Question 1:** How do leaders perceive the leadership institute as embodying TFL, CSC, and CFC?

**Question 2:** How have participants in the leadership institute experienced the integration of TFL, CSC, and CFC, and how has this integration manifested in their workplaces and community?

**Question 3:** What are the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the leadership institute according to the participants' perspectives?

**Question 4:** How do leaders perceive the impact of the leadership institute on changes within their workplaces and the broader community?

**Question 5:** What aspects of the leadership institute are identified by participants as most beneficial in promoting TFL, CSC, and CFC?

### **Assumptions and Limitations of the Study**

The assumption of the study that may have influenced the research outcomes were embedded in the researcher's experience working with charitable foundations/philanthropists. As the researcher, I have developed bias and opinions through my community work for the last decade. For example, I assumed that participants in the study would be fully able to participate in transparent honesty due to the relationship formed through the institute programming. Other assumptions were the institutes curriculum as a profoundly transformational framework and curriculum designed to aid in personal, organizational, and community transformation efforts. It

was also an assumption that philanthropic entities or persons are the best equipped to catalyze transformational change at a cross-sector level.

The limitations of the study were connected to the said assumptions. The sample of leaders participating in this study were from a very niche and small population of leaders in the community of Salem OR. The choice to study this specific population was because of their unique participation in the leadership institute. This justified a case of which to study in the community of Salem because it was the only place whereby the constructs of interest were intentionally connected to bring about specific desired outcomes. For that reason, the methodology of a case study was limiting, there is generally no quantifiable evidence from the study, it was at large qualitative only. However, it should be noted the study indirectly pointed toward quantifiable effects leaders within the institute have had in different areas of the community—such as educational metrics, city livability standards, etc.

That said, the depth whereby interviews lead could be profound due to the pre-existing relationships of participants in the study. On the other hand, the pre-existing relationships of the leaders who have participated in the institute may have been a limitation of a small sample. Social desirability may have affected the data gathering process but was controlled by transparent and honest communication with participants in the consent process and data collection. In addition, the contrast of understanding the participants lived experiences prior to their participation in the institute previous to a formal relationship, provided a “pre-exposed” perspective on the constructs under review.

### **Definition of Terms**

**Transformational Leadership**—Is generally an approach to leadership wherein the leader helps their followers see potential beyond themselves, it is a leadership style that inspires and connects

others to vision and purpose (Peng et al., 2021) There are also four definitive elements of TFL knowing throughout literature on TFL; idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Andersen et al., 2018).

**Cross-Sector Collaboration**—Is the interaction between two or more different sectors through sharing information, resources, activities, and distributing capabilities for a joint endeavor to produce and outcome (Bauer et al., 2020). CSC is often used when address complex social problems that require a multi-sector approach (Brown et al., 2019).

**Charitable Foundations as Catalysts**— Charitable foundations are formally created entities formed through their state for charitable purposes, with a primary cause of raising and/or distributing financial resources toward causes or needs deemed by the foundation (Toepler, 2018). Foundations have various structures, sizes, and priorities. Some are private, some a corporate, some are community-based foundations. Philanthropists are connected to charitable foundations as the individual(s) responsible for the giving, typically motivated by a greater desire to do good (Schmitz & McCollim, 2021).

### **Significance of the Study**

At the time of the study, there was a limited amount of literature on the topic addressed in this study. The constructs of interest have a fair history of research, but with different objectives and outcomes and not in combination. This research had the potential to contribute to each construct's knowledgebase; transformational leadership, cross-sector collaboration, and the impact of charitable foundations/philanthropists have within their communities. Further, the research also had the potential to inspire a new approach to organizational and community change by the combination of these constructs. There was opportunity for more research in how the constructs are clustered together and understanding different angles of they might work, or

not work, together. For TFL specifically, this invited a new branch of literature separate from the organizational context. The elements of TFL applied within a larger community lens had the potential to be a significant contribution to the literature. In addition, at the time of the study, there was an abundance of literature on CSC, but in each circumstance, they lacked a cohesive and consistent framework whereby they could operate as sectors coming together. Zhu et al. (2019) pointed out that the logic varies drastically throughout different disciplines and sectors, which is a key challenge to CSC. However, the leadership institute had a specific framework that trained leaders in the principles of transformational leadership so that healthy conditions were possible to facilitate both organizational change and community change, due to cross-sector collaboration combined with funding by charitable foundations. Another potential contribution to the literature is the evidence of charitable foundations/philanthropists as key catalysts within communities. During the time of the study there was very little, if any, research on this angle of CFCs. It may be that leaders who engage through programs such as the leadership institute in Salem, will also have a direct impact on improving their organizations as part of the greater community.

It may be that CFCs far and wide can have another option for how they go about doing their philanthropy. The desire was not only for this study to be replicated in other communities theoretically, but most certainly practically. Doing so may allow researchers and practitioners to better understand the potential for change needed to catalyze transformation. If this type of transformation—fundamental shifts toward positive potential—becomes replicable, what can become possible within communities may lead to exciting transformation. As shared in the introduction of this paper, community outcomes around homelessness, educational outcomes, mental health, crime, and civility, and largely the impact on children and the elderly as the most

vulnerable in our communities; can be better than anything we have ever seen before. Some of the world's biggest problems are a result of people not being seen and opportunities not being taken advantage of. At the heart of this study was the importance of humanhood at the levels of understanding self, the other, and the connection they share. The opportunity was to capitalize on what already existed within communities. People were already working tirelessly throughout families, organizations, and society to improve; yet transformational change was a rarity. However, the fundamental motive in this study was to not only fill a gap in the literature and contribute to the field, but to allow the enactment of real-world change in a way that was desperately needed.

### **Summary**

I reviewed the Leadership Institute, and the impact of its three components, TFL, CSC, and CFCs on organizations and communities. I proposed that the institute offers a unique approach to organizational, and community change due to being the only program that combines the constructs of TFL, CSC and CFC. The institute began with changing leaders to espouse a TFL approach and then encouraging them to incorporate TFL into the way they lead. This change within leaders was anticipated to facilitate repairing dysfunction within their organizations to create workplace conditions that encouraged transformational leadership principles of authenticity, respect, interdependence, creativity, and collaboration (Maufi et al., 2019; Peng et al., 2018). Further, leaders then met monthly with the mindset of authenticity, respect, interdependence, creativity, and collaboration to create fertile ground for cross-sector collaboration to brainstorm programming to take on larger social issues and long-term challenges (Rei et al., 2019). Then, the financial backing and positive reputation of the charitable foundation served as a catalyst to bring about the community programming efforts identified by cross-sector

collaboration. I proposed that this combination of TFL, CSC and CFC can result in improved organizations and an improved community, all trickling down from improvements in leadership. I highlighted the potential impact the institute can have on the field of I/O Psychology, as well as the practical impact it might have to make a difference in tackling wicked problems.

From this, I posed the problem statement to be essentially outline that while TFL, CSC, and CFC have been initially considered with organizational change, they have not been associated in combination as an influent to both organizational and community-based change (Brown et al., 2019; Busari et al., 2020). The leadership institute showed real promise of providing a conceptual model for the said change. I posed the purpose of the study to understand how constructs of TFL, CSC, and CFC influence organizational and community-based change. Therefore, the experience of individual leaders within the institute was critical. They have been exposed to TFL, they have participated in CSC, and they opportunity provide them by the institute is funded by a community philanthropist. I then presented the research question that together encapsulate what this study is aiming to accomplish and understanding, followed by important assumptions and limitations. These of course addressed important elements that may have had an impact on the entirety of the study but were taken into consideration prior to the proposed and methodological research. Key terms such as transformational leadership, cross-sector collaboration, and charitable foundations were defined. Lastly, I ended the chapter with a discussion on the significance of what was being proposed. The contributions this study can make to the literature in all three key element areas (TFL, CSC, and CFC), are significant. In addition, the practical significance of potentially impacting communities, and the workplace



from a leadership standpoint was worth noting. In Chapter Two, I will delve into the literature and present an integrated review of the relevant content.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

### **Overview**

The principles of TFL and CSC fueled by the funds of a philanthropist, may be the necessary ingredients to empower change at the organizational and community level. Leaders trained and participated in the leadership institute may have served as a metaphorical water droplet that created a ripple effect that lead to transformational outcomes addressing the “wicked problems” discussed in chapter one. Although there has been some evidence that TFL, CSC and CFC individually have had a positive impact, there was little research that has examined their synergistic effects as it relates to both organizational and community change during the time of this study. In this literature review, I will cover what was known in the areas of transformational leadership, cross-sector collaboration, and philanthropy as they relate to organizational and community change.

### **Description of Search Strategy**

The Jerry Falwell Library was used as the starting point search engine for the majority of the research articles for this study. From there, the terms searched were redirected to various peer-reviewed databases. Terms searched were primarily focused on transformational leadership, cross-sector collaboration, philanthropy, and charitable foundations. These terms were then coupled with other terms to pinpoint specific areas of interest, terms such as change, impact, community, performance, transformational leadership, etc. The delimitations put on the research were primarily a timeline within the previous 5 years, peer-reviewed, and filtered through related fields of study and practice. In addition to the academic articles used, other literature I have come across in form of impacted the constructs of theoretical foundation and methodology. Lastly, the King James version of the Holy Bible was used as a supporting backbone to the philosophical

perspective on the research. Keywords were used to identify related scripture for discussions on Biblical implications to the study.

### **Review of Literature**

The concept of community transformation and the foundational premise of leadership's importance have led to the selection of the studies outlined in this review. Each study has been chosen as a reference due to the contribution it makes to validating the constructs under review in this research, or the clarity it provides to the gap in the literature this study will address. Largely, transformational leadership is core to this review due to its robust history and evidence, it also shares an essential connection to the Rooted Institute. Also essential to the constructs reviewed include collaboration across sectors playing a vital part in transformational change, and the role of charitable foundations as a catalytic entity within a community. These themes will be addressed one at a time to emphasize how their distinct differences contribute to the conceptual framework.

### **Transformational Leadership**

Transformational leadership works to clarify vision, share it, and sustain it for the long term. By and large, most of the transformational leadership literature focuses within the organizational world and there is very little, if any, literature on its effects at the community level. Community is any set group, or subset group of people that make up the collective of a given region, city, town, or municipality. While there are other definitions of community, the community referred to in this study will represent the above definition. Therefore, a central part of this theme in the literature review is that the impact of TFL on change within the organizational space is to be expanded and generalized in the realm of a collective community at the societal level. Transformation as a word insinuates change (Peng et al., 2021). Therefore,

nearly the entirety of the literature in this review on TFL comes down to the impact it had on change in some way, shape, or fashion.

I propose that TFL, CSC, and CFC work synergistically to create the conditions needed for and facilitate organizational and community change. The TFL component involves repairing dysfunction within the leaders' organization to create workplace conditions that encourage transformational leadership principles of authenticity, respect, interdependence, creativity, and collaboration (Maufi et al., 2019; Peng et al., 2018). Further, TFL principles are applied within the CSC model to provide a foundation of authenticity, respect, interdependence, creativity, and collaboration among leaders within the community, creating fertile ground for cross-sector collaboration to brainstorm programming to take on larger social issues and long-term challenges (Rei et al., 2019). The financial backing of the CFC serves as a catalyst to bring about the community programming efforts identified by cross-sector collaboration. The result should be improved organizations and an improved community, all trickling down from improvements in leadership.

***Transformational Leadership's Impact on Relationships Across Levels and On Performance.*** TFL has been noted to be a motivating style of leadership because of the focus on vision clarification and unification amongst followers (Andersen et al., 2018). In their study consisting of individual interviews with 16 leaders and 32 employees, Andersen et al. (2018) found that leaders who work to clarify, share, and maintain organizational vision motivate their employees to good beyond themselves. Specifically, the change in vision shifts to a more societal level that includes those outside their organization and in their community. This forecasts some of how TFL can impact CSC and gives a glimpse of how TFL can be expanded/understand at a community level like it is at the organizational level within the literature. In comparison to the

following articles in this section, we can speculate that when followers are motivated to do good beyond themselves, it may spread across all levels of an organization and have an impact on performance.

Transformational leadership impacts change at all levels of an organization because of the effects it has on individuals and groups. Leadership is multifaceted, it has to do with the exchange between the leader and the individual, the leader and the group, as well as the leader and the entire collective. Studies have shown that TFL positively impacts all three of those levels and enhances the “exchange” between the leader and the three different levels—increasing organizational collaboration and performance (Chun et al., 2016). In Korea, 23 different companies found that TFL focused on the collective was associated with better team performance through the relationships of the team members. In addition, the study found that the relationship between individual leaders and individual team members was positively influenced by TFL. As a result, multiple levels of the organizations were positively impacted by TFL (Chun et al., 2016). Considering performance, it can mean many things and can even feel ambiguous. Schaubroeck et al. (2007) stated that transformational leaders help inspire followers to transcend self-interest, that alone is a monumental accomplishment, and any sensible individual can see why it is connected to performance. Schaubroeck et al. (2007) specifically found that TFL positively affected the power distance between leaders and followers, in combination with creating a team collectivism. Power distance is the perception followers possess toward their leaders, the higher the perceived distance, the higher the judgment and bias amongst teams. The team collectivism is the combined effort teams possess to engage with one another supportively and demonstrate concern for one another. Both low levels of power distance and higher levels of team collectivism were shown to increase team performance (Schaubroeck et al., 2007).

Additionally, a meta-analysis of 62 studies, including 23,037 participants found that TFL has the strongest effect on relational perceptions and behavioral outcomes (Gui et al., 2020). We can presume that relational perceptions are connected to the health of relationships amongst followers and leaders and followers amongst followers—LMX and TMX. These relationships can also be presumably connected to the four elements of TFL discussed in chapter one: idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and inspirational motivation. These aspects are included in the leadership institute. Lastly, the consistency found in the meta-analysis regarding behavioral outcomes can be speculated as a consistency with increased performance. The logical argument would be that improved behavioral outcomes correlate to increased performance because increased performance cannot happen without a change in behavior (Gui et al., 2020).

*Transformational Leadership and Organizational Culture and Change.* TFL has shown to directly impact organizational culture, and how culture then connects to both the readiness and reactions to change within followers (Busari et al., 2019; Faupel and Süß, 2018; Ghasabeh & Provitera, 2017). Ghasabeh and Provitera (2017) claim that transformational leaders work to build culture in order to contribute to their organizations. They review the impact culture has on organizational learning, knowledge, and innovation. We can speculate culture building to be an important facet of TFL. Busari et al. (2019) found through a quantitative research design combined with qualitative follow-up questions, TFL positively impacted followers' reactions to change, their trust in leadership, and participation in change. When compared to the Faupel and Süß (2018) findings on the relationship between TFL and follower behavior during change, they saw valence and work engagement as key mediator constructs. Therefore, it can be said that

culture as an organizational construct, created by transformational leaders, appears to directly impact change amongst followers.

Another study found that amongst 319 workers in a multinational organization, TFL and follower commitment to the organization was mediated by culture/climate. Culture and climate here were the shared set of values and perspectives within the organization. Again, evidence that transformational leaders lead by building culture—which has been shown to impact followers positively (Mañas-Rodríguez et al., 2020). Whether it be change, change readiness, trust, or commitment amongst followers, TFL has a positive connection. Transformational leaders impact the climate and culture of their surroundings, in so much that they have the power to change them and increase commitment of their followers. Note that the leadership institute discussed in chapter one is a framework that helps leaders to practically build effective and transformational cultures. In addition to the above studies, Peng et al. (2020) conducted a meta-analysis based on 30 empirical studies surrounding TFL and followers' reactions to change and found three common themes among the studies. (1) TFL has a positive relationship with commitment, openness, and readiness for change. (2) TFL has a negative relationship with resistance to change, including cynicism. (3) TFL has a correlation with support for change, although, less significant than the first two themes. There were a compelling 12,240 participants combined in those studies.

***The Breadth of TFL Impacts, Including the Comparison to Transactional Leadership.***

TFL also has profound impacts on performance and effectiveness. Other notable impacts described in different studies regarding the positive impact of TFL are the perceived professional quality, the learning culture of an organization, and the psychological empowerment behind innovation. Professional quality concerns the processes and products of an organization,

affecting input, output, and ultimately the outcomes (Andersen et al., 2018). The learning culture pertains to the ability and motivation a follower possesses to learn deeply about oneself, their collective community (the organization and greater community), and the larger system in which they are embedded. In New Orleans, eight active community leaders from various backgrounds were interviewed and observed to understand this concept of the recognition of self as it relates to others and the greater community. The “learning” increases the follower’s engagement in each of the levels, which contributes to an increase in performance (Medellin et al., 2019). The congruential process of transformation starting with the self, then leading the organization, then to the community is presumably seen in the Medellin et al. (2019) article. That said, the sample is small and will require more investigation and validation.

Finally, innovation is directly connected to performance because it significantly impacts an organization’s effectiveness and survival (Pieterse et al., 2009). Because of the inspiring element of transformational leadership, it leads to follower empowerment in their role within an organization; and empowerment is a key component of innovation. Therefore, it can be said that TFL has the potential to increase innovation. This element will be another focal point of the study under review in this paper.

While this literature acts as compelling evidence for TFL’s benefits, it does not go without weaknesses and faults. The claim that is largely throughout the research on TFL is that transformational leadership is more effective than its counterpart, transactional leadership. However, this is not as empirically supported as advocates for TFL would like it to be. The consistency throughout TFL literature is its contribution as a construct of interest when it comes to better performance and increased effectiveness at the organizational level (Andersen, 2015; Mysilaki & Paraskeva, 2020). Andersen et al. (2016) wanted to discover if the enthusiasm and



positive findings surrounding TFL are out of proportion with its weaknesses. They found that TFL possesses some conceptual limitations, such as the comparison to transactional leadership may not be completely fair, given that transactional leadership has been shown to increase effectiveness as well, but “effective” is subjective depending on the study. They found that TFL has a bias toward the relationship between a leader and a follower, however, the same study pointed out that as a strength of TFL. TFL is centered around the relationship between a leader and follower. They even considered such miniscule weaknesses of TFL such that in some cases the term “follower” gets confused with the term “subordinate,” therefore, contributing to a negative effect of TFL. That said, the result of this study indicated that while not perfect and has weaknesses, the strengths and enthusiasm of TFL are far greater.

As mentioned, transactional leadership can still increase effectiveness and performance to achieve outcomes, however, consider the impact transactional leadership has on the culture and people (Andersen, 2015; Pieterse et al., 2009). The challenge to empirically support TFL as more effective than transactional leadership necessitates more qualitative studies because it is simply difficult to quantify something like transformational leadership (Gui et al., 2020). Even so, a study conducted with 230 government employees in the Netherlands found that transactional leadership was negatively related to innovative behavior, while TFL had a positive relationship to innovative behavior (Pieterse et al. 2009). This finding supports the idea that TFL is superior to transactional leadership at least in terms of encouraging innovation.

Another concern that Andersen (2015) raised is the fact that transformational leadership as an approach does not automatically make a leader transformational. It requires intentional efforts and deliberation of mind to become a transformational leader and not just do transformational things. In essence, transformational leadership is a key condition that precedes

transformational change. A claim of this study will be that this style of leadership must be enacted within organizations and communities for transformation to be possible. This suggests that TFL in combination with CSC may create optimal conditions for both organizational and community change, something that is espoused by the leadership institute.

### **Cross-Sector Collaboration**

When sectors come together to share information, collaborate, and combine capabilities and activities for the good of the community; they formally demonstrate their organization's character and leaders' commitment to change (Bauer et al., 2020; Reid et al., 2019). Bauer et al. (2020) found that when an institution with insufficient resources and reliance upon institutional partners is coupled with individual characteristics of a leader that has a certain number of years in a position and experience in another sector, a cross-sector collaboration is more likely to formalize. This study demonstrates that there are hypothetical "conditions" or underpinning motivations as to why organizations engage in CSC. Reid et al. (2019) found through multiple-case studies from different community coalition groups in Los Angeles to New York City, that intrinsic motives, as well as altruistic motives, bring cross-sector leaders together. They found that there was a desire to leverage the talents, resources, and perspectives of others was beneficial to achieving their desired outcomes—intrinsic motivation. However, they also shared more altruistic motives of collaborating for equity and justice. Either motive required the coalitions to form new relationships that did not previously exist. It invited them to collectively learn from failure, address power dynamics within their community, racism, and different forms of oppression to work through conflict productively.

