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THE POWER WITHIN: INSTITUTION-BASED LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS IN RURAL COMMUNITY COLLEGES IN ILLINOIS

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THE POWER WITHIN:
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We certify this dissertation, submitted by the above named candidate, is fully adequate in scope and quality to satisfactorily meet the dissertation requirement for attaining the Doctor of Education degree in the Community College Leadership Doctoral Program.

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to my beloved parents Dr. Bushra Sabrey and Dr. Talaat Saleh. You might have left this earth, but you are always in my heart. You are my true inspiration. I know you are proud of me. This one is for you.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges in Illinois, and the impact of these programs in supporting and preparing future community college leaders. The study also explored the efficacy of these programs and whether their implementation aligns with the institutions' culture and goals. According to Hull and Keim (2007), 70% of today's leaders believe that there is a need to expand in-house development programs.

This study employed a mixed methods design for data collection and was structured as a dominant-status sequential design where qualitative data gathering was dominant, although quantitative data gathering occurred first. Community colleges selected for this multiple-case study included 25 rural community colleges located throughout the state of Illinois (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2010). Participant selection began with a web-distributed survey sent to the chief academic officers and presidents of the 25 selected rural community colleges. Based on responses, six participants (two each from classifications "rural-small," "rural medium," and "rural-large") were identified and selected for semistructured interviews.

Findings from interviews suggest four emerging themes: (a) despite an agreement present among rural community college senior-level administrators on the merits of institution-based leadership developments programs, a formal implementation process is not yet present; (b) there is evidence to suggest that succession planning at rural community colleges is taking a more informal direction in light of the absence of a formal plan; (c) there are conflicting perspectives among community college boards of trustees and senior-level administrators in rural community colleges regarding the implementation of institution-based leadership development programs;

and (d) limited financial resources of rural community colleges can constitute barriers for developing institution-based leadership development programs.

This study concluded that there is no clear evidence to support the claim that rural community colleges, are taking steps towards formalizing leadership development programs. According to the Sherbini Paradigm developed as a result of this research, it is recommended that the successful implementation of institution-based leadership development programs in rural institutions require four main components (cultivate, appropriate, incorporate, and realign,).The components constitute the foundation for the development, implementation, sustainability, and success of these programs.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The community college leaders of today are in a rare position to facilitate collaboration and partnerships through nontraditional means such as providing customized educational programming through distance education or through multisite options specifically geared to meet the needs of their local and regional stakeholders, in addition to forging national alliance with nonprofit organizations (Wallin, 2004). Moreover, as Greenleaf (1977) and Greenleaf, Beazley, Beggs, and Spears (2003) suggested, future community college leaders must be channels also for institutional change while remaining a natural partner as a servant leader, making decisions and taking the political risks necessary to offer fair and reasonable opportunities for those they serve within and external to the institution. Whether the leadership style is transactional, transformational, or servant, the leader must be a motivator and provider, and must engage and inspire those he or she leads and serves, creating an institution culture that promotes teamwork and collaboration to face the challenges and opportunities of the future community college (Gould & Caldwell, 1998; Stubbs, 1997).

Background

American community colleges have continued to demonstrate their strong commitment to expanding education opportunity for all (Vaughan, 2000). As educational progression continues in the 21st century, demands on community colleges are increasing and challenges are beginning to emerge. Vaughan concurred by noting that "in the 21st century, the community colleges' success will continue to depend on its ability to respond to a changing environment" (p. 29). One of these changes involves leadership. Presently, there is a growing concern regarding the quality and preparedness of future leaders that will be replacing those retiring (Campbell, 2007; Charan,

Drotter, & Noel, 2011; Wallin, 2006). The mass departure of experienced upper level administrators who started their careers in the sixties, seventies, and eighties (Dupree, 2007; Shults, 2001) forms the basis of a significant challenge facing community colleges at present and in the near future.