*Cross Sector Collaboration to Achieve Better Outcomes.* We can begin to speculate from these studies that CSC may exist both formally and informally, however, the formal

creation of CSC efforts can lead to potentially transformational outcomes. Such outcomes were achieved in Milwaukee Wisconsin in 2019 among a group of leaders and organizations that came together for a CSC effort. Caufield and Brenner (2019) discuss how the social networks and collective leadership were vital to the outcomes they experienced with a decrease in teen pregnancies. In Milwaukee, the term “wicked problems” was given as an abbreviation to the problems their community faced that lead to increase in crime, incarceration, drug/alcohol abuse, violence, etc. Together as a community they identified teen pregnancies as the underpinning statistic that influenced the myriad of wicked problems in their community. The United Way was chosen as the convening entity to facilitate the network groups participating. The various groups were health and social service agencies, faith communities, public schools, media groups, business, city government, and teen groups/general public. The collective leadership that proceeded the cross-sector collaboration is what provided the view of the community as a social network that if unified in purpose could share an untapped level of power, trust, and diverse skillsets to solving community problems.

Before discussing the outcomes that Milwaukee found in their CSC efforts it is important to point out a couple of things. One is the major advantages of cross-sector collaboration as thematic in the literature and already mentioned, the leveraging of shared resources. The resources can come in many forms, such as, talents, perspectives, ideas, and diverse organizations that all contribute to addressing large-scale, complex social challenges (Reid et al., 2019). The second is the importance that CSC efforts need to have an intellectual framework and/or theory of change by which they can operate. For the Milwaukee case, they utilized the Kotter Change Model. It is noted that this review will not delve into the Kotter Change Model at depth, because the call for such a model is what needs emphasizing, not the details of the model

itself. However, to understand the essence of the Kotter Model, a synopsis is briefly provided. It consists of eight steps: Create urgency, form a coalition, create a vision for change, communicate the vision, remove obstacles, create short-term wins, build on the change, and anchor the change (Caufield and Brenner, 2019). It should also be noted that the leadership institute in the proposed study acts as such a model in the community of Salem Oregon. That said, cases like the one in Milwaukee are glimpses of what the potential looks like in community transformation through CSC.

Continuing to the outcomes experienced in Milwaukee, at origin of the study they had one of the highest rates of teen pregnancy in the country. Because of the formal and direct CSC efforts the community, teen pregnancies were reduced by over 50%. Their goal was 46% in a 10-year period and that they achieved over 50% in only 7 years (Caufield and Brenner, 2019). This is a prime example of not only what can happen when sectors come together in unity, but also the power of transformational type leaders that unite a community in purpose to accomplish a momentous transformational change.

*Sectors Collaborating Must Learn from Other Sectors and Align in Purpose.* As mentioned, a key theme in CSC is the coming together of shared resources, information, and perspectives—it is also the sharing of activities (Bauer et al., 2020). Meaning, organizations share what their best practices are, and their capabilities to impact the problem. This means that they will even share motives, intellectual frameworks, and business models. For example, 179 nonprofits in Eastern China benefitted tremendously from CSC efforts with the business community. The number one thing they benefitted from and learned was “business rationale,” which is the implementation of business best practice and process. Examples include strategic planning, the use of consultants, independent financial audits, and quantifiable program

evaluations (Song and Yin, 2019). Such a simple concept had a profound impact on their performance and change management. One would not have been able to predict that at the outset, nor would the city of Milwaukee have been able to predict their outcomes around teen pregnancies. These two examples are further evidence that confirm the research proposed in this paper, that cross-sector collaboration, when done right, can be a breeding ground for transformation. It may ever be considered an essential element to creating the conditions for transformation. What these and other studies, such as the research done by Zhu et al. (2019) lack is a sustainable framework whereby other communities can successfully adopt and utilize. In their case, they were interested in how to mobilize CSC in rural communities to improve population health. Through interviewing 22 health related informants from the social service and local government sector, they found that rural communities form CSC efforts in a variety of ways. While they yielded positive results, they also concluded that real and lasting CSC partnerships are rare. This would consider another element to gaps in the CSC models, they are not sustainable, in addition to the lack of a consistent intellectual framework.

The adage that “less is more” is flipped on its head when cross-sector collaboration can be achieved. When organizations can learn to work collaboratively to solve social issues, they have the potential to unleash the knowledge that they can achieve much more together than they could have in isolation (Brown et al., 2019). The complexities involved in social problems require a multi-sectored approach, which in turn strengthens themselves in addition to the community, one of the many benefits to collaborative efforts (Brown et al., 2019). Brown et al. (2019) designed a three-stage case study with 28 non-profit organizations in the US that shared similar missions of community revitalization, missions that required CSC-type strategies in order to be accomplished. They developed and used the strategic compatibility assessment (SCA) to

understand the CSC capacities within the 28 different organizations. The SCA was a designed instrument to better understand the capacities across sectors in a hope to motivate collaborative behaviors that lead to desired change. They reported a moderate-to-high level of CSC behavior in post assessments. These findings of CSC that move beyond initial effort to encourage it point to the capacity and potential of successful CSC efforts when organizations have elements of their mission that rely upon the networking and collaboration with other organizations and/or sectors. Note that this example in the Brown et al. (2019) study, affirms the assumption that CSC efforts that are unified in purpose is a “condition” for transformational change. Again, this points to the connection with TFL, because TFL prioritizes unity of vision and inspires others to work toward purpose together.

*The Potential of CSC and The Connection to TFL.* All that said, there is a perceived paradoxical challenge to cross-sector collaboration—transformation can be possible through it, but transformation cannot be forced. Meaning, we know enough about cross-sector collaboration to know that when it is done correctly it becomes a key ingredient to incredible transformational change at the societal level. Consider the examples already shared. Each attempt and effort are different from the next; what works in one community may not work in another—at least at specificity. The knowledge to collaborate through collective leadership across sectors is not enough to do it and do it well. Disingenuous attempts to collaborate among sectors may fall short, just as disingenuous efforts to approach leadership through a TFL model may fail if the leader is not enacting what they espouse. Hence, designing and implementing cross-sector collaboration is something needed, but is also challenging. It is challenging because designing takes time and so does implementing. Not to mention, both can be intellectually exhausting. However, the need remains the same, in order to successfully collaborate at a multi-sector level,

a well-thought-out design and leadership are required (Bryson et al., 2015). Bryson et al. (2015) emphasize the importance of designing and implementing CSC strategy when efforts are likely to produce public value. They analyze four conditions that should surround collaborative structures and processes. The first are the general antecedent conditions surrounding the environment and need to address public issues. The second, the linking mechanisms, including agreement on aims and relationships. The third, accountability and outcomes—immediate, intermediate, and long term. The fourth, conflict and tensions—conflict must be addressed along with equity and power dynamics. All four of these are centered around an acting leadership entity that fosters the governance and competencies to guide CSC. Note that the leadership institute in the proposed study acts as the central leadership entity provided competency, structure, and process. In addition, the Rooted Framework informally addresses the four conditions outlined above.

The example above informs us that CSC will not just happen on its own, and certainly cannot happen in a vacuum. Collaboration processes are complex and demand a concurrent analysis of all the elements in motion (Bryson et al., 2015). This is also why there needs to be significantly more research than what currently exists on the topic. More research such as the Malin and Hackman (2018) case of a pre-existing CSC group in supporting the Marshall School District. The CSC group utilized the Crosby and Bryson model outlined in the above paragraph to guide their work together. The study took place over 15-months in an effort observe the utility of the model. There were observations, interviews, and document analysis. They found the model aided the group to align purposes, objectives, priorities, and to better understand the environment—resulting in effective CSC. This example is what would be recommended as further expansion to the literature on CSC. The proposed study would offer the Rooted

Framework and structure of the leadership institute in Salem Oregon as a similar candidate for further research and analysis.

### **Foundations as a Community Catalyst**

Charitable foundations come in all forms, including community foundations, private family foundations, and corporate philanthropy. All of these can look different, operate differently, and can differ in what they spend and gift financially a great deal. When referring to charitable foundations, foundations, or philanthropy in this literature review and the entire proposed research, the terms will be used interchangeably and contain the same essence in their meaning. To better understand the importance of foundations as a catalyst in this research design and why it is under review in the selected literature, a deeper understanding of how foundations operate is important to recognize.

Foundations' relationship with their community is essential for various reasons. Toepler (2018) conducted an analysis of philanthropic foundations from 12 different countries and found various similarities and differences among them. First, they exist to give back to their community, whatever or whomever that community may be. Second, they are defined within their community by what they do and how they contribute. Lastly, they cannot accomplish their objectives without a community to give to. Foundations must clearly and legally define their relationship with the state whether explicitly or implicitly. Meaning, they need to file their taxable status as a 501c3 and formally organized tax-exempt organization or a corporation that legally is a for-profit business but writes off their philanthropic endeavor as tax-exempt. These matters are essential to doing their work. For example, a private foundation is required to give no less than 4-5% of the entire value of their assets and portfolio. So, if their portfolio is worth \$100,000,000 then they must give at least \$5,000,000 away annually to their philanthropic



priorities to maintain their 501c3 status. It is also not as easy as writing checks to whomever you please, whenever you want to. Many foundations are generational and no longer can change their articles of incorporation, which is a funding document that outlines the prioritized areas where resources are funneled.

For example, if a founder of a foundation had a passion for science and wrote it in the articles of incorporation as part of their estate plan and trust, then whoever comes after must honor the flow of money toward anything “science” related (cof.org, n.d.). However, as will be discussed at the end of this literature review, foundations are speculated to be the best positioned in a community to change and adapt to a TFL style and approach in bringing a community together. The assumption in the proposed study is because foundations have no competition, they can let go of unnecessary political agendas, they have a unique influential power in communities, and ultimately are a neutral party. As such, they may be able to catalyze change efforts in a way that other entities simply cannot. The power that foundations possess within their communities should be used in socially appropriate ways that can propel communities toward transformation (Gabel, 2012).

When considering all the various sectors that exist within our communities, we can speculate charitable foundations stand out as a strong entity specially qualified to spearhead transformational efforts. This is because foundations have a unique relationship with all the sectors due to their desire and attempts at having altruistic motives and influence (Nilsson et al, 2020). Because of their resources they make available to a community, they often take on a moral responsibility, some might even say a Christian responsibility, to do right by their community (Giacomin & Jones, 2021; Harvey et al., 2019; Toepler, 2018). These foundations, in whatever form they may come in, typically have substantial financial or human capital they

oversee. These resources can serve as the fuel to facilitate desired change within their communities. As such, charitable foundations are an essential piece to public service and advancing the well-being and public good throughout the world (Schmitz & McCollim, 2021). Schmitz and McCollin (2021) reported on the “global pledge” that was expressed by many prominent philanthropists throughout the globe, people such as Bill and Melinda Gates, and Warren Buffet. The pledge outlines a commitment to give back to the world, and interestingly enough, explanations from philanthropists as to why they give, four themes were identified: the desire to make difference, the want to give back, having a sense of fulfillment because of giving, and having philanthropy as part of their socialization since a young age. This pledge is an embodiment of the moral responsibility that is presumed to be inherent amongst CFC.

*Charitable Foundation Spending Aligning with Needs.* With that, the CFC community has an incredible responsibility to steward their influence and resources well, which unfortunately is not always the case. Despite best intentions, many foundations can miss opportunities of impact due to negligence, unnecessary agendas, conflicting priorities, etc. (Song & Fu, 2018). Song and Fu (2018) found charitable foundations typically spend money where they believe it is needed most in their communities based upon the needs, they are passionate about. Most foundations offer grants to local nonprofits to better fulfill their mission and objectives. However, through gathering data from 361 charities in China, there is a noticeable gap between the spending of charitable foundations and the population needs. This points to the need amongst the CFC community of a method or approach to better meeting their community’s needs. It also highlights the dichotomy of altruistic motives and moral foundations; they do not always match the direct needs of those they desire to “help.”

Nonetheless, CFC brings with it an influential power through financial means and reputation, which can be leveraged in many ways. Unfortunately, as we learn from Song and Fu (2018), communities must ask if foundations always spend money where people need it most. They assessed the relationship between population needs and expenditures of local foundations to understand if the money was going where the highest needs were identified, and unfortunately it was not always the case that money went to where it was needed most. Foundations can do what they want, to some extent; they don't answer to anyone so long as they abide by their relationship with the state. That said, philanthropic work can be one massive investment in social impact or a misappropriated use of funds. Aggarwala et al. (2017) argue this can only be done when the analysis of impact is done with the same rigor and specificity as done in business regarding financial results. Over \$6 billion is given away philanthropically each year and very little of it is "forecasted" or rigorously analyzed. Charitable giving is typically a matter of the heart, and the heart does not always need the same logic as the brain.

Other themes pulled out of the scarce literature on foundations' relationship to community transformation were the importance to have an ecological perspective in philanthropic endeavors, the strategic approach to strategic impact in charitable giving, and the place-based approach to philanthropy (Aggarwala et al., 2017).

### ***Ecological Perspective in Philanthropic Endeavors***

The ecological perspective pertains to the level of social capital a foundation has, the networks, partnerships, and friendships, which vary based upon the community's urbanity and racial diversity (Hwag and Young, 2018). This means that the effectiveness of philanthropic initiatives within a community hinge upon the relationships and partnership they have. If a foundation operates in a community that is largely African American, and their social capital

consists of zero partnerships/friendships from that community, then their impact will likely not be effective. The social capital of a foundation should reflect the demographics of the community to expand and capitalize on potential impact. While it may seem ideal to reflect the racial diversity of the community whereby giving takes place, Harvey et al. (2020) found recently in their research on the ethics of philanthropy something worth noting in comparison to the Hwang and Young study. They found that in the emerging world of philanthropy there is an entrepreneurial spirit that has been long referred to as “entrepreneurial philanthropy.” In United Kingdom they analyzed interviews with 24 elite philanthropists, 12 of them were more traditional customary philanthropists, and 12 of them were entrepreneurial. They found entrepreneurial philanthropy to be a seemingly effectual instrument of social justice but referred to it as an ethically flawed impulse regarding ideological purity. The ethical flaw was drawn from the conclusion that entrepreneurial philanthropy striving for equal access and opportunity could also mean less opportunity for them (the philanthropists), resulting in the exploitation and expansion of what is currently available to them. Essentially, if everyone is wealthy, then no one is. Social justice is the desire to achieve equality of opportunity for all. This has resulted in the weaponization of philanthropy that has casted an offensive shadow on many individuals and groups attempting to do good within their community.

The Bible reminds us that any man that desireth good things, will bring about good things, and him that desireth evil will bring about evil things (KJV, 1769/2015, Matthew 12:35). I believe, and through my real-world experience working the philanthropists and foundations, that if it is good, then it is from God. If giving, despite perfectly meeting the needs of a population is all that one can do, it is still good. However, the quest for better meeting the needs of the community and reflecting their population accurately through the philanthropic endeavors,

is ideal. As the leadership institute in Salem has set out to do, “help people find their own answers.” Meaning, aside from responding the lack of TFL and CSC in Salem, they do not provide solutions to any of the “wicked problems” in their community. Rather, they empower leaders in the community address problems themselves, and use philanthropic resources to focus on creating space and capacity within leaders and organizations.

### ***Importance of Strategic Approaches***

The strategic impacts that foundations can catalyze are incumbent upon their ability to have strategic approaches. As mentioned previously, while a significant amount of philanthropy is done by simply granting to those that apply and meet certain requirements, that approach may miss opportunities for profound impact on the community. Roberts (2018) outlined in her article that the more strategic a foundation can be in their approach to philanthropy, the greater the chances of a larger impact. Roberts (2018) assessed The Freemont Area Community Foundation and their development of what they called the “Community Investment Strategy.” The Freemont Area Community Foundation is a great example of bridging the two contrasting perspectives on an ecological perspective of philanthropy in the section above. Their foundation implemented a community investment strategy that was created with and by their community. They invited key community entities and leaders to take part in the creation of their strategy and the subsequent goals and focus areas. With their community they created a mission of improving the quality of life for those in their county. They set goals to increase post-secondary educational achievement by 60%, decrease poverty below the national average, and reduce unemployment below the national average. These goals resulted in five focus areas of education, poverty to prosperity, community and economic development, and natural resources (Roberts, 2018). This case is an

example of how the CFC community can respond to concerns about ecological perspective, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

This investment strategy was developed with their community and by their community to ensure absolute impact. This is a key element to understand as a theme in this research, both the Hwag and Young (2018) study and the Roberts (2018) study discovered; community involvement in philanthropic work is paramount for large-scale impact. Specifically having representation from all sectors as priorities are determined sets the stage for identifying the best target for investing resources. Foundations can have a greater impact when they include their community in their strategic efforts. The final study reviewed in this part of the literature speaks to that same sentiment of community involvement in charitable giving and philanthropic work.

### *Place-Based Approach*

Easterling et al. (2019) published a multiple case study looking at three prominent charitable foundations and their cultivation of what is called the “place-based” approach to philanthropy. Essentially, place-based philanthropy pushes foundations to move beyond their traditional grantmaking processes and take advantage of the philanthropic capital available to them (Easterling et al., 2019). They stopped focusing on specific grantees and began allocating their resources and attention to the entire community and larger-scale problems—transformational efforts. However, the nuance is that the resources and attention given is based upon the ability of a community to come together and work collaboratively to address the problem(s). The “cultivation” component of place-based philanthropy has four major elements that end up becoming the potential role the foundation can play. The first is to be an **activator**, which is essentially that a foundation will activate and jumpstart an effort, but ultimately expect someone else in the community to drive and sustain the effort. The second is to be a **driver**,

which means the foundation will own and operate the effort continuously, it becomes a central part of their work and often falls in the category of “action philanthropy,” where foundations do what they want to see done in the world. The third is the role of an **enhancer**, which is when a foundation finds an already existing effort and works to enhance its potential by providing resources and attention for a specific amount of time until it can be sustained continually on its own. Lastly, another role is that of the **supporter**, which is more of a traditional approach to philanthropy where the foundation supports by giving resources but is ultimately not involved outside of that (Easterling et al., 2019). Any of the four roles facilitate change, and the best role is the one that fits well with the community and CFC resources available. This place-based approach is the most related to not only the conceptual framework of this study, but it directly demonstrates the example of what a charitable foundation makes possible when it adopts a transformational approach within their community. They can be a catalyst to bring the community together from all sectors and unite them in large-scale change efforts.

Foundations have the ability to be innovative in their approaches to philanthropy, they have the opportunity to lead ethically through TFL, and invite others to do the same (Harvey et al, 2020). This may come in the form of place-based approaches, wherein grants given hinge upon the ability a community has in coming together. It may involve strategic impact approaches where foundations convene the community to develop a plan(s) to improve their community, therefore allowing the community to participate in the philanthropy (Easterling et al., 2019; Roberts, 2018). It can even come in the form of driving efforts such as leadership institutes, as is the case in Salem Oregon where the research will take place. Foundations can impact community relationships and partnerships, community outcomes, and even policy; their efforts worldwide

can be seen as a large-scale impact movement toward transformation (Aggarwala et al., 2017; Bushouse and Mosley, 2018).

The proposed study considers the research in the above three constructs of interest: transformational leadership, cross-sector collaboration, and community foundations as catalysts. When considered together as conditions that can lead to transformation—I posit that the transformation that results likely serves to produce fundamental shifts toward positive potential.

### **Biblical Foundations in Relationship to TFL, CSC and CFC Constructs from the Institute Curriculum**

As stated in Chapter One, there is no better example of TFL than that of Jesus Christ. He was, and is, the perfect example of all things—foremost—leadership. That said, His teachings from the Old and New Testaments have helped nurture and create transformational leaders long before transformational leadership became a popular approach to leadership, or popular in the literature. We know that over time there have always been changes to dominant leadership theory and best practices (Northouse, 2019). However, Christians would argue that since the start of mankind, there has been an unwavering example of leadership through God and the prophets He chose to lead His people. Consider leaders like Abraham and Joseph, Peter, and Paul, in the Bible.

Abraham had to embrace the unknown and rely upon a deeper purpose, his God. Even when asked to do something as difficult as sacrifice his only son, he did not waver. We know the story, of course, it all being a test and he did not have to slay Isaac. The sense of purpose to something bigger than himself, and devotion to that purpose he had is remarkable. This deep sense of purpose to the greater good is important amongst TFL theory as we have thoroughly reviewed. As such, it is also reflected in the institute's framework. Looking back on the literature



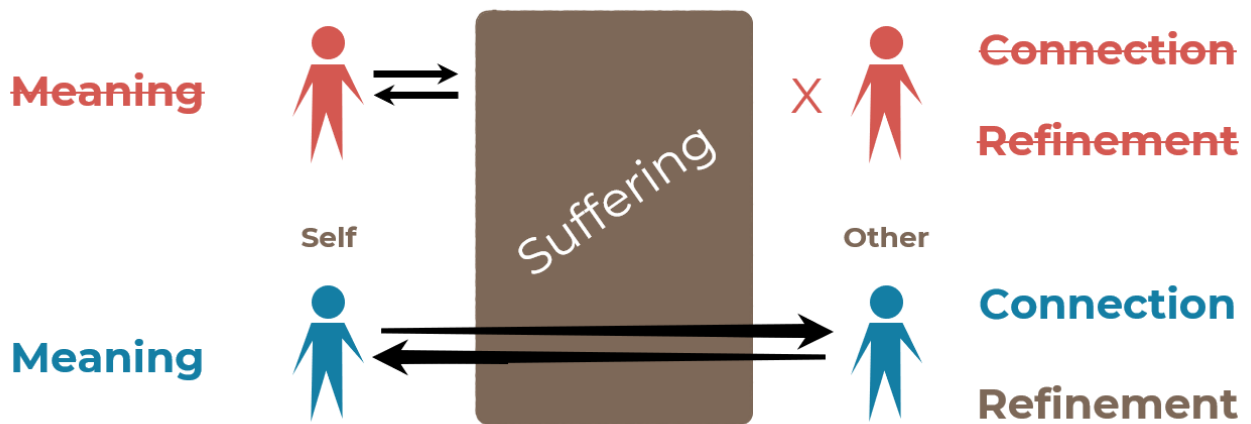
review of TFL, we see examples of how critical the concept of purpose is to TFL in nearly every article. Transformational leaders help vision a better future and connect their followers to that purpose (Andersen et al., 2018; King James Bible, 1769/2015; Medellin et al., 2019).

Seeking the greater good often requires personal sacrifice. Joseph of Egypt is an example of extreme personal sacrifice. He had to endure unthinkable pain, betrayal, and challenges with faith. The betrayal from his brothers being sold into slavery, slavery itself, the framing of a crime from Potiphar's wife, and then spending years in prison. All of this had to be endured, and not just endured, but endured well. Leaders implementing transformational leadership often must sacrifice personal productivity and time as they invest in mentoring others. Cross-sectional collaboration on community improvement involves volunteering time and energy that could be spent on personal and/or professional endeavors. Indeed, in the institute framework, there is a principle of "suffering well" that teaches leaders the power that can be derived from suffering. It highlights the importance of having choice in suffering, that one can choose to suffer well, or suffer poorly. When choosing to suffer poorly, they lose connection to others, they do not grow, and their suffering becomes pointless—thus, they derive no meaning from their suffering. Whereas the framework holds the one who chooses to suffer well experiences deeper connection with those around them, they are refined by the suffering and grow. Lastly, and most importantly, they gain deep meaning from the suffering. It is no longer pointless, rather purposeful, and even needed. Indeed, Romans 8:28 shows there is meaning to be found in suffering because God promises to work everything for our good, according to His purposes (King James Bible, 1769/2015). And James 1:2-4 states, "Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your

faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.”

**Figure 1**

*Using Your Suffering Well*

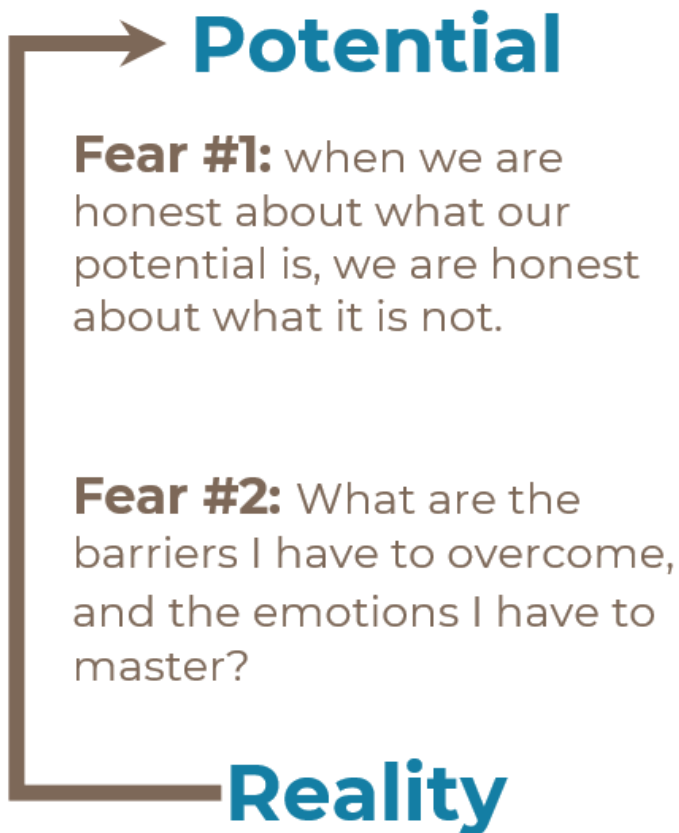


Victor Frankl, who put logotherapy on the map (meaning therapy), discovered firsthand through his experience in concentration camps during World War II that people choose to suffer well or not, and when they choose well, they can find meaning deeper than ever before (Frankl, 2006). That is transformational, and a leader that could endure despite their circumstances not only exhibits idealized influence that points to purpose, but they become inspiring leaders that motivate their followers (Andersen et al., 2018 and King James Bible, 1769/2015).

Then there is Peter, who was discussed briefly in Chapter One, but I share his example once more because of the transformational leader he became at the end of the New Testament and his ministry. However, it came at no easy cost. Peter, as we know failed more than once. From his first encounter with Christ at the seashore of Galilee, doubted his own worthiness to

join the ministry despite the Son of God qualifying him by extending the invitation to come, and follow Him. We can imagine this doubt remained with him throughout the ministry and even morphed into denial of Christ three times during the moments leading to His crucifixion. Peter not only had to recover from his failures, but he had to turn them to faith in his journey of reaching his potential, the Rock upon which Christ built His church (Matthew 16:18, King James Bible, 1769/2015). This fundamental shift from fear to faith, is nothing short of transformational.

The leadership institute emphasizes the importance of overcoming fear and doubt in order to reach potential. Their tool “Facing Fears” helps leaders to face the reality that the moment they specify the conditions for success, they also specify conditions for failure, and that this fear of failure can debilitate one to ever trying toward potential in the first place. The tool also helps leaders face the fear that comes from both external and internal circumstances. External might be the actions of others that one cannot control, while the internal circumstances would be one’s own emotions. In either case, these lead to fear and doubt that can stifle the progress toward potential. When one encounters these forms of fear, they often time divert to mediocrity, subpar, or even defeat. Yet, this example of Peter shows us that when we can focus on something like faith, we can break through our failures and doubts and continue toward our potential. Which in his case, was being the great head apostle of Christ and His church (King James Bible, 1769/2015).

**Figure 2***Facing Fears*

Lastly, Paul is an impeccable example of the sort of transformational change that TFL can cause. In his case, it was the transformational leadership of Christ that influenced his change but became the embodiment of who he was. Paul throughout his life in Acts was a zealous Pharisee who violently opposed the spread of Christianity, and even went out of his way to see Christians killed and imprisoned. However, when meeting Jesus in Acts 9, he changed and became equally zealous about the truth being taught by Christ and went on to be a disciple of Christ that spread Christianity. This change that occurred within Paul is transformational. Christ lovingly invested in Paul, bringing Ananias to pray over him and call him to be His “chosen

instrument” for the Kingdom. Jesus also filled Paul with the Holy Spirit to provide wisdom and guidance as he fulfilled this new role. This type of investment and continued mentoring is foundational to TFL. The literature on TFL is enamored with studies on how it influences change, change readiness, resistance to change, etc. It can be said in confidence that TFL influences others to change (Busari et al., 2019; Faupel & Süß, 2018; Ghasabeh & Provitera, 2017; King James Bible, 1769/2015; Peng et al., 2020).

### **The Bible and CSC**

The term “cross-sector collaboration” might be a modern and secular contribution to the literature, but the essence behind it can be argued to have Biblical roots. There are examples in the form of metaphors used to describe the power of collaboration. There are examples of the Lord using literal examples to emphasize why collaborating can be powerful to create change. Some of those examples are outlined in this section and along with how they relate to what the institute believes, and the modern CSC literature. In addition, I share some speculation on the importance of collaboration with God. He has set up His method and order of prayer to be one of collaboration. In fact, I would argue that one-sided prayer is not prayer at all. Prayer is the communing with God in that we speak to Him and then we listen—He speaks to us. It might be through feelings, through other people, and through scripture. That said, the only way to be in relationship with God from my perspective is to enter into a collaborative agreement with Him. The scripture would say we covenant with Him, in other words, He promises us that He will keep up His end of the agreement if we keep up ours. An example of this would be the covenant God made with Abraham and the Son (Isaac) Sarah would bear, an everlasting covenant that would extend beyond him through his seed (KJV, 1769/2015, Genesis 17:19). The collaboration exists in the ongoing struggle to imperfectly keep our end of that covenant with God. We need

His help and while the Bible does not use the word collaborate, we can imagine our relationship with Him to be one of collaboration.

In Ecclesiastes 4 (KJV, 1769/2015) it states that two are better than one, meaning, the reward from labor will be greater when more than one person is working. The Lord uses common reasoning to help us understand that a greater investment will yield greater results. If I labor in the fields alone but one day, I may produce results, but imagine if I were two, then three, then four; the results begin to multiply. I believe the Lord is telling us that if we can work together, greater will be our reward. In relationship to the literature, we can see the power CSC brings due to the fact that it means people from across sectors come together for the sake of working together. Is that not what God is meaning in Ecclesiastes? We can do more together than we could ever do alone (Bauer et al., 2020; Reid et al, 2019).

TFL and the institute curriculum addresses this same idea that two are better than one. Yet there is also the understanding that, in order to sustain working relationships, there needs to be intentional repair and compassion. For example, the leadership institute includes something referred to as the fundamental relationship, which consists of three main components: 1) The Self, being the perspective of the individual(s) using the principle. For example, if it were me trying to make sense of this fundamental relationship, I would be the self. 2) The Other, being the other person(s) with whom I am considering being in relationship. If I am the self, and I am considering the relationship with my spouse, then the other would be her. 3) The space between, which is the metaphorical space that exists between people in a relationship, is represented with a hyphen much like Martin Buber's I-It and I-Thou. It could be the relationship itself between the two. The space between helps people understand the sort of behaviors that exist in the relationship, the health of the relationship, how close the relationship is, and how transactional or

transformational the relationship is. As a final example, the space between my wife and me, if our relationship were struggling, may metaphorically be wide and full of behaviors exhibiting blame and contention. As opposed to the space between my wife and me if our relationship were healthy, close, full of understanding, compassion, and kind behaviors.

### Figure 3

*The Fundamental Relationship: Transformational vs Transactional*



In 1 Corinthians 12:14-17 (KJV, 1769/2015) the Lord uses a metaphor of the body having multiple parts to it, all contributing and collaborating with one another to function properly. The hand cannot do anything unless the foot knows, and the foot cannot know of anything unless the mind knoweth. The body is miraculously interconnected in inseparable ways, much like the space between described in the above paragraph. This metaphor of the body and concept of the space between can be expanded to the community level, where sectors are inseparably connected whether they know it or not. The makeup of a community as defined in the proposed study, are the connections shared amongst sectors and organizations. Consider the Caufield and Brenner (2019) study, and what they formed within their community to address teen pregnancy rates. It clearly illustrates the organizations/sectors that entered the collaborative

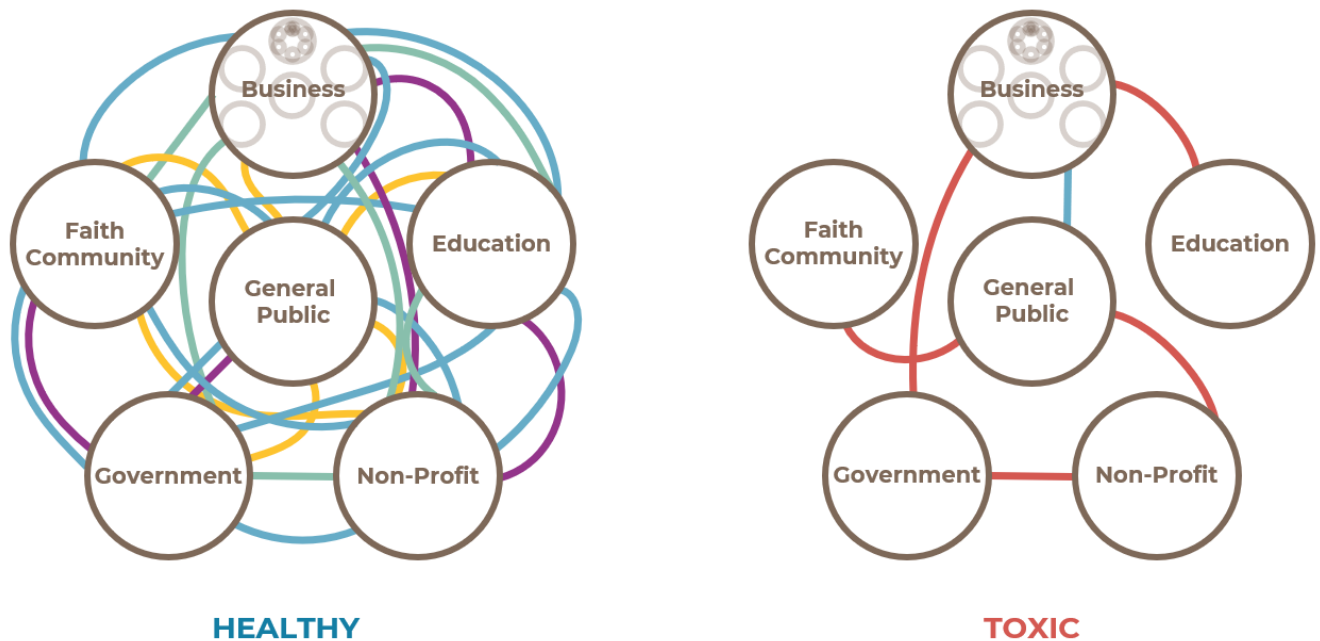
effort and how all of them were connected in a network to one another, and therefore, part of the solution. In comparison to the space between diagram within the institute curriculum, the resemblance is uncanny. Note that the concept within the institute was developed separately from the Caufield and Brenner study.

**Figure 4**

*Collective Leadership Structures Embedded Within a Social Systems Network*

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**Figure 5***The Space Between: Healthy vs Toxic Community*

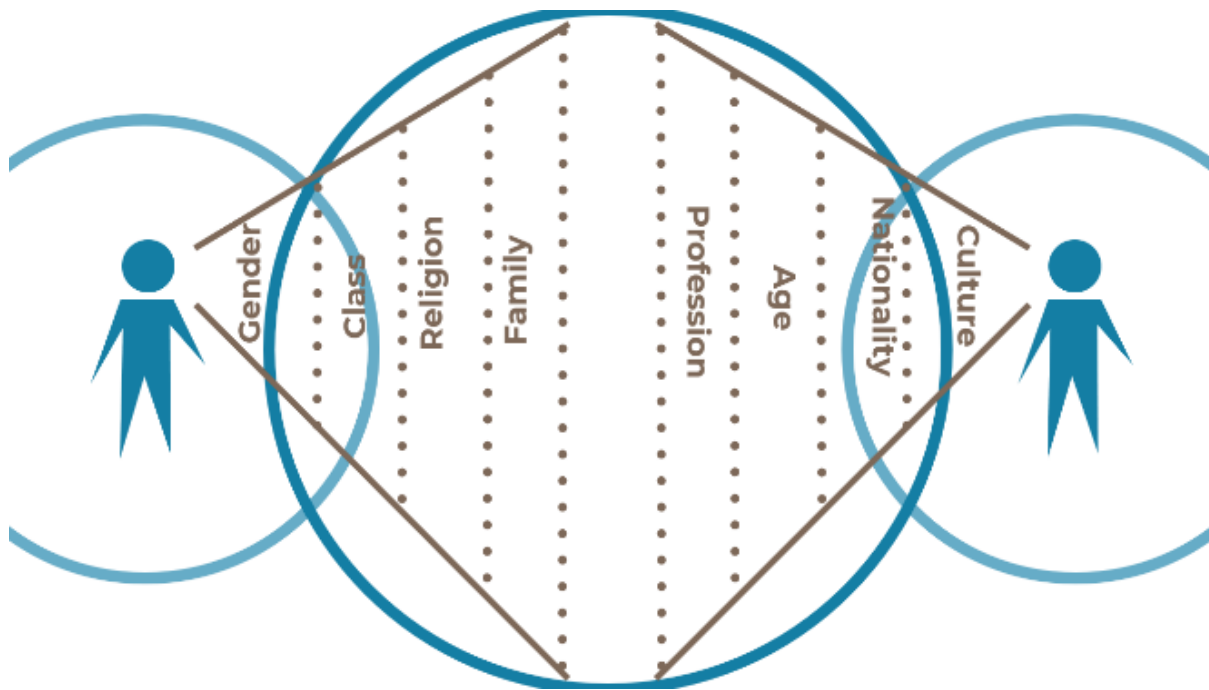
Another example from the Bible that tells us of the power CSC can produce comes from the old saying, iron sharpens iron. In Proverbs 27:17 this phrase is used to describe how a man improves the countenance of his friends when working together. This metaphor is descriptive at many levels. The first is the idea of iron, it is hard, sometimes we have hard hearts and minds that alone we cannot change. It requires the “iron” of others to help us grow, sharpen, smooth, and improve. Alone we can be a hard, rough, even ugly piece of iron, but together we can be smooth, sharp, and beautiful. The second is the use of the word “friend.” Notice that the Lord does not say men improve their countenance when their enemies sharpen them. The idea that we must be in a healthy relationship with another to the point we can even think of them as a friend is something worth noting. This tells us of the importance of having good relationships when engaging in CSC. Perhaps on some occasion, we may enter a CSC engagement not fully as

friends, maybe even enemies of heart, but for the collaboration to be successful we must change—hence the importance of TFL.

When considering the institute, a tool that is used relates to how individuals can help one another improve. The different lenses and perspectives we each bring is what can help people in CSC to make each other better and learn with one another. No two people see the world the same, neither do organizations or sectors, they all bring a unique perspective. These may be the cultures people bring, their religions, their economic class, gender, age, nationality, family, etc. In kind, I shared in the literature review a similar perspective from research like Reid et al. (2019) who discussed when all sectors bring their knowledge, expertise, backgrounds, lenses, resources, and understanding, these are the conditions that makes CSC work.

**Figure 6**

*Understanding Relationships: Different Lenses*



## **The Bible and CFC**

Recall from Chapters One and Two, the term CFC created in the proposed study is used loosely to encapsulate the catalytic power that philanthropy contains. Charitable foundations and/or philanthropists are argued to have the ability to catalyze transformational type of change because of the influence and resources they possess. The leadership institute is a prime example of how to be such a CFC as outlined. A philanthropist in Salem desired to see change in their community, they leveraged the human capital they possessed and gathered the right people together, they then leaned into their financial resources and funded a multi-million valued leadership institute. The aim was to bring leaders from all sectors consistently together, teach them transformational type theory/leadership, collaborate, and develop personally over the course of multiple years. Looking to the Bible, both Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus are examples CFCs through their belief in the change the Savior was preaching, and then in funding His ministry. The ministry would have happened no matter what because God can do all things, but he uses us, His children, to do His work. He used Joseph and Nicodemus in these examples to help catalyze some of His work. He uses charitable foundations and philanthropists to do good in the world today. Afterall, that is literally why they exist and do what they do.

As mentioned in the literature review, in 2021 the “Giving Pledge” formed by very prominent global philanthropists, they commit to giving back and making a difference in the world through their resources (Schmitz and McCollim, 2021). MacDonald and Howorth (2018) examined the roots of social enterprise, as far back as the early 1600s, to be early signs of formal philanthropy. This tells us that the desire to use resources for good, and for the betterment of mankind is certainly not new to the literature on philanthropy. Yet, the literature on philanthropy, especially as it pertains to the catalytic power they possess, is scarce. Therefore, we must rely

upon that scarcity and the Bible to understand the potential CFCs possess to help contribute to needed transformation.

Since studying philanthropy, foundations, and philanthropists, I have often wondered why they do it. There is no clear or scientific reason why people with a wealth of resources give back to others. Every person or organization would explain their motives differently, but I would speculate that majority have a similar thread in common: feeling of being blessed with such an abundance that they feel compelled to give to those less fortunate. Giving may be in the form of money, it could be time, it could be connections, or other resources, but giving comes from the heart. In 2 Corinthians 9:6-8, the Lord implores us to give what is in our heart, not reluctantly or with compulsion, but from a pure intent. To be happy in giving and the Lord will bless us (KJV, 1769/2015).