A review of the literature pertaining to community college leadership reflects a focus on community college presidents' life experiences, styles, and careers only, with less empirical evidence examining the career paths of other college administrators (Amey, 2006; Beach, 2006; Weisman & Vaughan, 2007). Moreover, there seems to be no explanation of what organizational strategies might be appropriate for developing and supporting alternative trajectories (Vaughan, 1990). The literature suggests that alternative leadership styles are replacing the traditional ones, as well as providing novel and atypical ways of understanding the concept (Eddy & VanDerLinden, 2006).

Furthermore, due to dwindling state funding to community colleges, cost effectiveness becomes a priority that can make the external hiring process of senior-level administrators expensive, tedious, and time-consuming (Campbell, 2007; Campbell, Syed, & Morris, 2010). One way to resolve this predicament of leadership quality and preparedness, as well as to cultivate and nurture a new class of leaders, involves developing institution-based leadership development programs that provide the essential tools for attaining these goals. By approaching the issue of identifying and developing leadership internally versus externally, institution-based leadership programs might also provide a sustainable and resourceful alternative to current practice (Amey, 2006; Eddy & Murray, 2007; Friedel, 2010; Jeandron, 2006).

Significance of the Study

At a time when many veteran leaders are retiring and the challenges facing potential administrators are escalating, many in the field of higher education are speculating about where and how future leaders will be identified. According to Friedel (2010), the exodus of senior-level administrators is likely to create new leadership opportunities for the next generation of community college leaders, especially in middle-level management. With many senior-level administrators now approaching retirement age, there is growing concern that the pipeline is not producing new leaders rapidly enough to fill all the resulting vacancies. Complicating this issue in community colleges is that retirement among senior-level administrators is not only among college presidents, but also among vice presidents. In 2001, projections indicated that 33% of senior-level administrators (vice presidents) would be retiring by 2006 (Shults, 2001).

Faced with the escalating challenges due to the anticipated retirement of current leadership, community college leadership development programs are fast becoming the sign of the changing environment of higher education. Existing research proposes that there are substantial approaches regarding the skills and qualities required for generating future leadership (Amey, VanDerLinden, & Brown, 2002; Campbell et al., 2010; Jeandron, 2006).

According to Hull and Keim (2007), 70% of today's leaders believe that there is a need to expand in-house development programs. However, despite the interest in such programs, very few colleges actually have one in place (Jeandron, 2006). The need for institution-based leadership development programs in general seems to be gaining momentum as a means for cultivating new leadership in community college, and more so in rural institutions. Clearly, these institutions face issues and challenges that are noticeably different from their urban and suburban counterparts, especially when it comes to mission, location, and limited resources (Miller &

Kissinger, 2007; Morelli, 2002). Hence, from a leadership perspective, these differences, coupled with the challenges they create, have led many in the field of rural community colleges to take a closer look at the merits of institution-based leadership development programs, as well as "grow your own" (GYO) programs as a means for filling the void created by retiring senior-level administrators.

In regard to the rural community college environment, GYO and institution-based leadership development programs seem to be a trend that emphasizes a more holistic approach, focusing on personal growth through the acquisition of leadership skills. Such programs seem more suitable for some rural community colleges that do not use a selection committee for acceptance to these programs. For example, at Parkland College, a rural community college located in Illinois, the president and the vice president select the participants (Jeandron, 2006). Moreover, institution-based leadership development programs "continue to create a climate of learning and leadership for their communities" (Jeandron, 2006, p. 39), which is the driving force behind leadership in the 21st century, in community college in general and rural institutions in particular.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges in Illinois, and the impact of these programs in supporting and preparing future community college leaders. The study also explored the efficacy of these programs and whether their implementation aligns with the institutions' culture and goals.