The first time I had ever met the philanthropist funding the leadership institute, I asked him why he does what he does. He responded quickly that he believes his checkbook belongs to the Lord. In his heart of hearts, he lives every day trying to do the will of the Lord through the resources he has been given. A separate individual whom I have worked with in another community serves as the CEO of a large private family foundation shared in response to what their “why” was: they believe God placed them on this earth to help His children. If that means granting away millions of dollars a year, he will do it, if it means mentoring an addict, he will do it, if it means developing a leader, he will do it, or if it means doing the dishes so his wife doesn’t have to, he will do it. Examples such as this can begin enlightening us as to why charitable foundations/philanthropists do what they do, and why they possess a catalytic power that is much bigger than they. A power that cannot be described in any other way than transformational, or from the Divine.

The Biblical premise of this proposed study is to do Kingdom work, to build Zion as described within the book of Psalms—a people of one heart and one mind. Zion is not only a destination, but a process as well, meant to strengthen and refine us (KJV, 1769/2015, Psalms). In connection to the research, the work that goes into building Zion and getting people to change, come together, and work toward something greater; is the same as building the conditions for transformation within a community. Building Zion in such a way to usher in the return of the Savior is not only an individual effort, but it is more so a collective one (Embry & Jack, 2019), we as children of God must do this together. As such, healing, repairing, and fostering love within communities is essential. However, this starts with one person, one leader at a time.

To close the biblical foundation, I connect the leadership institute and scripture one more time. In the gospel of Luke, the Savior shares the example of having 100 sheep, and losing one, then asking, wouldn't we leave the ninety and nine to go after the one? Christ certainly cares about the one just as much as the ninety-nine (KJV, 1769/2015, Luke). The leadership institute is built upon the idea that the one can make a ripple of an impact leading to transformation. There is a concept in the institute programming of having “deep accountability,” which is to find a way to change even if we have every reason not to. We must change first, deep within our hearts and minds before we can enact the change we wish to see in others. What the scripture in Luke does not state is that we are often the one in the ninety-nine. We are the lost sheep not yet found and that the Lord will always leave the rest to come for us. The change, the catalyst, the transformation starts within us.

### Summary

In this chapter I reviewed the literature that currently exists surrounding the area of the proposed study: the literature on TFL, CSC, and CFC. The literature on TFL is quite vast and has a robust history from the past 30 years. Because TFL literature is largely surrounding the organizational space, the proposed study aims to expand TFL theory into the community space through reporting on the case in Salem Oregon. CSC as described in this review, has been shown to produce great community outcomes, but lacks a consistency surrounding a theory of change and methodology that can be formally implemented in a variety of different communities. The proposed study aims to provide evidence from the case in Salem Oregon of a consistent and scalable theory of change and method of formalizing CSC. Lastly, the literature on charitable foundations as catalytic entities within their communities is scarce and nearly nonexistent. While there is literature on foundations, charities, and philanthropists, there is none on exactly their ability to catalyze change within their communities. This review looks at what does exist surrounding the impact that foundations/philanthropists can have but lacks the complete view of charitable foundations as catalysts. Thus, the proposed study is essential to provide an actual case in Salem Oregon of a philanthropist that set out to formally catalyze change within their community.

All three of the constructs of interest, TFL, CSC, and CFC, when combined together have the potential to be positioned as proper conditions for organizational and community change, through leadership. The case in Salem is focused on leaders that have participated in a leadership institute that is provided freely by a local philanthropist. Within that institute they are taught and brought together with leaders from all sectors to develop as individual leaders, but also to collaborate in such a way they can approach community challenges in a completely different

way. As a result, not only is there potential for the community of Salem benefiting, but the individual organizations of the leaders, as well.

In addition, this review considers the strong connection this study has to the Bible at a philosophical level. The Bible has strongly influenced me as the researcher, and it is informally embedded throughout the theoretical framework, the leadership institute, and this literature review. The Bible and/or faith does not have a formal role in the research design, but it is important to note of its influence upon the research conception and eventual analysis.

## CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHOD

### Overview

To best understand the research questions and to accomplish the research objectives, I selected qualitative case study methodology. I examined the impact of the leadership institute embodying TFL, CSC, and CFC in Salem Oregon has on organizational and the community change. Qualitative case study allowed for a deep analysis of individual perspectives and experiences. In this chapter, I provided a description of the participants followed by the planned procedures for the study that outlined the reliability and replicability of what was proposed. These sections will conclude with the analysis and delimitations, limitations, and assumptions will be discussed.

### Research Questions

RQ1: How do leaders perceive the leadership institute as embodying TFL, CSC, and CFC?

RQ2: How have participants in the leadership institute experienced the integration of TFL, CSC, and CFC, and how has this integration manifested in their workplaces and community?

RQ3: What are the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the leadership institute according to the participants' perspectives?

RQ4: How do leaders perceive the impact of the leadership institute on changes within their workplaces and the broader community?

RQ5: What aspects of the leadership institute are identified by participants as most beneficial in promoting TFL, CSC, and CFC?



### **Research Design**

In this qualitative design a case study method was chosen due to the following contributing factors: 1) The research is focused on one single case consisting of three elements of interest, TFL/CSC/CFC, occurring in combination via the leadership institute in Salem Oregon. It was assumed that nowhere else were these three variables in complete combination as they were in Salem, therefore, this case was essential to understand how they impact one another and contribute to transformational-type change. 2) The leadership institute was a central construct for this study, as it combined TFL, CSC and CFC. Salem Oregon was currently the only community intentionally combined the said elements. This case study will have provided opportunities for future validation of the institute and the framework in other communities and/or settings to be understood as a reliable and valid contributing framework to creating conditions for transformational change. 3) The impact of the leadership institute had on workplaces and the community in Salem is unique and therefore required an individualized approach to the research design.

A case study was the assumed best method of addressing the purpose of this research to understand the impact charitable foundations/philanthropists have in their communities to catalyze transformational-type change through cross-sector collaboration efforts, and transformational leadership.

### **Participants**

Twelve participants were identified through purposeful sampling from the 2020 through 2023 cohorts of leaders who had completed the 12-month leadership institute program and training. These leaders held either an executive role or a senior management position or served as “community influencers” in the general public. The 2020 through 2023 cohorts consisted of 83

leaders from the community of Salem, Oregon who were able to fully commit to the expectations of the institute. In addition to their leadership role, they had within their organization/community, these leaders committed their time, energy, and talents to the program. Foremost, they needed to resonate with the vision of the leadership institute, which was to be a catalyst for transformational change. Most leaders were nominated by previous participants in the program, but the application was available for anyone interested. After applying, each candidate was interviewed and vetted as someone willing to commit to the program. The program within the leadership institute was free for all participants and provided by the community philanthropist. The value per person was about \$18,000, a significant investment in them individually as leaders.

To ensure representation across six different business sectors, I invited two leaders from each of the following: non-profit, business, government, faith, education, and the general public. Charitable foundations were not included due to the overlap with the CFC construct. I selected two leaders from each of these sectors to facilitate diversity in age, gender, ethnicity, work experience in terms of years. A sample size of 12 leaders from different sectors and organizations should have provided a saturated and sufficient sample representation of the population of cross-sector leaders.

### **Study Procedures**

I recruited participants through existing relationships with the leadership institute, as, at the time, I served as its director. I emailed current participants in the leadership institute, and alumni, to extend an invitation to participate in the study. A consent form (Appendix A) was provided to each participant stating the procedures and that their participation would not negatively affect pre-existing funding relationships or business relationships in the community.

All potential participants' questions were answered before asking them to sign the consent form. No personal identifying information was used in the presentation of the results. All findings were generalized and attributed by theme and research purposes.

I conducted individual semi-structured interviews with the 12 leaders. I met with each leader once for a 90-minute interview to gather focused data and information (see below and Appendix B). Since the leaders were either current participants in the leadership institute or alumni, they were familiar with the institute's program/curriculum and the concepts behind transformational change. However, I provided a refresher on any relevant content in the interviews. Details for the interview questions and focus group script are specified below and in the Appendix. After all data was collected, analyzed, and written into the dissertation, the results of the study with participants were provided.

### **Instrumentation and Measurement**

**Demographics.** I asked participants to provide the following information for descriptive statistics: age, gender, ethnicity, years of work experience, leadership position, years within that leadership position, and religious affiliation.

**Interviews.** I conducted the interviews with the individual leaders. Semi-structured interview questions generally followed the scripts provided in Appendix B, allowing for impromptu questions based upon the individual, conversation, or dynamic in the moment of interviewing. The interview questions were designed to collect information on the impact of the leadership institute on their leadership, organization, and community, as well as their evaluation of the most beneficial aspects. I took notes and audio recordings (with participant permission) in order to capture the data.

**Reliability*****Credibility***

The relationships that existed in the community through the charitable foundation and the community members allowed for an honest, relaxed, and open dialogue with each person and group. Each interview started with the same methodology inviting and welcoming the participant to be fully transparent with no ramifications if they were to share anything they thought to be received as negative. The data collected was an accurate representation of the actual views of the participants – they were given full permission to discuss negative aspects of the Institute/things that did not go as planned.

Because of the pre-existing relationship with the participants, and their knowledge of this being academic research, the statements of the researcher's neutrality were made clear. This consisted of statements such as, "you have permission to be honest, in fact, we need you to be in order to gather the most accurate data." Or "you don't need to worry about offending me by sharing things you might think I don't want to hear." Or "please don't hold back on what you have to say, be open with me about the good and the bad."

***Transferability***

The participants represented six different sectors: non-profit, business, government, faith, education, and the general public. This diversity facilitated the generalizability of themes gathered into other industries/contexts. However, the hope for this study was that the leadership institute could be transferred into other communities and organizations. Ideally, because of the cross-sector participation, the neutrality of the philanthropist, and the universality of

transformational leadership; the potential existed that this institute could be replicated in other communities.

### ***Dependability***

Each interview with every leader was conducted in the same manner, including the same recruitment process and communication, exact interview questions and flow (preserving room for flexibility and the organic nature of the interviews), and the same locations being in person or on video call. Each interview was analyzed in the same way, using the same framework to interpret findings. Each leader was treated equally and with the same respect and consideration.

### ***Confirmability***

There was pre-existing relationship between me and the participants, which could have influenced not only gathering of data, but the analysis as well. My own bias was considered throughout all the methodology. I shared my purpose in conducting the research and pursuit of truth in understanding the impact of the leadership institute. Through all the procedures above, I was careful to not assume transformational change, or that the leadership institute has had a positive impact on the participants, their organization, or the community. I did my best to remain neutral and not lead participants to overstate or misrepresent the facts. During data analysis, I remained open to what was found in the data, verses forcing a specific agenda that supports the success of the leadership institute.

## **Data Analysis**

Because of the case study nature of the research and how the data was compiled, the analysis was continued by a thorough disassembly of interview notes, field notes, and researcher reflection notes. I then re-assembled and coded the data into themes to make clear for interpretation. All coding was done in relation to the research questions acting as a filter to

disseminate the gathered information. Through coding themes, key statements, key challenges, and major influences, I interpreted the data and provided an outline connected to the research questions. The interpretation portion of the analysis examined how TFL, CSC, and CFC embodied in the leadership institute influenced organizations and the community. As a conclusion in presenting the findings, I explored how the components of TFL, CSC and CFC, influence transformation within organizations and the community, as well as which aspects were most beneficial.

### **Delimitations, Assumptions, and Limitations**

#### ***Delimitations***

The inclusion/exclusion criteria of this study hinged upon three things: 1) They must be a current or former participant of the leadership institute. 2) They must represent one of the two participants from one of the six following sectors—nonprofit, business, education, government, faith community, or general public—12 total participants. 3) They must serve in a position of leadership at the executive or senior management level in their organization unless they are representing the general public. This study was very niche in what it was seeking to understand, and therefore, it called for a very niche sample of participants. There were 83 participants/former participants in the leadership institute that fit the above inclusion/exclusion criteria. To encourage a variety of representation, I selected two leaders from each of the listed sectors that represent diversity in age, gender, ethnicity, work experience in terms of years.

#### ***Assumptions***

There were four assumptions most relevant to this study. First, I assumed that the pre-existing relationship I had with all participants were positive. I assumed that these leaders were fond of me as a person and would have considered me a friend, however, that may have not been

true for all of them. This could have had an impact on the data collection in terms of their complete transparency, and level of comfortability with me. Second, I assumed every participant who was asked to participate would in fact willingly participate. It may have been the case that life circumstances or the nature of being a busy leader prevented some from volunteering. Third, I assumed the data collection via interviews would be without challenges and be done with ease because of the relationships and commonality they shared together and with me through the institute. However, this may have not been the case once participants were placed in a formal interview environment connected to academic research. Lastly, I assumed the data collection would correspond with the research questions and result in validating what has been proposed. That said, what I might have discovered could have led to more weaknesses in the institute's programing. It may have also pointed to the inconsistency amongst the constructs under review. After conducting the data collection, these assumptions served well as pre-cautionaries and information in order to successfully gather the data. It can be reported, there were no signs of complications, and the data was gathered successfully as planned.

### *Limitations*

There were inherent limitations of subjectivity and lack of control which were important to recognize. However, a case study approach was chosen as the methodology because it allowed for uniqueness, specificity, and flexibility in the process to best understand the truth of the case at hand. Another limitation of this study was the chance of social desirability impacting the data collection and accuracy. The participants all knew who I was, they knew each other, and were assumed to have a positive bias toward the institute and institute curriculum. To respond with answers or thoughts that could have been perceived as a negative reflection of the leadership institute, may have been a concern for them. I shared that I valued their honesty so there was an

accurate assessment of the perceived impact of the combination of TFL, CSC, and CFC on organizational and community change, as well as the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the leadership institute.

Another limitation was the small sample size. It could be assumed larger samples may have provided more compelling results. Twelve participants were only 15% of the entire 83 past leadership institute participants in the community of Salem over the span of four years. I determined to continue collecting data until I reached saturation, and further, I was also intentional to recruit a diverse group of leaders, as a result, a sample of 12 leader participants was fully sufficient to create understanding of the phenomenon.

Finally, the last limitation worth noting was the vastness of meaning and inability to claim causation amongst the constructs under review. There was no way of knowing exactly how and why, in detail, the leadership institute has impacted the participants' ability to experience transformation at all levels. During their participation in the institute, they had a myriad of other things impacting them, in addition to the impacts the institute was having not yet accounted for. The claims they may make were largely anecdotal and speculative. However, through the analysis, I searched for dominant themes that have been generalized and attributed to any of the variables at play, especially in how they have coalesced through the institute. In part, the same limitation exists pertaining to the institute and framework. This was one case that may be spiritually or philosophically compelling to some but cannot provide compelling statistical evidence backing its validity elsewhere. Therefore, it is stated and recommended in the concluding chapter, the proposed research needs further investigation from other angles and vantage points from both a qualitative and quantitative position.



### **Summary**

This chapter provided a methodological breakdown of the study in terms of its qualitative nature. The justification of choosing a case study approach was also discussed as the best option to understand and appreciate in the case of leaders attending the leadership institute. I provided the interview questions and the data analysis plan. The study does not go without weaknesses, which I described in my discussion of the delimitations, assumptions, and limitations. I also addressed the proper controls and boundaries to address these weaknesses. The next chapter will present the results of this proposed study.

## CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

### Overview

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the combined impact of transformational leadership, cross-sector collaboration, and charitable foundations on driving organizational and community-based change. Additionally, it sought to gain insight into the perceived strengths and weaknesses of a leadership institute experienced by leaders from various sectors. This study focused on the experiences of individual leaders representing six diverse sectors who participated in a cross-sector leadership institute, funded by a local philanthropist in the Salem, Oregon community.

The data collection process in this study was conducted through semi-structured interview research. It involved gathering information and insights from a diverse group of leaders who participated in a cross-sector leadership institute in Salem, Oregon, generously funded by a local philanthropist. The data collection methods included 90-minute, audio-recorded interviews, with documented analysis via field notes in real time. These leaders represented six different sectors, and their experiences and perspectives were crucial to understanding the impact of transformational leadership, cross-sector collaboration, and charitable foundations on organizational and community-based change. Through a systematic and in-depth examination of these participants' experiences, the research aimed to shed light on the interplay of these constructs and was guided by several key research questions:

**Question 1:** How do leaders perceive the leadership institute as embodying TFL, CSC, and CFC?

**Question 2:** How have participants in the leadership institute experienced the integration of TFL, CSC, and CFC, and how has this integration manifested in their workplaces and community?

**Question 3:** What are the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the leadership institute according to the participants' perspectives?

**Question 4:** How do leaders perceive the impact of the leadership institute on changes within their workplaces and the broader community?

**Question 5:** What aspects of the leadership institute are identified by participants as most beneficial in promoting TFL, CSC, and CFC?

These research questions guided the study, directing the collection and analysis of data to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact the leadership institute has had on leaders and their communities.

### **Descriptive Results**

The study sample was on average age 47.33 years old ( $SD=10.51$ ), mainly White Christian males with over 23 years of work experience, and nearly 11 years of experience in a leadership role. See Table 1 for the breakdown of the demographic data by participant.

**Table 1***Study Sample Demographic Information*

<b>Leader Participants</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Years , Work Exp.</b>	<b>Years Leading Exp.</b>	<b>Current Role</b>	<b>Religious Affiliation</b>
Participant A	54	M	White	26	20	School Superintendent	Christian
Participant B	38	M	White	21	10	Lead Counselor	Christian
Participant C	50	F	Black	34	15	School Administrator	No Affiliation
Participant D	62	M	White	50	14	Chief of Police	Christian
Participant E	54	M	Hispanic	38	12	Executive Director	Christian
Participant F	58	F	White	40	12	Department Head	Christian
Participant G	59	F	White	35	12	Executive Director	Christian
Participant H	35	M	Black	20	15	COO	Christian
Participant I	48	F	White	24	10	Administrator	No Affiliation

Participant J	43	F	White	29	20	CEO	No Affiliation
Participant K	31	M	White	12	6	Director	Christian
Participant L	36	M	White	13	9	Regional Director	Christian

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*Note.* Exp. = Experience

### **Study Findings**

In part one, I will first present the results based upon the impact and manifestation of TFL, CSC, and CFC through the perspectives of the participants. Research Questions one, two, and four specifically address the perceptions of the key elements separately and in combination, so they are presented together. In part two, I will address research questions three and five, which are more evaluative in nature and address the strengths, weaknesses, and aspects of the leadership institute that promoted TFL, CSC, and CFC.

Each grouping of questions contains various themes discovered in the interviews as they pertain to the research questions and each key element of the study (TFL, CSC, and CFC). Furthermore, for each theme, there are excerpts provided, quoting content from the participant interviews. It is important to note that the names of participants have been excluded from these excerpts. Refer to Table 1 for a reference as to which leaders are quoted throughout these findings.

### **Themes Part One**

#### **Research Questions One, Two, and Four**

**RQ1:** How do leaders perceive the leadership institute as embodying TFL, CSC, and CFC?

**RQ2:** How have participants in the leadership institute experienced the integration of TFL, CSC, and CFC, and how has this integration manifested in their workplaces and community?

**RQ4:** How do leaders perceive the impact of the leadership institute on changes within their workplaces and the broader community?

The themes related to research questions one, two, and four will be organized as shown in Table 2. All are primary themes clustered in categories of TFL, CSC, and CFC in combination; and then each element (TFL, CSC, CFC) individually.

**Table 2**

*Themes from Research Questions One, Two, and Four.*

<b>Combination</b>	<b>TFL</b>	<b>CSC</b>	<b>CFC</b>
Collaboration	Culture Change	Space/Environment/Vulnerability	Deep and Pure Intent
Deep Relationships	Trust	Trust and Sharing	Reputation and Influence
Change in Mindset		Direct Application	Long-Term Impacts

**TFL, CSC, and CFC in Combination**

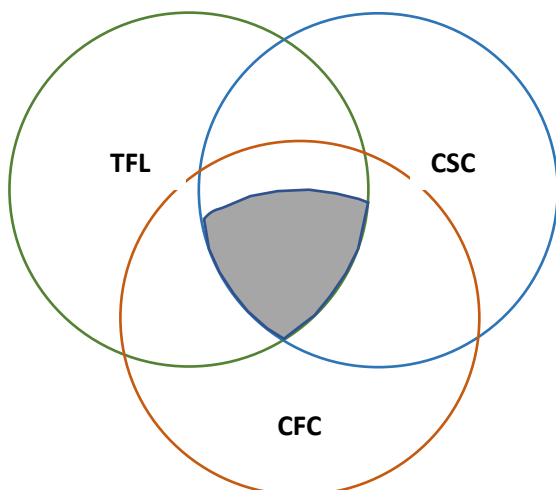
When asked about the integration of the three essential elements in the study and their manifestation in their experiences, every participant, in various expressions, affirmed, all three

were present throughout the entire process. The intent of what they meant clearly communicated the prevalence of TFL, CSC, and CFC throughout the leadership institute programming. One participant even drew out a Venn diagram to illustrate their idea, pointing out that the leadership institute manifests all three elements at the center (in grey). The participant said:

I'm picturing like, a Venn diagram in terms of these three, I was just thinking about what that looks like. You have the foundation or charitable community organization, right? You have cross sector collaboration. And then you have transformational leadership like explicit and specific, the leadership training and framework. And I think it'd be really interesting to figure out these are the conditions that create that space and can only exist if all three of those things are in play. And so, I think it'd be really interesting to think about that sweet spot. Imagine pushing to make this overlapping section bigger and more powerful in the Venn diagram? So, I think that's just interesting you're really setting this right. Yeah. And so, I think figuring out how it can create these conditions, if they don't tend to share that circle a little further.

### Figure 7

*Depiction of a Participant's Drawing Describing the Combination of Study Elements*



The following will include the percentage of participants who discussed the theme, followed by a brief presentation of the comprehensive perspective of that theme, and a quote(s) by a participating leader.

**Collaboration.** One hundred percent of participants highlighted creating a spirit of collaboration within the leadership institute, the impact it had on them to do work outside the institute together in the community, as well as in their individual organizations. They developed a collaborative mentality and described it as being central to their organization's success. Sixty seven percent specifically discussed a collective feeling toward their own purpose and vision themselves, the vision statements within their organization, and as a collective community as alumni of the program. Participant C stated, "Really working more collaboratively... when I think about within my own organization: working even more collaboratively with staff on a lot of different things so that we can really make sure that voices are heard."

Participant H: We've talked about working collaboratively with other organizations but haven't. Bringing this collaborative approach in, we've started writing it in even into grants on how to really be more collaborative with our community members and looking outwards. I mean, our purposes come from a place where it's been full of silos and all this other stuff.

Participant G: I don't know if I told you this, but I've been able to connect with other community leaders. And we share some of my visioning for what is possible. And they're excited. They feel like they want to partner with us. And it's just, we are scraping on the surface of things that people are getting really excited about. And as those excitements



happen, I think you start to line up additional resources that maybe aren't just philanthropic to make it happen.

**Deep Relationships.** One hundred percent of participants commented on authentic connection and deep relationships developed with fellow leadership alumni as one of the most impactful program elements. As such 100 percent of participants commented on how through the deep relationships, they learned the significance of creating a space both literally and metaphorically to build trust and relationship as critical. Participant C said, “I think just having those moments where we can create the space where people can trust each other and be vulnerable has really helped me a lot, I’ve learned a lot about being a leader in that way.”

Participant D: It's because the relationships that are produced and there's a, you know, somewhat of a shiny object at the center of those relationships that you're able to point to. It produces deep, deep, deep, perhaps, even deeper relationships, and there are some deep relationships that have produced that, but it produces deeper relationships. And I think to some degree, it's because we're always at the ‘campfire’. It allows you to sit with other people without having to engage. You follow me? Do you understand why the campfire element and metaphor? You and I, you like to sit around a campfire and be very casual with each other because there's a campfire between us and the campfire itself gives us space to just sit in be. It doesn't force communication and relationship, right? It allows it to be produced and that produces a deeper relationship than you and I at a table being forced to work together on a question. In some adult learning environments, campfire idea produces deeper relationships than other adult learning environments.

One is that the institute identifies the way life and leadership works. The way transformation works. So, apprehending and applying that, through developing those

deep relationships around that. When I say apprehending, I mean grabbing it and digesting it, understanding it. So, in the process, it's the apprehension of transformation. That's the campfire that we're sitting around developing these deep relationships.

Participant B: I think the opportunity just to network and be in relationship with members of a community that those relationships didn't already exist, and whether it's those who are also in public education sector or those who have no connection to the public education sector, but we have them because of those relationships and the conversations that happened. There's a deeper understanding and appreciation for each other and our community, for what challenges we face as a as a community and the growth opportunities obviously as well. So, I think just those relationships, having a place and an avenue to live that out, and that cross-sectional partnership that exists is huge.

**Change in Mindset.** Sixty-seven percent of participants reported a change in mindset that led to improvements in their organizational health because of how TFL, CSC, and CFC influenced their leadership. They described it as being able to directly apply program components that emphasize the need to be transparent as a leader, to address organizational conflict, and to identify common goals within team members. The combination of TFL, CSC, and CFC also contributed to their change in mindset and perspective on their own leadership and how to lead change organizationally, and within their community. Participant F stated, “You have to have all three of them (TFL, CSC, CFC), people have really changed their mindsets.”

Participant E: Becoming a more transparent a leader. I mean, that happens on a relational side and a practical side within an organization but even in our organization, where a lot of information didn't flow well. Let's say financial information, right. My goal is to get that information in front of them as far down the flowchart as possible, so that everybody

understands why decisions are being made at an administrative level. That's an example of a practical application of the transformation within me.

Participant H: Understanding how conflict can be constructive was very huge, and how to really change and even welcome the conflict is it has been a big thing for me and the relationships in our in our organization.

Participant: I think at the end of the day, when I'm looking down to kind of the bottom line, there may be some differences, but knowing that there's a common goal I think helps to kind of break the barriers and break the mindsets or shift the mindsets of people who may not be so receptive.

Participant E: I think it's probably important to note that the individual one-on-one relationships, to be able to do the community cross-collaboration stuff, they don't particularly have to be deep. But as everyone's gone through and gotten deep at various levels, with different people, your mindset is in the right place to make something happen within the community.

### **Themes Related Specifically to Transformational Leadership:**

**Culture Change.** One hundred percent of participants described in several ways how TFL contributed to their ability to change culture in their own life, their organization, and within the community at large. Additionally, 67% reported various other changes happening in their lives at different levels; both personally and organizationally. Participant B, made the following point, "Examine culture and examine systems that are in place that need change, which require us to innovate, like we talked about, that require us to think deeper about people and about the reasons we're doing things (as individuals)." Participant J added, "I mean, talk about

transformational change: like everything is better, everything's better, everything's more efficient (organizationally).”

Participant J: But I think even what we talked about just now (culture change) is taking the time to actually evaluate and celebrate the successes little by little takes part in a change to the culture to be a little bit more relaxed and... fun.

Participant G: It feels like to me that the leadership institute has risen the tide in Salem, and now all the boats are floating a little higher. Everybody's doing a little better, including programs that we work with that were never a part of the institute, but we're working with them in a better way. And so that program is doing better, right? The report vulnerable families are doing better, regardless of who's serving them because the tide has risen. There's a there's a kindness, the love, the compassion, the collaboration that just this is bigger in in our community than it was before.

Participant E: The change I see is that those cross collaboration, cross sector engagements happen easier. I mean, I don't even have to know someone very well, who's gone through the institute, to be able to reach out and talk about something to solve a community challenge or because we know we've gone through the institute like our setting is on all right, how do we work together? How can I help you? Can we work together?

Participant E: (Regarding their personal change) I'm more willing to throw myself into the world take a few hits, because I want to be real to people. And so, when it comes to trusting, I want to I want to live in a world where people trust people, and sometimes the price they pay for that is I get burned. But I still want to live in that world. So, I still do it.

**Trust.** One hundred percent of participants used the word trust repeatedly to describe what TFL fostered within and amongst the participants. As such, 75 percent of participants

demonstrated more self-efficacy and confidence because of trust in their own abilities, and even others. Manifest through their stories shared in the interview and subsequent evidence in their accomplishments, such as the confidence to do more and improve because they had the newfound knowledge and perspective provided to them. As a result, participants stated and shared various examples of both situation and self-awareness fostered through learning TFL. Participant K mentioned, “I feel like, the principles of transformation are now a part of my vocabulary, a heightened my awareness to the point that I work on them consciously and unconsciously.”

Participant G: Then I'm going to want, and I'm going to be willing to give, and I'm going to be willing to negotiate and I'm going to be willing to do all of those things and give of myself a little more deeply. Give up my resources a little more deeply, because I know this person, I trust this person. This person is a trusted and valued person and that's who we give more to, right?

Participant A: I would have not applied to be in the position I am now as a superintendent, had I not been given the confidence from the institute and the leaders I met. Not only that, but I had the confidence in how I needed to lead. It's the being equipped and may be the best example I can share. Where I was not equipped and confident before.

### **Themes Related Specifically to Cross-Sector Collaboration**

**Space/Environment/Vulnerability.** One hundred percent of participants described how the environment created within the leadership institute mattered a great deal for them to break down barriers and build relationships of trust which is important for leaders to successfully cross-sector collaborate. This resulted in 75 percent of participants highlighting that the

programming helped instill a shared vision amongst leaders in the community, which further encouraged CSC and urged a collective desire to do more for their community.

Participant G: We had to be open and vulnerable. So, what created that? Well, I think part of it was the people, right? I think part of it was the stories laid out there. Those running the program were always openly and honestly sharing, which gives room and make space for other people to do the same.

Participant L: It was healthy for me to be in a community in which, like, we had a shared vision of hope and optimism, and you know, potential for this city that we care about. That was inspiring, you know, like, oh, these people are working to make Salem better to they have a vision of a Salem that is healthier and flourishing. And so, I wanted to be a part of that.

**Trust and Sharing.** One hundred percent of participants described trust and sharing as something critical for them. The way they spoke about trust was centered in the importance of building it before the sharing takes place across and within sectors. Participant L shared, “My experience with the Institute, I think the barriers, to access and the barriers to productive conversation have gone way down and that is in regard to cross sector collaboration and the relationships.”

Another participant said the following in reference to how CSC as a construct of the program influenced her the trust and sharing within her own organization.

Participant J: “I was able to see the importance of having trust amongst my staff and helping them feel comfortable enough to share. Since all of this, we have more

opportunities to lead, share, and collaborate, to the point where even myself being the CEO, I leave the room.”

Participant K: The environment of the institute promotes an atmosphere of friendship and that is perhaps one of the strongest elements of the institute. It really fosters friendships, no matter who you are, or where you came from, or where you work, and that level of trust between people breaks down barriers that tie up the rest of the world in knots and allows us to actually get things done together.

**Direct Application.** One hundred percent of participants referenced moments of direct application and outcomes stemming from their CSC efforts. The most prominent examples included the development of a behavioral health program within the Career Technical Education Center (CTEC,) a career technical high school in the area, and the revitalization of a community wide youth festival that had ended and lost funding several years ago.

The program at CTEC is the first CTE behavioral health program of its kind in the entire country for high school kids. This conception and initial execution of this program was catalyzed through institute participants and alumni. In addition, the community-wide youth festival was run by a nonprofit that was dissolved a number of years ago, however, the community has longed for the festival ever since. Institute participants and alumni catalyzed the initial revitalization and saw through its execution and success, bringing a youth festival (the Awesome 3000) back to the community after its nonexistence for several years. Leaders engaged in these efforts through the institute’s program element, community problems of practice. Participant F said about the community problems of practice, “The community problems of practice were a direct form of

application. Also, bringing back the alumni and hearing their stories of application. I think it's good that some of them were very transparent.”

Participant H: The best example I got is the community problems of practice from last year's cohort. That group that was assigned city livability in Salem and worked on the Awesome 3000. They were like, we're bringing this back, and did it!

Participant I: Working on that project (CTEC) with that group of people had it in the very forefront of my mind and there was a domino effect and we ended up having the opportunity to add a program here. There is nothing quite like the behavioral health program, some have tried to dabble with different courses in different places, but nothing set up like this clinical training space with an immersive experience.

### **Themes Related Specifically to Charitable Foundations as Catalysts**

**Deep and Pure Intent.** One hundred percent of participants felt the importance of a deep and pure vision without self-interest. They realized when leading through TFL and engaging in CSC when catalyzed by pure intent, there is no obligation or hidden agenda, therefore, the intent is trusted. This was supported by 75 percent noting a philanthropic spirit when noting a feeling of accessibility and being genuine because it was provided by a philanthropist. They even felt a responsibility to take their leadership development and collaboration more seriously.

Additionally, knowing a philanthropist was investing in them led them to be fully committed with a sense of moral responsibility to their community, organizations, and themselves.

Participant J: Interested in impact, having impact, long-term sustainable impact. Really only a philanthropist who is committed to that can participate in this in this way because there is no quick short return on the investment. You know, changing the culture of a city and now, if you're successful on that, which you know, there's already these examples of



pockets of it being you know, seeing success right with people collaborating and working together and all that.

Participant C: I feel that because somebody (a philanthropist) is investing in me because they trust that I will take that forward and do something with it. I'm not looking for a handout. Nobody. That's not what we're trying to do. But it didn't feel like a handout. It felt like an investment. And I wanted to make good on that. There was a trust that I would be somebody that would make good on that investment.

Participant B: Philanthropy inherently carries a deeper purpose. It carries a deeper weight that there is accountability. With that, that someone has seen or affirmed that I as a leader, have potential as a leader to change and transform our community. And there has been a monetary and a time commitment both to valuable resources, finite resources that have been invested in me in our community, someone believed in me, I must be invested in that.

**Reputation and Influence.** One hundred percent of participants shared how the reputation of the philanthropist in the community of Salem is prolific. The philanthropist's history of positively influencing the community spoke volumes and contributed to their commitment and efforts to be influential leaders and develop strong reputations in their organizations and in the community. Additionally, 67% of participants agreed the philanthropist was best positioned to catalyze the institute and change beyond political or other agendas and serve the best interest of the community. Participants see the philanthropist as best suited to do this work because he does not belong to a specific sector with specific restrictions and guidelines. He, like a maverick, does what he wants in response to learning the needs of the community. Participant J said about the philanthropist, "The reputation is huge, because you

have the influence and human capital.” Many participants communicated the sentiment, of who else would be able to do this. Meaning, who else could pay hundreds of thousands of dollars a year for leaders of all sectors to go through an extensive leadership program. Lastly, the program came from within the community via the philanthropist, it was not something brought from the outside and even felt homegrown. Participants claimed this showed them what works in community and organizational change, to start from within.

Participant D: So, it's just kind of unfortunate the word philanthropy doesn't really come through as thoroughly as the word should. But if you think in terms of a love of man, yeah. For the sake of loving man, if that is the philanthropic angle, then yes, it makes a significant difference. There was not agenda involved, there was not agenda attached to it, the institute was created for the betterment of the people and the community.”

Participant L: If you get someone that is pretty dogmatic and political in their views or religious views and you know, publicly in that way, then in that case, the philanthropist or the philanthropic organization, funding the Institute, I don't think will be as successful.

Participant C: I think because it's a homegrown thing. You're, it feels like okay, somebody who's here who knows, like, you know, your community, right? Or yeah, you're going to have that feeling that you know, your community because it's coming from within, you know, that homegrown thing, right. And I think that if it were someone outside it might it even though there would, people would still be receptive. I think it's just, it feels better and it feels like it's really truly more of an investment when it's coming from somebody that hey, I live here I work here I you know, I buy my groceries here, my kids go to school here, you know, like just a feeling of you're taking ownership of your community, and you're taking pride in your community and, and having it come from

within I think it really does make a difference and I think you probably would get more support because here's somebody local, we want to continue to support. You know, it's kind of like when they say by local, you know, kind of that same concept where you know, they know and understand the struggle and they know and understand the needs of our community, right? And so, having them invest back in, I think really makes a difference in how people view and be more supportive.

**Long-Term Impact Takes Time.** Fifty-eight percent of participants pointed out an increased understanding of how the strategy to bring leaders together and spend significant time together in a controlled and safe space would, over time, have massive impacts. The idea of going slow was referenced by participants to describe the process long term in fulfilling the vision of the institute—to be a catalyst for transformational change. This translated to their ability to directly apply that principle in their own life.

Participant A: Having impact, long-term sustainable impact. Really only a philanthropist who is committed to that can participate in this in this way because there is no quick short return on the investment. This is like over time, over cohorts. Just like I have learned in my own organization; soil work takes time.

Participant J: I think because what I'm seeing with the program is it's kind of like the long game, right? It's not the fast Yes. Companies think, we need to get a return on this investment, which I'm assuming is why it's not feasible for, companies or other organizations, whereas a foundation, they're, they're philanthropic right, so they can take

that on with no one is at risk, they can play the long game, which is over time building this community.

### **Themes Part Two**

#### **Research Questions Three and Five**

Research questions three and five pertained to how the leadership institute specifically encouraged TFL, CSC, and CFC. Additionally, these questions achieved a list of strengths and weaknesses of the leadership institute. The responses were all connected to institute/program elements that are mostly very practical in nature as are described below.

**RQ3:** What are the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the leadership institute according to the participants' perspectives?

**RQ5:** What aspects of the leadership institute are identified by participants as most beneficial in promoting TFL, CSC, and CFC?

The themes related to research questions three and five were organized as shown in Table 3. The themes are aspects of the institute most profound to participants, based upon their perceptions and most beneficial in promoting TFL, CSC, and CFC as well as participants perceptions of the institute's strengths and weaknesses.

**Table 3***Themes from Research Questions Three and Five.*

<b>Beneficial in Promoting TFL, CSC, and CFC</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Commitment	The Vulnerability and Relationships	More Time and Going Deeper
Consistency	Accountability and Commitment	Asking More
Safe Space	Community Application	Organizational Focus
Deep and Genuine Relationships	Retreat and Monthly Session	Long-Term Sustainment
Accountability and Responsibility	Alumni Involvement and Opportunities	Better Coaching and/or Mentoring

**Commitment.** One hundred percent of participants provided perspective to the importance of the commitment required of them in their growth throughout the program, to one another, and the vision of the institute. Participants reported their sense of commitment to the leadership, collaboration practices and habits both inside and outside of their organization, and a commitment to giving back to their community as having increased, mostly due to the

philanthropic drive of the institute. Being provided free of personal cost made a difference and increased commitment because of the investment made in them. At large, the combination of the three elements creates a higher level of perceived commitment within each participant.

Participant L: You know, and that simple fact of the very simple concept of getting people in the room and asking them to commit to one another. I think that was a key piece of the Institute as well. This isn't a come and go sort of thing. There's a sense of like, hey, we're going to actually commit to this.

Participant I: I think while obviously making the time and space, it's really easy. I'm sure my sector is not the only one. It's really easy to focus on what's right in front of you. You know, the quadrants of urgent and important always gets your attention first, right?

Important but not urgent, is how I think a lot of people feel about developing themselves. It tends to fall into that like we know it's important but it's not urgent. So again, making the commitment and the intentional time and space for it.

Participant L: I know...if I had to personally...foot the bill for me to be a part of this, I wouldn't have been a part of it. Not because I don't think it's worth it. But because I...have two small kids... I'm already in grad school. Like, I didn't have the resources to ...sign up for it. Similarly, if the Leadership Institute wants to have a diverse membership, you know, if you want to have diverse applicants, including young people, people of color, you know, then the cost could potentially be a factor if individuals have to foot the bill. So, the fact that a philanthropy organization did that, I think opened up...

the opportunities for a much more diverse group of leaders, which is all positive and beneficial.

Participant C: Having it come from within, from a local philanthropist, really does make a difference because it is local. The financial part of it of it being provided free to leaders, especially others, other leaders that may not ever have the opportunity, especially in kind of what we're going through economically now. There's a lot of people that are on the struggle bus and I think for me, it helps me to even be more so like, okay, somebody is taking the time and the effort to invest in me. I need to really, really put the effort in.

**Consistency and Length.** One hundred percent of participants agreed the leadership institute provided the necessary consistency to learn, understand, and implement TFL, in addition to consistency to develop collaborative relationships with others. Participants mentioned the importance of the consistent time they spent with one another. Participants mentioned the importance of consistency the institute provided and the length of time they give to the program as important, that it takes time and consistency to do it well. Participant L said, "Specifically, it gave a consistent rhythm, space where relationships could be built, and people could be human with one another." They also noted, "There is a beautiful mix of consistent expectations and the necessary time needed." Finally, Participant I said, "Timing and the consistency are a big part of it (the institute program and process)."

Similarly, 58% of participants described the process of the programming within the institute to highlight elements of TFL and encourage CSC. They also could easily see the impact of CFC in the entire conception and construction of the institute. Participant K said, "So, the

basic structure of the institute, going through the process of being a cohort member of the Institute, that process is very much structured to promote those elements (TFL, CSC, and CFC).”

Participant A: First, is the process of just developing confidence to be a leader and the curriculum and going through that year of the groundwork gave me tools gave me ideas gave me vision, on how to go forward and even just have the confidence to apply for a position. So, from a transformation standpoint, alone. It was really just the beginning competence of that process. Once I was in, and kind of right in the midst of the whole curriculum piece.

Participant K later mentioned, in terms of data and experience I would say just in conclusion that this has been an enormously powerful high impact organization. Unlike any leadership development curriculum or process I have been through, and I think it is noteworthy for the record to say that it is enormously impactful. And for context, I have been to many, many, many leadership development workshops, trainings, I know and have been, and have listened to many powerful speakers. And this has a bigger impact than virtually all of those.

**Safe Space.** One hundred percent of participants attributed the space created to the programming deployed by the leadership institute. They claimed it created a safe space for people to be comfortable, learn, and practice applying what was being taught. The neutrality of the philanthropist was also mentioned regularly and how philanthropy is often seen as neutral in the community. They noted the philanthropist who funded the institute, and his other notable community efforts as evidence pointing to their neutral and best interest in mind. Particularly in Salem, they mentioned the philanthropist to appear neutral and therefore contributed to their feelings of safety and being vulnerable. Participant I said, “This was just a comfortable and neutral space. That took and I felt I didn't feel like there was any hierarchy in the room at all.” Participant C added, “Having those moments where we can create the space where people can



feel safe and vulnerable has really helped me to feel a lot more confident over time being part of the cohort, being a part of this leadership group.” Participant A noted, “We feel very safe. There's 100 and some people in the room from all over the state. We feel very safe.”

Participant B: It has given a lot of opportunity for conversations and therefore, in terms of being a catalyst, it's, again provides an avenue that didn't exist previously. To step into safe spaces. That healing was needed, or growth was needed. Yeah. It's great.

**Deep and Genuine Relationships.** One hundred percent of participants referred to the level of depth in the relationships they formed through the institute compared to other relationships in their life. This led to fostering these genuine relationships together and supporting their efforts to influence others through relationships. Fifty percent of them attributed these relationships to a sense of accountability and responsibility describing the CSC efforts within the institute to be inherent models of accountability to one another, and individual responsibility to each other and the community at large.

Participant E: The building of relationships, I can't get off that point. Nothing happens without relationship, right? One organization doesn't make a deal with another organization. The person in this organization makes a deal with a person in the other organization. That's relationship.

Participant L: I would say the next part that very, very just tangible takeaway, is the emphasis placed on relationships, not only I mean, obviously, I built relationships with

other people in the cohort, but every single piece of the leadership content Praxis it's all built upon how we interact with other people with other humans.

Participant L: The leadership institute gave me the tools to think about CSC more deeply, but also put me in the space to be responsible to other people who are also exploring it themselves, so there's a built-in accountability there as well.

**Common Language and Curriculum.** One hundred percent of participants claimed that having a common language and framework within the institute through the program curriculum were critical for participants to grasp theory and practice what was taught. Participants also described the curriculum as important to achieving outcomes. Additionally, they attributed the curriculum being responsible for the “shared language” within the program. Participant G said when listing off strengths, “Obviously the curriculum is a strength.” Likewise, Participant K said, “The curriculum, ultimately, is focused on delivering results. For any leader, that’s a really big deal.”

Participant D: I mean, for me the institute, it seems to talk about the way life is and to, to plot it out in a in a tangible common language. So again, I mean, I've been in leadership long enough, I'm attentive enough and am a critical thinker, that I don't know that I had any substantially systemic changes in my thinking. What I did get was affirmation. And a common language around these things. I think that's crucial. Otherwise, how do you, how do you share it? How do you extrapolate it?

Participant H: That means there's 100 other leaders in this community... they've gone through this and had the same common analogy; common language and their lexicon can be shared. So, that's why I was like when we talk about what's next? Why create a new

curriculum that one's already created through the institute, that 100 leaders in Salem are already using.

Participant H: It's created a connection amongst us, a common language, the curriculum and the resources because I still go back and look at some of that stuff. And I take some of that stuff to my organization, I think the curriculum is amazing. For an entire year, I have been talking about the critical importance of taking care of the soil that will nourish the defining the fruit that you want and have used the curriculum as a way to teach a concept and it gave our organization direction gave us a common language and a rally point about which we were going to do things and people talk about you got to go after the low hanging fruit.

### **Perceived Strengths of the Leadership Institute**

The following areas are specific program elements and/or features they described as strengths.

**Vulnerability and Relationships.** One hundred percent of participants mentioned the power of the vulnerability and the relationships in the institute repeatedly as a compounding element to the strength of the institute. It was discussed the vulnerability starts from interviews, through the retreat at a level many have never experienced, and in every session/gathering thereafter. In reference to the commitment of vulnerability in the program, another participant stated the following. Participant K said, "I have never gone so deep emotionally and intellectually in my entire life, not even at church." Participant A when discussing vulnerability said, "It was a part of that interview process and selection, it was important from the start."

Connected to vulnerability is the importance of relationships in the programming. Some reported that while they may forget some of the content and program elements, they will never

forget the relationships. Many claimed the relationship element of the institute as the secret weapon to actualizing transformational change.

Participant K: Another strength is that it creates friendships. That's a big deal in our day and age. In tandem of creating friendships and relationships, it breaks down barriers and assumptions and biases. I would also say that it gives people an intentional space to be better versions of themselves. Sometimes it's difficult to do something if you don't have a space and a lens to do that through.

Participant B: I also think I alluded to it earlier, but that vulnerability that exists that was modeled by the facilitator was a gift that provided the rest of us to say, "we're going to get real here." This is an opportunity for us to, to grow, to own ourselves, to hold up a mirror to ourselves and say, these are the areas that I struggle in, both personally and professionally. Here are the areas that my organization struggles in to have a place a home sanctuary where that is possible. That's the petri dish where transformational change I think happens is in that vulnerability is in that ownership of self and others and then what so it's the facilitator and other leaders modeling it, it's us having the ability to ask hard questions to each other and be vulnerable to each other as well.

**Accountability and Commitment.** One hundred percent of participants claimed the commitment asked of them in the beginning, throughout, and after the program is an essential strength of the institute. They said it created a culture of accountability not only toward themselves, but within each other, and ultimately a sense of accountability/stewardship in the community. Participant H begged the question, "If not us as leaders, then who else is going to

lead change in Salem?” Participant A claimed, “It was just exciting to see that energy continue, and to be able to get put forward with some accountability for the future.”

**Community Application.** This is known within the institute as “Community Problems of Practice.” One hundred percent of participants described these as real problems, real people, and in need of real solutions that they had the opportunity to “practice” on in a controlled environment. The Problems of Practice are a specific program element where participants are assigned a community problem whereby, they spend the entire year working on understanding it, analyzing it, diagnosing it, and possibly taking action on it. They are meant to help participants apply what they learn in the institute without any pressure of “fixing” it.

Participant A: I think it's that the problems of practice component where you start to look at things in a whole different way. So that became part of my professional growth and part of my ability to see things in a little bit different light. And I attribute that to that transformational leadership piece.

Participant L: The community problems of practice for sure was impactful. I'm just thinking about having to work with someone like (fellow participant) during it all. Like, that was incredibly helpful, basically we spent an additional time together outside of the institute that we probably wouldn't never have, you know, I mean, outside of seeing each other at the institute. And that three hours actually led to stuff in which like, I know, my organization and CTEC have had a good partnership, but there's even more open line of like, hey, let's work together now. And that's because of that relationship and problem of

practice, honestly, it probably would have been the same if I had it with anyone else. Just happened with that particular person.

**Retreat and Monthly Sessions.** One hundred percent of the participants mentioned the leadership retreats as a key strength of the institute's programming. They described it as a critical time to build relationships and learn all of the institute's core curriculum from their handbook. The retreat was described as formative and essential to the program, in addition, as one of the most favorite elements. Participant K: said, "My favorite part of the institute was during the retreat." After retreat, follows 11 months of monthly sessions, eight three percent of participants described the sessions that take place every month for an entire day as a strength. They were described as core to the programming and provided consistency. Participant I said, "I don't think that the depth of learning would have been there if not for our sessions themselves."

Regarding the retreat, Participant J said, "The retreat was so focused on learning this material and going through everything to really understand and work through the workbook and understand this material."

Participant A: One key element is the retreat. When you are being taken out to a location and put up for retreat, and there is a significant investment in time and energy and resources, that we believe in you as a leader. We interviewed, you are part of this, we're inviting you to attend and that's just not normal. And so, to have the room full of every type of organization and they are willing to do that is I think is momentous.

**Alumni Involvement and Opportunities.** Sixty-seven percent of participants said the alumni element of the institute programming was what made it special and unique. Having alumni participate in the programming through being a mentor, panelist, speaker/presenter, or to simply show up and engage in dialogue were seen as strengths of the institute. Many participants

stated they had never participated in any club, social group, leadership program, etc. that integrated alumni so intentionally. Participant F said, “Bringing back the alumni. Just hearing their stories of application. I think it's good that some of them were very transparent, then to engage that same way as an alumnus is great.”

When discussing the importance of alumni involvement Participant L said, “You know, like it came from you know, the alumni network, you know, that is still actively involved in shaping the future of the institute. It's all birthed out of that community.”

Participant F: Strong leaders in so many different areas of our community now because of the institute. We have so many nonprofits, whose chief executives are our alumni of the institute, who have spent time taking what they've learned and instilling it into their organizations and giving back. And those nonprofits are serving generations of people. The same alumni of the institute in turn serve as speakers and mentors once they become alumni after their year of participation in the institute, they are the prominent opportunities of staying involved.

Fifty eight percent of participants mentioned how the guest speakers throughout the program were lynchpins in their learning and key realizations around various institute/leadership topics. The guest speakers consisted of paid professional speakers (authors, mainstream thought leaders, etc.) flown into Salem, as well as alumni within the community who went through the institute in a previous year. Participant F said, “I really loved the speakers that came in and they put a real face to the problem at hand that we were dealing with.” Participant L stated, “I'm thinking of the speakers in particular, were really, really impactful and brought some really cool concepts and perspectives to leadership.” Additionally, each participant in the current year of programming in the institute is assigned a mentor, a leader from a previous year, to support them

and their growth throughout the year. Fifty percent of the participants claimed this to be a difference maker in their experience in the programming.

Participant B: To, you know, from a broader perspective, the fact that I have a mentor in the district that I can connect with, yesterday, for example, and share the same language, and they have gone through the same program even in different years, is powerful.

### **Perceived Weaknesses of the Leadership Institute**

**More Time and Going Deeper.** One hundred percent of participants consistently brought up the wanting more time as a potential weakness of the institute. All interviewed shared their desire to have more time together and more time to learn. Many participants found themselves eager to meet each month and not wanting the session to end. Paradoxically, nearly all participants described the time commitment being one of their biggest concerns before starting the program. However, by the end they found themselves wishing for more of it. Participant H said, “At the end of each session and ultimately the year I just wanted more time, even though we had committed so much time already.”

In addition, seventy five percent of participants in the interviews mentioned the desire to go even deeper in the content and application. They stated the institute is uniquely positioned to take people to emotional and spiritually deep places where total transformation may occur. They encouraged the institute to consider taking advantage of this unique position they are in.

Participant D profoundly declared “I think the institute can go even deeper, don’t hold back.”

**Asking More.** Forty-two percent of participants described the institute not asking enough of participating leaders and alumni. Meaning, the institute should be more intentional of asking more than their commitment of time to show up to each session but get creative in bring leaders together to solve more problems, mentor more people, and engage in more learning. Participant



K responded, “I do think that the Institute can ask even more from leaders in terms of what they should put into it, producing results, etc. It is reasonable to ask leaders to give even more.”

Connected to this, fifty-eight percent of participants mentioned the desire to have more involvement and opportunities to engage. Participant I claimed, “As an alumnus I would like to be asked more and have more opportunities to be engaged.”

**Organizational Focus.** Sixty-seven percent of participants desired the programming to provide more of a specific organizational focus on their individual organizations. They described the programming to be focused on their personal transformation as leaders, but they naturally desire more programming and/or resources to apply in their organization. Participant L said, “We learn and develop personally as leaders, you know, I just desire more resources for my organization.”

**Long-Term Sustainment.** Eighty-three percent of participants observed philanthropic funding as a benefit, can last for many years, but can also end abruptly by the choice of one philanthropist. They stated the financial longevity is in the hands of one person and can disappear as quickly as the program was created its first year—out of nowhere. Participant F proclaimed, “If you lose your donor, then what? That is something to figure out.”

Participant J: And so, I think that when you're talking about a philanthropist that is truly interested in impact, having impact, long term sustainable impact. Really only a philanthropist who is committed to that can participate in this in this way because there is no quick short return on the investment. This is like over time over cohorts. That's a heavy lift to ask for a municipality or a taxpayer or a business, who has a very specific

fiduciary responsibility to take on something like that. So, I think that's why specifically, you know, the right donor or the right philanthropist pass is part of the equation.

**Better Mentoring and/or Coaching.** Fifty percent of participants mentioned the mentoring could be improved. Participant A simply stated, “Being matched better with mentors or having more resources as a mentor.” Participant A also mentioned,

This most recent year from January till now, as a mentor, that mentor relationship is part of that same synergy, but I don't know if I have been able to keep that sustainment going on at a much deeper level. I think I'm still on the periphery of that piece.

Participant B: I don't know that my mentorship with my mentee went well. He and I have completely different worldviews. I just don't know how beneficial I was. You know, people either get a lot out of it, or they don't, and I think it all comes down to that.

### **Summary**

In summary, this chapter presented the themes identified in my data analysis of the interviews in light of the research questions. The chapter examined the impact of Transformational Leadership (TFL), Cross-Sector Collaboration (CSC), and Charitable Foundations as Catalysts (CFC) within a Salem-based leadership institute. Findings reveal that TFL led to collaboration, deep relationships and a change in mindset, and tools for change at individual, organizational, and community levels. CSC resulted in space for vulnerability, trust/sharing, and direct application. The CFC, catalyzed by a community-focused philanthropist, was seen as uniquely positioned to ignite change due deep and pure intent, reputation and

influence. Further participants expressed that long-term impacts take time. The combination of TFL, CSC, and CFC showcased collaboration, deep relationships, and a change in mindset.

The strengths of the Leadership Institute were valuable vulnerability/relationships, accountability, the ability to address community problems, the impactful retreat and monthly sessions, and alumni involvement/opportunities. Weaknesses included the desire for more time/going deeper, requesting greater demands on participants, a more specific organizational focus, concerns over long-term sustainability, and improved mentoring/coaching. Overall, the study demonstrated the pivotal role of TFL, CSC, and CFC in fostering community transformation and offered recommendations for the program's ongoing success and long-term impact.

## CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

### **Overview**

In this study, I explored how TFL, CSC and CFC impact organizational and community change. Examining diverse leaders' experiences, I delved into their multifaceted influence. The research showed these elements not only fostered a supportive environment for leaders to build relationships and implement strategies but also led to organizational and community-level changes. Through the research questions, I unraveled the complexities of these factors at a Salem Oregon leadership institute—Groundwork Leadership, understanding their impact on leaders' perceptions and practices. The chapter concludes with key themes, findings, limitations, recommendations, and a summary of the dissertation.

### **Summary of Findings**

This section provides an in-depth analysis of key research findings, focusing on the themes derived from the research questions. The findings suggest that the TFL component of the programming fosters culture change and trust, that CSC resulted in creating a safe space for vulnerability, trust/sharing, and opportunities for direction application in the community. Participants shared that these conditions are all facilitated by the philanthropic approach of deep and pure intent, solid reputation and influence. Participants shared that long-term change takes time. All participants were able to see the presence of TFL, CSC, and CFC and their combination resulted in collaboration, deep relationships, and a change in mindsets. Additionally, leadership institute participants reported positive changes in themselves, in the health of their organizations and in the community. Participants considered the strengths of the Leadership Institute to be the valuable vulnerability/relationships developed, accountability, the ability to address community problems, the impactful retreat and monthly sessions, and alumni involvement/opportunities.

Weaknesses included the desire for more time/going deeper, requesting greater demands on participants, a more specific organizational focus, concerns over long-term sustainability, and improved mentoring/coaching. Research Question 1 (RQ1) guided an exploration of leaders' perspectives on how the institute embodies TFL, CSC and CFC. The findings unveiled unanimous endorsement of the institute's role in implementing programming that taught and encouraged the application of these principles. I will discuss these in more detail later in this chapter.

The exploration of RQ2 addressed how the integration of TFL, CSC, and CFC within the institute was experienced by participants in their workplaces and communities. The research illuminated how these leaders felt more connected to their purpose and vision, collectively envisioning positive change in their communities. This aligns with the exploration of TFL and CSC, emphasizing the tangible experiences and applications of these leadership paradigms, as well as CFC as providing the means for said change.

Furthermore, RQ4 investigated the perceived impact of the leadership institute on change within leaders' workplaces and communities. Two-thirds of participants reported improvements in organizational health, demonstrating the practical application of TFL, CSC, and CFC principles. The transformative shift in mindset and perspective, a theme acknowledged by half of the participants, aligns with the exploration of TFL, showcasing the profound impact of the leadership institute. Pertaining to Transformational Leadership, the study outlined how TFL contributed to cultural change, trust-building, heightened awareness, and various levels of personal and community transformation.

Regarding the element of Cross-Sector Collaboration, participants emphasized the importance of an open environment, shared vision, and trust, aligning with the integrative

approach encouraged by the institute. Discussions on Charitable Foundations as Catalysts underscored the philanthropist's unique position to provide a safe space, resonating with the study's exploration of CFC. Overall, the research reveals a cohesive connection between the identified themes and the underlying principles of TFL, CSC, and CFC, highlighting their collective impact on leaders' perceptions, experiences, and the transformative outcomes in both personal and community spheres.

RQ3 focused on the strengths and weaknesses of the institute. Participants identified the strengths of the Leadership Institute as having the ability to address community problems, the impactful retreat and monthly sessions, a thoughtful selection process, valuable vulnerability, guest speakers, a comprehensive curriculum, a philanthropic vision, supportive alumni involvement, a strong sense of accountability, and the cultivation of deep, transformational relationships. Weaknesses highlighted the desire for more time, increased alumni engagement, a more specific organizational focus, greater demands on participants, and concerns over long-term sustainability, on-site visits, improved mentoring/coaching, and the aspiration for deeper emotional and spiritual transformation within the institute's framework.

Regarding RQ5, exploring aspects of the institute that encourage TFL, CSC, and CFC, the findings were interwoven with the responses to RQ3. Participants reported that the institute's emphasis on commitment helped not only to encourage personal growth but also to collaboration practices, habits, and community contributions. Consistency and length were unanimously recognized as essential for learning, understanding, and implementing TFL and developing collaborative relationships. The participants appreciated the institute's structured process, emphasizing the impact of consistent expectations and the necessary time provided. Safe Space, identified by all participants, was attributed to the leadership institute's programming, creating an

environment conducive to comfort, learning, and practical application. Common language and curriculum were considered critical by all participants, highlighting the importance of a shared language within the program. Deep and genuine relationships were acknowledged by all of participants, emphasizing the unique depth of connections formed through the institute compared to other relationships in their lives.

Application for Organizational and Community Health was evidenced by direct outcomes, with 100% referencing instances of practical application and positive changes in their workplaces and communities. Accountability and responsibility, identified by 50%, emphasized the institute's role in modeling accountability within the cohort and promoting individual responsibility to the community. The philanthropic nature of the institute, mentioned by three-fourths highlighted the impact of free and philanthropic opportunities in making leadership development accessible, diverse, and genuine. The role of a neutral party also underlined the perceived neutrality of the philanthropist, contributing to feelings of safety and vulnerability among participants.

Overall, participants understood and appreciated the interconnectedness and mutual influences of TFL, CSC, and CFC. TFL appears be a foundational pillar for fostering trust and commitment, thereby enabling successful CSC. Moreover, it discusses how CFC, as a catalyst, augments and sustains the impact of the combined elements, illustrating how this synergy brings about community transformation. Next, I will discuss the findings in light of the existing literature.

## Discussion of Findings

### Transformational Leadership

*Collaboration.* The literature on TFL, particularly the study by Chun et al. (2016), demonstrates that TFL focused on the collective is associated with better team performance through improved relationships among team members. This aligns with the theme of collaboration in the study, where participants highlight creating a spirit of collaboration within the leadership institute, impacting their ability to work together in the community and within their organizations.

*Deep Relationships.* The study by Andersen et al. (2018) emphasizes that leaders practicing TFL motivate followers to go beyond themselves, fostering a deeper connection and engagement. This corresponds with the theme of deep relationships in the study, where participants discuss feeling more connected to their purpose and vision, both individually and collectively, as alumni of the program.

*Change in Mindset.* Andersen et al. (2018) also indicates that TFL leads to a change in vision, shifting from individual concerns to broader societal goals. This connects with theme change in mindset, as participants describe a shift in their perspective, feeling a moral responsibility and commitment to their community.

*Culture Change.* Busari et al. (2019) found that TFL positively impacted followers' reactions to change and trust in leadership, contributing to a change in organizational culture. Aligning with the theme of culture change, where participants note feeling a sense of responsibility to their organizations, communities, and themselves, reflecting a change in the culture of leadership.



*Trust.* The literature, including studies by Gui et al. (2020) and Busari et al. (2019), demonstrates that TFL is associated with positive relational perceptions and trust between leaders and followers. This connects with the theme of trust, where participants express trust in the philanthropist funding the institute and trust in one another, leading to a sense of responsibility and commitment in their leadership development.

To summarize the above themes, the literature on TFL provides a theoretical foundation for the relevant themes of the study. TFL is portrayed as a catalyst for collaboration, the development of deep relationships, a change in mindset towards societal goals, culture change within organizations, and the establishment of trust between leaders. These connections reinforce the importance of TFL in shaping the themes explored.

### **Benefits, Strengths, and Weaknesses Connected to TFL**

**Commitment.** Participant C in the study emphasizes commitment by stating, "I feel that because somebody (a philanthropist) is investing in me because they trust that I will take that forward and do something with it." This aligns with the literature on TFL, where leaders committed to transformational principles positively influence commitment within organizations (Busari et al., 2019).

**Consistency.** The study mentioned consistency often, and Schaubroeck et al. (2007) found that TFL positively affected team collectivism and consistency, leading to increased team performance. This supports the idea that TFL contributes to a consistent and collaborative organizational environment.

**Safe Space.** The theme of a safe space highlights within the literature, TFL's impact on organizational culture. TFL, as indicated by Busari et al. (2019), positively influences followers'

reactions to change, trust in leadership, and participation in change, contributing to a safe and supportive space.

**Deep and Genuine Relationships.** Andersen et al. (2018) in the literature review emphasizes that TFL fosters deep relationships by motivating followers to go beyond themselves, which resonates with the theme of deep and genuine relationships.

**Accountability and Responsibility.** The concept of accountability and responsibility is supported by the literature on TFL's impact on follower empowerment, a key element of TFL being inspirational motivation (Medellin et al., 2019). TFL inspires followers to take responsibility for their roles within an organization, contributing to a sense of accountability (Pieterse et al., 2009).

**Vulnerability and Relationships.** Vulnerability and relationships are connected to the literature on TFL's impact on relational perceptions. Gui et al. (2020) found that TFL has a strong effect on relational perceptions and behavioral outcomes, which are crucial elements in building vulnerable and genuine relationships.

**Collective Community Application.** The theme of collective community application aligns with the broader societal impact mentioned in the literature on TFL. TFL's focus on a shared vision that goes beyond individual organizations can contribute to collective community efforts (Andersen et al., 2018).

**Retreat and Monthly Sessions.** While specific details about retreats and monthly sessions may not be explicitly mentioned in the literature, the broader idea of TFL creating a conducive learning environment (Medellin et al., 2019) and promoting consistency in team interactions (Schaubroeck et al., 2007) supports the concept of retreats and regular cadence and/or sessions.

**Alumni Involvement and Opportunities.** This strength aligns with the literature on TFL's impact on organizational culture and change. TFL has been shown to positively influence followers' reactions to change, trust in leadership, and participation in change (Busari et al., 2019). Alumni involvement can be seen as a manifestation of this positive impact, creating a culture of engagement and continued participation.

**More Time and Going Deeper.** This weakness may relate to the potential challenge highlighted in the literature of sustaining long-term engagement. Transformational leadership, as discussed in the literature, often involves a significant investment of time and intentional effort (Andersen, 2015). The weakness of needing more time and going deeper aligns with the idea that TFL requires a commitment to sustained and deep engagement.

**Asking More of Participants and Leaders.** This weakness corresponds to the literature's acknowledgment that transformational leadership is not automatic and requires intentional efforts. Andersen (2015) emphasized that becoming a transformational leader involves a deliberate mindset and commitment. Asking more of participants and leaders aligns with the literature's recognition that transformational change necessitates effort and dedication.

**Having More of an Organizational Focus.** This weakness may be seen in contrast to the literature's emphasis on TFL's impact on both individuals and organizations. The literature suggests that TFL positively influences individuals, groups, and the entire collective within an organization (Chun et al., 2016). A cautionary note, having more of an organizational focus might limit the broader impact on individuals and the community.

**Long-Term Sustainment.** The challenge of long-term sustainment aligns with the caution raised in the literature that TFL requires consistent intentional application over time

(Andersen et al., 2016). Sustainability is a common consideration in TFL literature, emphasizing the need for ongoing commitment and effort.

**Better Coaching/Mentoring.** While not explicitly mentioned in the literature review, the need for better coaching/mentoring might be connected to the literature on the importance of leadership development. Effective coaching and mentoring are integral to the success of leadership programs (Peng et al., 2018). The weakness highlights the critical role of mentorship in the application of transformational leadership principles.

In summary, the benefits, strengths, and weaknesses identified in the study are consistent with the principles and outcomes associated with Transformational Leadership (TFL) as discussed in the literature review. TFL appears to contribute positively to commitment, consistency, the creation of a safe space, development of deep relationships, accountability, and responsibility, vulnerability in relationships, collective community application, and the effectiveness of retreats and regular sessions. The weaknesses align with considerations in the literature regarding the sustained effort, intentional application, and the balance between organizational and broader community focus in the context of transformational leadership.

### **Cross-Sector Collaboration**

**Space/Environment/Vulnerability.** Effective CSC efforts require a conducive environment and intellectual frameworks or theories of change. For example, the use of the Kotter Change Model in Milwaukee and the leadership institute in Salem acts as a model providing structure and process to provide the space and environment (Caufield and Brenner, 2019). The literature implies that creating a space for vulnerability and learning is crucial for successful collaboration. The entire concept of CSC revolves around collaboration, as different sectors come together to share resources, information, and perspectives (Reid et al., 2019), this is

an obvious one within the study. The literature highlights the importance of leveraging shared talents, perspectives, and diverse organizations to address large-scale social challenges through collaboration (Reid et al., 2019). This most certainly occurs within the study based upon the perceptions of the participants.

**Trust and Sharing.** Trust is a fundamental aspect of CSC, as leaders come together to share motives, intellectual frameworks, and business models (Song and Yin, 2019). Sharing of best practices, capabilities, and even motives is essential for the success of cross-sector collaboration efforts. Cross-sector collaboration requires the formation of new relationships that might not have existed previously. Leaders in these collaborations share intrinsic and altruistic motives, leading to the development of deep relationships as they collectively learn from failure, address power dynamics, racism, and various forms of oppression (Reid et al., 2019). The deep relationships contribute to the effectiveness of CSC efforts.

**Direct Application.** The direct application of CSC efforts is illustrated in the Milwaukee case, where teen pregnancies were reduced by over 50% through formalized CSC efforts (Caufield and Brenner, 2019). The literature suggests that when CSC is done right, it becomes a breeding ground for transformation, showcasing its potential for direct application to societal-level transformational change.

Literature on Cross-Sector Collaboration demonstrates the interconnectedness of collaboration, deep relationships, a change in mindset, the importance of space and vulnerability, trust, and the direct application of collaborative efforts to achieve transformative outcomes. The themes align with the multifaceted nature of effective CSC efforts.

**Benefits, Strengths, and Weaknesses Connected to CSC**

**Commitment.** The commitment of leaders in CSC efforts is highlighted in the literature, where intrinsic and altruistic motives bring leaders together for the betterment of the community (Reid et al., 2019). This commitment is parallel to the commitment expected from participants in the leadership institute and the commitment they reciprocate.

**Consistency.** The literature emphasizes the need for consistency in CSC efforts, as seen in the study by Brown et al. (2019), where organizations showed a moderate-to-high level of CSC behavior post-assessment. This aligns with the importance of consistency in the efforts and actions of the leadership institute.

**Safe Space.** Creating a safe space for vulnerability and learning is crucial for effective CSC (Caufield and Brenner, 2019). The literature implies that a safe environment is essential for fostering deep relationships and successful collaboration, which can resonate with the need for a safe space in the leadership institute.

**Deep and Genuine Relationships.** Deep relationships are a key outcome of successful CSC efforts (Reid et al., 2019). The commitment to genuine relationships is mirrored in the leadership institute, where the development of deep and genuine relationships among participants is likely a strength.

**Accountability and Responsibility.** Accountability is crucial in CSC, as organizations share motives, intellectual frameworks, and business models (Song and Yin, 2019). This aligns with the strength of accountability and responsibility in the leadership institute, where participants may be accountable for their roles in collaborative efforts.

**Vulnerability and Relationships.** Vulnerability is emphasized in the literature as a crucial element in the success of CSC efforts (Caufield and Brenner, 2019). This can be linked to

the vulnerability and relationship's strength in the leadership institute, where creating a space for vulnerability is deemed essential.

**Accountability and Commitment.** The commitment of leaders in CSC efforts, as seen in the literature, can be connected to the accountability and commitment expected from participants in the leadership institute. Commitment is a shared aspect between successful CSC efforts and effective leadership training/engagement in the program.

**Collective Community Application.** The literature suggests that successful CSC efforts contribute to addressing large-scale social challenges at the community level (Reid et al., 2019). This aligns with the idea of collective community application, where the leadership institute aims to impact the community through the development of leaders.

**Retreat and Monthly Sessions.** While not explicitly mentioned in the provided literature, the concept of retreats and regular sessions aligns with the need for well-thought-out design and leadership in CSC efforts (Bryson et al., 2015). The literature suggests that successful CSC requires a structured approach, and the leadership institute's retreats and sessions may serve this purpose.

**Alumni Involvement Opportunities.** The idea of alumni involvement opportunities aligns with the collaborative aspect emphasized in the literature on CSC. Successful CSC efforts often involve ongoing collaboration, knowledge sharing, and networking (Song and Yin, 2019). The involvement of alumni in the leadership institute could serve as a valuable resource for ongoing collaboration and support.

**More Time and Going Deeper Together.** The need for time and depth in CSC efforts is acknowledged in the literature (Bryson et al., 2015). Similarly, the weakness of needing more

time and going deeper together in the leadership institute suggests a recognition of the challenges associated with achieving meaningful collaboration and transformation in a relatively short time.

**Asking More of Participant Leaders.** Asking more of participant leaders aligns with the concept of accountability and responsibility highlighted in the literature on CSC. Successful collaboration requires active participation and contributions from all involved parties (Song and Yin, 2019). The weakness suggests a recognition that participants may need to contribute more for effective outcomes.

**More of an Organizational Focus.** The weakness of having more of an organizational focus can be viewed in light of the need for a broader community perspective in CSC efforts (Reid et al., 2019). The literature suggests that successful CSC goes beyond organizational boundaries to address community-wide challenges. This weakness implies a recognition of the importance of community-centered approaches.

**Long-Term Sustainment.** Long-term sustainment is a challenge identified in the literature on CSC, where lasting partnerships are considered rare (Zhu et al., 2019). The weakness in long-term sustainment for the leadership institute reflects a common challenge in maintaining the impact of leadership programs over time.

**Better Coaching/Mentoring.** The need for effective coaching and mentoring aligns with the emphasis on leadership and guidance in CSC efforts (Bryson et al., 2015). The weakness suggests an acknowledgment that improvements in coaching and mentoring could enhance the effectiveness of the leadership institute.

Cross-Sector Collaboration provides insights into the commitment, consistency, safe space, deep relationships, accountability, vulnerability, and collective community application, which can be connected to the strengths and focus areas of the leadership institute. The strengths



of alumni involvement opportunities align with collaborative aspects highlighted in the literature on CSC. The weaknesses, such as the need for more time, deeper collaboration, asking more from participants, an organizational focus, long-term sustainment, and better coaching/mentoring, are reflective of challenges and considerations identified in the literature on CSC. The weaknesses indicate a recognition of the complexities associated with sustaining transformative efforts and ensuring meaningful community impact.

### **Foundations as Community Catalysts**

**Deep and Pure Intent.** The moral responsibility of foundations to do right by their community, the philanthropic "global pledge" made by prominent philanthropists, and the desire for foundations to make a difference, give back, and fulfill a sense of socialization represent a deep and pure intent within the community foundation context (Schmitz & McCollim, 2021; Harvey et al., 2019). Foundations with a deep and pure intent set the stage to operate within a network of collaborations and partnerships. The ecological perspective in philanthropic endeavors emphasizes the importance of relationships, networks, and partnerships that foundations have within their communities (Hwag and Young, 2018). Collaboration is a key theme, as foundations must work with diverse stakeholders to effectively address community needs. Further, the ecological perspective underscores the significance of deep relationships and social capital that foundations should cultivate within their communities (Hwag and Young, 2018). Deep relationships are essential for the strategic impact of foundations, as seen in the case of The Fremont Area Community Foundation's community investment strategy developed with and by the community (Roberts, 2018).

**Reputation and Influence.** Foundations, especially community foundations, possess influential power through financial means and reputation. Their ability to leverage this influence

is crucial for catalyzing change (Gabel, 2012). The place-based approach to philanthropy also emphasizes the influence and resources that foundations can allocate based on community collaboration and needs (Easterling et al., 2019). The transformational potential of foundations is linked to a change in mindset. Foundations are speculated to be well-positioned to adopt a Transformational Leadership (TFL) style and approach due to their unique position in communities, lack of competition, and neutral status (Gabel, 2012). The proposed study suggests that foundations can catalyze change efforts in ways that other entities may not be able to due to their influential power.

**Long-Term Impacts.** The strategic impact that foundations can have on communities, as seen in the Community Investment Strategy example, reflects a focus on achieving long-term impacts (Roberts, 2018). Additionally, the place-based approach involves cultivating long-term change by expecting communities to drive and sustain efforts after the foundation's initial involvement (Easterling et al., 2019).

Foundations as community catalysts are intricately tied to collaboration, deep relationships, a change in mindset, deep and pure intent, reputation and influence, and long-term impacts. The literature suggests that the transformational potential of foundations lies in their ability to adopt a TFL and CSC approach, work collaboratively with diverse stakeholders, and strategically allocate resources based on community needs and collaboration.

### **Benefits, Strengths, and Weaknesses Connected to CFC**

**Commitment.** Foundations, as community catalysts, operate with a commitment to giving back to their communities and improving the well-being of the public (Toepler, 2018). This commitment aligns with the commitment expected from participants in a leadership institute.

**Consistency.** The strategic impact and place-based approach of foundations suggest a need for consistency in philanthropic efforts to achieve long-term impacts (Easterling et al., 2019; Roberts, 2018). This consistency is analogous to the need for consistency in leadership practices within an institute.

**Safe Space.** The community involvement in philanthropy, as seen in the ecological perspective and strategic impact approaches, emphasizes the importance of creating safe spaces for community participation and collaboration (Hwag and Young, 2018; Roberts, 2018). This notion of safe spaces aligns with creating a conducive learning environment within a leadership institute.

**Deep and Genuine Relationships.** The ecological perspective in philanthropy underscores the significance of deep relationships and social capital that foundations should cultivate within their communities (Hwag and Young, 2018). This mirrors the emphasis on deep and genuine relationships within the leadership institute.

**Accountability and Responsibility.** Foundations, especially community foundations, operate with a moral responsibility to do right by their community (Schmitz & McCollim, 2021). This sense of responsibility aligns with the need for accountability and responsibility within a leadership institute.

**Vulnerability and Relationships.** The vulnerability in foundations adopting innovative approaches, like the place-based approach, is a strength that allows for deep relationships and community collaboration (Easterling et al., 2019). This vulnerability is akin to the strength associated with vulnerability in relationships within a leadership institute.

**Accountability and Commitment.** The strategic impact and community investment strategy emphasize the importance of accountability and commitment in philanthropic endeavors

(Roberts, 2018). This aligns with the strength of accountability and commitment within a leadership institute.

**Collective Community Application.** The place-based approach encourages foundations to work collaboratively with communities for large-scale change efforts (Easterling et al., 2019). This mirrors the strength associated with collective community application within a leadership institute.

**Retreat and Monthly Sessions.** The periodic and structured nature of retreats and monthly sessions within a leadership institute aligns with the strategic approach's foundations adopt to enhance their impact (Roberts, 2018). Both involve planned and regular activities for learning and growth.

**Alumni Involvement and Opportunities.** The involvement of alumni in foundations' activities and the philanthropic global pledge suggest opportunities for continued engagement and impact (Schmitz & McCollim, 2021). This aligns with the strength associated with alumni involvement and opportunities in a leadership institute to follow suite.

**More Time and Going Deeper.** The weaknesses associated with needing more time and going deeper in foundations' philanthropic efforts (Song & Fu, 2018) parallel the challenges of allocating sufficient time and going deeper in a leadership institute.

**Asking More of Participants and Leaders.** The weaknesses, similar to the above weakness, related to asking more of participants and leaders in foundations' efforts (Song & Fu, 2018) align with challenges in expecting more from participants and leaders in a leadership institute.

**More of an Organizational Focus.** The weakness associated with having more of an organizational focus in foundations' spending, which is not common, (Song & Fu, 2018) is akin to the challenge of organizational focus within a leadership institute.

**Long-Term Sustainment.** The challenges related to sustaining philanthropic efforts over the long term (Easterling et al., 2019) parallel the difficulties associated with long-term sustainment in a leadership institute if the foundation and/or philanthropist ceases to fund the effort.

**Better Coaching/Mentoring.** The weaknesses in the analysis of impact in philanthropy due to the lack of rigorous coaching and mentoring (Aggarwala et al., 2017) align with the challenge of better coaching/mentoring within a leadership institute. Essentially, making it more intentional and purposeful.

In summary, the literature on Foundations as Community Catalysts connects to how the strengths, benefits, and challenges associated with philanthropy can be analogous to the dynamics within a leadership institute. This connection highlights the potential for shared principles and lessons between the two contexts.

### **Connections to The Biblical Foundations of The Study**

**Collaboration.** The Bible emphasizes strength derived from unity. Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 (KJV, 1769/2015) highlights the idea that "two are better than one" and that a threefold cord is not easily broken, illustrating the power and support that arise from collaboration. Leaders across sectors working with charitable foundations can be seen as forming a robust alliance to address societal challenges, reflecting the biblical encouragement to be of one accord and esteem others above oneself (KJV, Philippians 2:2-4, 1769/2015). The Bible underscores the idea that

collaboration is not merely a strategic approach but a reflection of a biblical call to unity, mutual consideration, and the pursuit of common goals.

**Deep Relationships.** In the Bible there are many examples of genuine connections and love for one another. In John 13:34-35 (KJV, 1769/2015), Jesus instructs his disciples to love one another as he has loved them, highlighting the depth and sincerity of relationships. The concept of deep and genuine relationships aligns with the biblical principle of bearing one another's burdens and sharing in each other's joys (KJV, Galatians 6:2; Romans 12:15, 1769/2015). The Bible encourages believers to cultivate relationships built on trust, honesty, and selflessness, mirroring the qualities essential for transformative leadership and collaborative community efforts. The depth of relationships advocated in your study finds resonance in biblical narratives that portray the enduring bonds formed through shared purpose and mutual care.

**Change in Mindset.** The Bible underscores the transformative power of renewing one's mind. Romans 12:2 (KJV, 1769/2015) urges believers not to conform to the patterns of this world but to be transformed by the renewal of their minds, emphasizing the importance of a changed perspective. The Bible consistently emphasizes the need for a shift in mindset, encouraging followers to adopt virtues such as humility, compassion, and forgiveness. The transformative leadership advocated in your study aligns with the biblical idea that true change begins within the mind and heart. The narrative of repentance and spiritual transformation found throughout the Bible echoes the significance of embracing a new mindset to align with God's principles and purposes (KJV, 1769/2015).

**Culture Change and Trust.** In this study there is alignment with Biblical principles emphasizing the transformation of individuals and communities. The Bible, particularly in the New Testament, highlights the establishment of a new culture based on love, righteousness, and

unity. Scriptures such as Galatians 3:28 (KJV, 1769/2015) stress the breaking down of cultural and social barriers in the context of faith in Christ, promoting a new, inclusive culture. *Trust*, as a theme, is foundational in biblical teachings, calling believers to trust in the Lord with all their hearts (KJV, Proverbs 3:5-6, 1769/2015). Then of course the Savior beckoning all to follow Him, trust Him, etc. The concept of trust is deeply rooted in the Biblical narrative, with numerous instances illustrating the importance of trusting God's plan and relying on His faithfulness. The emphasis on trust as a theme point to the genuine transformation and cultural change are rooted in a foundation of trust, both in divine providence and in human relationships.

**Space/Environment/Vulnerability, Trust and Sharing, and Direct Application.** The Bible teaches concepts of creating a conducive environment for spiritual growth and openness connected to the theme Space/Environment/Vulnerability. The Bible encourages believers to be vulnerable before God, acknowledging their weaknesses and seeking His transformative power. The notion of creating a safe space aligns with the biblical idea of finding refuge and strength in the presence of the Lord (KJV, Psalm 46:1, 1769/2015). Trust and Sharing reflects biblical principles of communal living and sharing one another's burdens, as highlighted in Galatians 6:2 (KJV, 1769/2015). It underscores the importance of trust in interpersonal relationships, emphasizing shared responsibilities and mutual support. Direct Application corresponds with the Biblical emphasis on applying principles of love, justice, and charity directly to real-world situations. Believers not only should be hearers of the Word but also doers (KJV, James 1:22, 1769/2015), emphasizing the practical application of faith in everyday life.

**Deep and Pure Intent, Reputation and Influence, and Long-Term Impacts.** The Bible's teachings on the purity of heart and intention correlate to the theme Deep and Pure Intent. The Bible emphasizes the importance of having a sincere and pure heart in actions and

motives (KJV, Psalm 51:10, 1769/2015). Reputation and Influence connects with biblical principles surrounding the impact of one's reputation and influence on others. Proverbs 22:1 (KJV, 1769/2015) highlights the value of a good reputation, stating that a good name is more desirable than great riches. Additionally, Long-Term Impacts resonates with the sowing seeds for a future harvest. The Bible encourages believers to persevere in doing good, with the assurance that there will be a harvest if they do not give up (KJV, Galatians 6:9, 1769/2015). The concept of leaving a lasting impact aligns with the emphasis on the enduring effects of righteous living and positive influence on future generations (KJV, Psalm 112:6, 1769/2015).

**Commitment, Consistency, Safe Space, Deep and Genuine Relationships, and Accountability and Responsibility.** Regarding Commitment, there are fundamental Christian ideals of love and service, commitment is exemplified in passages like Galatians 5:13 (KJV, 1769/2015), which dictates to serve one another humbly in love. Charitable foundations, guided by Christian principles, express their commitment through philanthropy and community service, reflecting the biblical call to love and serve others (KJV, Matthew 22:39, 1769/2015). For Consistency, the principle of consistency resonates with the Bible's emphasis on unwavering commitment to faith and practice. Hebrews 13:8 (KJV, 1769/2015) states, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever," highlighting the enduring nature of divine principles. Similarly, charitable foundations should uphold consistent commitment to community betterment, mirroring the steadfast dedication portrayed in biblical teachings.

**A Safe Space to Learn and Practice** aligns with the nurturing and teaching aspect of the Bible. Proverbs 22:6 (KJV, 1769/2015) advises, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Similarly, charitable foundations provide a supportive environment for learning and development, resembling the biblical model of patience, teaching,



and guidance (KJV, Matthew 28:19-20, 1769/2015). Regarding Deep and Genuine Relationships, deep relationships align with the Bible's emphasis on love and unity. Ephesians 4:2-3 (KJV, 1769/2015) urges believers to be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. To make an effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. Similarly, charitable foundations aim to unite communities, fostering trust and strong relationships for collective support and development, echoing the biblical call for believers to trust in God (KJV, Proverbs 3:5-6, 1769/2015).

**Accountability and Responsibility** within the leadership institute's framework corresponds to principles that emphasize accountability before God and responsible stewardship. In the Bible, believers are called to be accountable for their actions and use their resources wisely. The parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14-30 (KJV, 1769/2015) underscores the importance of faithful stewardship and accountability for the resources entrusted to individuals. Additionally, the principle of responsibility is evident in biblical teachings on being responsible for one another, as expressed in Galatians 6:2 (KJV, 1769/2015), which encourages believers to bear one another's burdens. The idea of holding oneself accountable and fulfilling responsibilities aligns with the biblical emphasis on living in a manner that reflects integrity, responsibility, and accountability both to God and to others.

The strengths and weaknesses of the leadership institute can be connected to Biblical principles that highlight the importance of vulnerability, relationships, accountability, commitment, community engagement, and long-term impact.

### **Strengths**

**Vulnerability and Genuine Relationships.** The emphasis on vulnerability and building genuine relationships aligns with biblical teachings on humility, openness, and love. The Bible

encourages believers to bear one another's burdens (KJV, Galatians 6:2, 1769/2015), fostering a sense of vulnerability and interconnectedness. The bible highlights the theme of vulnerability as being a condition for the best work to be done. When talking about unity, maturity and instructions for daily living, Paul instructed the Ephesians to “put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another” (KJV, Ephesians 4:25, 1769/2015). Vulnerability, in this context, aligns with the biblical concept of working collaboratively and acknowledging limitations for collective growth (KJV, Philippians 2:4, 1769/2015)).

**Accountability and Commitment.** The institute's focus on accountability and commitment is reminiscent of biblical principles promoting faithfulness, stewardship, and accountability. The parable of the talents (KJV, Matthew 25:14-30, 1769/2015) emphasizes the responsibility of faithful stewardship and accountability for the resources entrusted to individuals.

**Direct Community Application.** The commitment to direct community application resonates with the biblical call to love one's neighbor and actively contribute to the welfare of the community (KJV, Galatians 5:13-14, 1769/2015).

**Retreat and Monthly Sessions.** The periodic retreats and monthly sessions mirror biblical practices of gathering, reflection, and intentional times of learning and growth. In the Bible, there are instances of retreats for prayer, reflection, and teaching, such as Jesus withdrawing to solitary places for prayer, hence, we go to church (KJV, Luke 5:16, 1769/2015).

**Alumni Involvement Opportunities.** Encouraging alumni involvement aligns with biblical principles of mentorship and discipleship, where experienced individuals guide and support those who are newer or less experienced (KJV, Titus 2:3-5, 1769/2015).

## **Weaknesses**

**More Time and Going Deeper.** The need for more time and deeper engagement with participant leaders reflects the challenge of balancing depth with breadth, which is a common struggle. This resonates with biblical principles urging believers to go deep in their understanding of God's teachings (KJV, Colossians 2:6-7, 1769/2015).

**Asking More of Leaders.** While asking more of leaders can be a strength, it also poses a challenge. This aligns the Bible's teachings on leadership, which often involves sacrificial service and going beyond one's comfort zone, and often asked of leaders within the institute (KJV, Mark 10:43-45, 1769/2015).

**More of an Organizational Focus.** A potential weakness in participants wanting more of an organizational focus illuminates the importance of having a church organized in some manner whereby it may impact its members. Much like an organization to its employees/customers, which was an area of interest amongst participants. That said, there is an echo of caution against prioritizing worldly structures over spiritual values (KJV, Colossians 2:8, 1769/2015).

**Long-Term Sustainment.** The challenge of long-term sustainment corresponds to biblical teachings on endurance, perseverance, and the importance of finishing the race well (KJV, 2 Timothy 4:7, 1769/2015).

**Better Coaching and Mentoring.** Recognizing the need for improved coaching and mentoring aligns with biblical principles of wise counsel, guidance, and the importance of learning from experienced individuals (KJV, Proverbs 15:22, 1769/2015).

In closing, the Biblical foundation provided aligns with the identified themes, strengths, and weaknesses. The teachings and principles presented in the Bible as they are connected to the

themes have impressed upon me from the findings of this study. Additionally, they may be essential for charitable foundations to catalyze transformative change within communities, by bringing leaders from various sectors together and fostering a sense of responsibility, commitment, unity, and service towards others.

### **Implications**

The study's findings suggest that an integrated leadership institute can significantly impact community transformation. Leadership programs, supported by philanthropy, can foster cross-sector collaboration, and create ideal conditions for change.

#### **Implications for Theory**

These findings contribute to the ongoing evolution of theories related to community engagement, transformational leadership, and cross-sector collaboration. They supplement existing models by highlighting the importance of CFC in driving social change and uniting communities.

The interdisciplinary nature of these findings amalgamates principles from social science, economics, leadership theories, and religious studies, creating a holistic framework that underscores the interconnection between philanthropy, community dynamics, and Biblical principles.

#### **Implications for Practice**

The findings propose new strategies for philanthropic organizations, emphasizing the need for a strategic and communal approach, identifying priorities in community needs, and fostering collaboration to drive impactful change.

In psychological practice/consulting and community development, the findings advocate for the adoption of transformational leadership models and the cultivation of trust, consistency,

and shared language to facilitate a safe environment for learning, change, and collective problem-solving.

### **Impact on Scientific Community**

These findings provide a rich landscape for further exploration, encouraging research into the social impact of philanthropy, the efficacy of cross-sector collaboration, and the influence of transformational leadership principles at a community level.

The interdisciplinary nature of these findings invites collaboration among researchers across various domains, stimulating novel studies and partnerships to explore the multifaceted roles of CFC in community transformation, TFL within communities, and the dynamic opportunities for small- or large-scale CSC.

### **Impact on Psychological Practice/Consulting**

Psychological practice can leverage the identified themes to design interventions promoting community cohesion, trust-building, and resilience, fostering environments conducive to individual and collective well-being. Additionally, the same can be said for I/O psychology when consulting, assessing, and strategizing within the constructs of the organizational space.

The application of transformational leadership principles derived from the findings can enhance leadership development programs, fostering leaders equipped to drive positive community change.

### **Impact on Church and Other Organizations**

Like the implications toward charitable foundations and/or philanthropists, the findings offer a blueprint for faith-based organizations to strengthen their community outreach by implementing sustainable programs that align with both their religious principles and the identified thematic elements.

Insights from the literature underscore the significance of uniting various organizational entities, including churches, to collectively address community challenges, emphasizing collaboration over isolated efforts. Furthermore, organizations may glean insight into the type of leadership development programming they want to invest in for their leaders. Albeit internally or externally, the case in Salem has provided anecdotal evidence for transformative leadership development.

In summary, the findings from the examination of Foundations as Community Catalysts, Transformational Leadership, and Cross-Sector Collaboration intertwined with the Biblical Foundation, serve as a compass for both theoretical advancement and practical application. These insights offer a roadmap for leaders, organizations, including the scientific community, psychological practice/consulting, and churches, to drive meaningful, collaborative, and sustainable change in communities, focusing on the essence of unity, trust, commitment, and transformational leadership.

### **Limitations**

This section addresses the constraints and boundaries of the research. The study had several limitations intertwined with its fundamental assumptions and design framework, influencing the breadth and applicability of the findings:

Primarily, the qualitative case study was confined to a specific case within Salem, Oregon, centered around a select group of leaders from the local community. This choice severely limited the generalizability of the conclusions, as it focused on a singular instance and a specialized group of individuals connected to the targeted leadership institute. This niche sample size restricted the diversity of perspectives, potentially limiting the depth and breadth of the

conclusions drawn. The findings might lack representation from other key community leaders or sectors not directly involved in the leadership institute.

The reliance on a qualitative approach and the use of single 90-minute interviews with each leader also posed constraints on the study. This methodological approach might not have delved deeply enough or allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the constructs under investigation. The absence of multiple interviews or diverse research methodologies potentially limited the depth of data collection and the broader applicability of the study's outcomes. Moreover, the study faced challenges related to pre-existing relationships among the leaders involved in the institute. This factor could have introduced bias, potentially influencing responses during data collection due to social desirability. While efforts were made to control such bias through transparent communication, the pre-existing relationships might have shaped the information provided.

The qualitative nature of the study might have restricted the generation of easily quantifiable or generalizable evidence. While the study indirectly indicated measurable impacts on the community, the absence of direct, quantifiable evidence could limit its broader applicability. The case-specific nature of the study, confined to Salem, Oregon, makes it difficult to apply findings universally. The specifics of the Salem community and the unique attributes of the leadership institute might limit the transferability of conclusions to dissimilar contexts or communities.

In conclusion, while the qualitative case study of the Salem leadership institute provided valuable insights and in-depth understanding, these limitations should be acknowledged when interpreting and applying the findings and considering recommendations for further research in the related subject area(s). Addressing these constraints in future research with more extensive

samples, diverse methodologies, and broader scopes could contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the constructs under investigation and their implications for leadership and community transformation. A larger discussion of such recommendations is in the following section.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Future research should include exploring the adaptability of TFL, CSC, and CFC across various cultural and organizational landscapes. A randomized controlled trial would also be important to gather stronger evidence for the impact of the programming. A longitudinal study would help to understand the sustained impacts of these elements and aligning these components with evolving leadership paradigms and technological advancements. Future research could expand this study to multiple locations or leadership institutes, considering different cultural and community contexts. Additionally, incorporating multiple data collection methods could strengthen the validity of findings. Some exact recommendations are listed below, keeping in mind that any of the said recommendations are iterative and adaptive per researcher, research questions and/or hypothesis.

Future research should involve a study to quantify leaders' experiences using surveys or a variety of leadership instruments. Employing pre and post-tests and longitudinal research can offer a quantitative understanding of changes in leadership perceptions, skills, and actions over time. This would provide a more precise measurement of the impact of leadership development programs.

Future research is also recommended to undertake other case studies in communities where similar efforts to the Salem leadership institute are being attempted or where the same leadership institute has expanded. This approach allows for a comparative analysis of perceived



outcomes and data. Understanding how the application of similar constructs affects different communities can provide a broader perspective on the effectiveness of such initiatives.

I also recommend conducting a study that goes deeper into the impacts of leaders trained in the institute within their respective organizations. Use semi-formal interviews or surveys with employees of these leaders to assess changes in workplace dynamics, organizational culture, and employee experiences resulting from the leadership training. This type of study can illuminate the cascading effects of leadership development on broader organizational outcomes.

It would also be helpful to conduct a study that interviews and surveys all the participating leaders of the institute. This comprehensive approach would allow for a holistic understanding of the direct and indirect effects experienced by each leader. Collecting insights from all participants can present a collective understanding of the program's efficacy.

Further, it might be beneficial to perform an in-depth study that zooms in on one of the key elements explored in the case study (TFL, CSC, or CFC) and investigates its individual impact within the constructs of the presented case study. This focused analysis could help understand the differential effects and contributions of each construct in community transformation efforts.

By embracing these recommendations for future research, a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of leadership development, community engagement, and the influence of the constructs of TFL, CSC, and CFC can be achieved. These avenues of exploration will not only enrich the academic understanding of these constructs but also provide practical insights for organizations, specifically charitable foundations/philanthropist, communities, and leadership development programs.

### Summary

This research investigated the impact of transformational leadership, cross-sector collaboration, and charitable foundations within a Salem-based leadership institute. The findings highlighted the potential of integrated leadership programming in fostering community change, providing insights into participant perceptions, demographic data, and overall themes extracted from the interviews. All of which contributed to a thorough discussion of the findings, what they might indicate, and what the implications may be. Additionally, limitations to the study were discussed along with recommendations for future research.

This chapter has drawn the interconnections between the participants' experiences, the research questions, and the thematic outcomes. It has indicated the potential of an integrated leadership approach to instigate profound change at both organizational and community levels.

Finally, the culmination of this journey into the heart of leadership, community collaboration, and philanthropic empowerment, one can discern the resonating echoes of transformative potential. The exploration of Transformational Leadership, Cross-Sector Collaboration, and Foundations as Community Catalysts within the context of a Salem-based leadership institute has unveiled a tapestry woven with the aspirations and commitments of change agents. From the qualitative landscape emerged insights of profound significance, illuminating the transformative impact of integrated leadership strategies. The threads of hope, unity, and commitment have been intricately intertwined, portraying a vivid canvas that attempts to capture the very essence of transformational change at its core.

As the final chapter unfurls, it's evident that this study is but a prelude to the boundless possibilities and potentials that await. The lessons learned, the limitations acknowledged, and the recommendations put forth serve as guiding lights in the vast expanse of leadership and

community impact, inviting further exploration, growth, and innovation—mostly in part of new ways philanthropy can be done. The intricate interplay between individual experiences, collective aspirations, and the foundational tenets of community-driven progress has been unveiled, highlighting the transformative power of unity, cooperation, and compassionate leadership our world arguably is in dire need of.

May this dissertation stand not as a definitive conclusion but as a steppingstone into an era of transformative action. It is a testament to the collective spirit, the aspirations of change, and the resounding call for transformation. The leaders, the collaborators, and the philanthropic visionaries who tread this path are the pioneers of a future painted with the hues of transformation and unwavering commitment. Let this journey inspire others, beckoning them to harness their potential, join hands in shared visions and missions, and embark on their transformative journeys sculpting a world where collaborative leadership and philanthropic efforts converge to create a reality of profound and enduring change.

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## APPENDIX A: Consent

**Consent**

**Title of the Project:** Understanding Leaders' Experiences of a Leadership Institute Combining Transformational Leadership, Cross-Sector Collaboration and Charitable Foundations as Catalysts

**Principal Investigator:** Chris Pineda, Doctoral Candidate, Liberty University School of Psychology

<b>Invitation to be Part of a Research Study</b>
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You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be a current or former participant in the Groundwork Leadership Institute. You must hold a position of leadership within your organization and/or community. 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.

<b>What is the study about and why is it being done?</b>
--

The purpose of this study is to understand leaders' experiences of the Groundwork Leadership Institute, which combines s transformational leadership, cross-sector collaboration and charitable foundations. The researcher would like to learn leaders' perspectives of the influence organizational and community-based change, and program strengths and weaknesses.

<b>What will happen if you take part in this study?</b>
---

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

Participate in a single semi-structured interview, approximately one hour and 30 minutes in duration. During the interview, I will be taking notes and audio (video?) recording. You will be asked questions to reflect upon your experiences in your organization and within the Salem community, as well as reflecting upon the strengths and weakness of the institute.

<b>How could you or others benefit from this study?</b>
---

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study. Participation in this study will neither positively or negatively affect prior relationships with the sponsoring philanthropist or me as a researcher. That said, indirect benefits may occur, such as: A deeper understanding of the leadership institute methodology, a deeper understanding of the, and a deeper assessment of one's leadership and the potential for transformation within your community.

Benefits to society include contributions to the literature surrounding transformational leadership, cross-sector collaboration, and the role charitable foundations/philanthropists can have in their communities. Other benefits that may occur include the possible spread of leadership programs such as the one you have participated in...

#### **What risks might you experience from being in this study?**

The expected risks from participating in this study are minimal, which means you 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 except for the potential of future research on the same or related case. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher(s) will have access to the records.

- Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- 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/in a locked drawer/file cabinet. After seven years, all electronic records will be deleted and/or all hardcopy records will be shredded.
- Recordings will be stored on a password locked computer for seven years and then deleted. The researcher and members of his doctoral committee will have access to these recordings.

#### **Is study participation voluntary?**

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University, Groundwork Leadership, or Mountain West Philanthropy. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

#### **What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?**

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you, apart from focus group data, will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

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

The researcher conducting this study is Chris Pineda. 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. Natalie Hamrick 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](mailto: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.*

**Your Consent**

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

*I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.*

The researcher has my permission to audio-record/video-record/photograph me as part of my participation in this study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Subject Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature & Date

## APPENDIX B: Interview Script and Questions

### Opening

- Review confidentiality and field any questions the participant may have.
- Share the purpose of the research.
- Discuss and define briefly TFL, CSC, and CFC.

### TFL-Related Interview Questions

- How has what you have learned from the leadership institute impacted your leadership?
- Do you feel you have become a more transformational leader because of your participation in the leadership institute, why or why not?
- How has what you have learned impacted your organization, if at all?
- What aspects of the leadership institute played a role in any conditions for change or actual change in your organization?

### CSC-Related Interview Questions

- Do you feel like you have been able to successfully engage in cross-sector collaboration through the leadership institute, why or why not?
- What community changes or potential for change have you witnessed since participating in the leadership institute?

### CFC-Related Interview Questions

- Is there a difference in potential for change (either organizational or community) given that the leadership institute is coming from a community philanthropist, why or why not?
- How have you witnessed the Salem community benefiting from programming conceived by institute participants and funded by the philanthropist?

### TFL, CSC, CFC Synergy-Related Questions



- How have you witnessed transformational leadership, cross-sector collaboration, and the community philanthropist as a catalyst working in synergy since your initial training?
- What aspects of the leadership institute do you consider to be most beneficial in encouraging TFL, CSC, and CFC?

**Leadership Institute Strengths and Weaknesses**

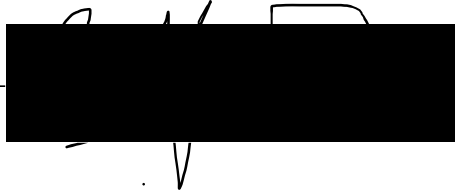
- What do you perceive to be the strengths of the leadership institute?
- What do you perceive to be the weaknesses of the leadership institute?

APPENDIX C: Copyright Permissions

**Figures 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6**

Under the authority of Groundwork Leadership LLC, I hereby grant permission for the use of the stated figures in this dissertation.

Chris Pineda

A large black rectangular redaction box covers the signature area. Handwritten lines and a checkmark are visible around the box, indicating a signature and approval.