Research Questions

The research questions developed to examine institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges include the following:

1. How can institution-based leadership development programs provide the skills and leadership competencies needed for future leadership?
2. What specific leadership development strategies are employed in institution-based leadership programs in rural community colleges in Illinois?
3. In what ways have institution-based leadership development programs addressed the issue of succession planning in rural community colleges in Illinois?
4. What are the criteria for participation in institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges in Illinois?
5. What role does the board of trustees play in institution-based leadership development programs?
6. How are institution-based leadership development programs assessed and or/evaluated (specifically, to what extent do institution-based leadership developments programs align with the institutional culture and goals)?

Data Collection Protocol

This study employed a mixed methods design for data collection, whereby both qualitative and quantitative methods complement each other by providing a more comprehensive view of the subject (Custer, 1996). Further, this study was structured as a dominant-status sequential design where qualitative data gathering was dominant, although quantitative data gathering occurred first. The study also utilized a multiple-case design in order to examine institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges in Illinois.

Community colleges selected for this multiple-case study included 25 rural community colleges located throughout the state of Illinois (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2010). Participant selection began with a web-distributed survey sent to each of the

chief academic officers and presidents of the 25 selected rural community colleges. Participants were asked to identify the institution-based leadership development programs they provide. Finally, the survey asked if the respondents would be interested in participating further through a semistructured interview process. Based on responses to the survey, six participants (two each from classifications "rural-small," "rural medium," and "rural-large") were identified and selected for semistructured interviews.

Limitations

The limitations of this study were identified as follows:

1. The study examined institution-based leadership development programs in 25 rural community colleges in the state of Illinois, which is the total number of rural community colleges identified within the Carnegie classification of "small," "medium," and "large" rural community colleges throughout the state of Illinois.
2. The study was limited further to Illinois rural community colleges that provide one or more institution-based leadership development programs.

Delimitations

The delimitations for this study include the following:

1. The research was framed to incorporate only geographically accessible participants who responded to the initial web-distributed survey.
2. The total number of community colleges selected in Illinois was limited to no more than 25 institutions which encompasses the total number of rural community colleges in the state.
3. The time frame to complete the data collection for this study was limited by program design to three months.

Assumptions

This research proceeded with the following assumptions:

1. Institution-based leadership development programs can assist in preparing future leadership in the community college.
2. Institution-based leadership development programs can be effective in providing the skills and training necessary for future community college administrators and leaders.
3. Information gathered from this study could help community colleges develop and/or revise effective institution-based leadership development programs.

Organization of the Study

The research conducted and collected for this study is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 serves as the introduction to the study, its significance, its purpose, research questions, limitation, delimitation, and assumptions. Chapter 2 is a literature review that provides an in-depth review of current literature and research regarding institution-based leadership development programs in community colleges in general, as well as highlighting the nature of such programs in rural community colleges in particular. The chapter also provides the theoretical framework adopted for this study. Chapter 3, Methodology, illustrates how the research study was conducted using a mixed methods approach. Chapter 4, Findings, highlights the results of the study by showing how data was collected through the use of the survey instrument (statistical) and semistructured interviews (descriptive), and triangulated with literature pertaining to institution-based leadership development programs to support the findings. Chapter 5, Conclusions, Implications, and Recommendations, highlights the research outcomes and presents conclusions and recommendations for future research.

Chapter Summary

Faced with the escalating challenges due to the anticipated retirement of current leadership, community college leadership development programs are fast becoming the sign of the changing environment of higher education. Existing research proposes that there are substantial approaches regarding the skills and qualities required for generating future leadership (Amey et al., 2002; Jeandron, 2006).

This study sought to examine the issue of institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges in Illinois and their impact in supporting and preparing future community college leaders. The research also explored the efficacy of these programs and addressed whether their implementation aligned with the institutions' culture and goals. If community colleges in general and rural institutions in particular are sincere about growing and developing their own leaders, consideration must be given to identifying institution-based leadership development programs and pathways for aspiring individuals and senior-level administrators who are interested in pursuing such careers (Eddy, 2009; Jeandron, 2006). Accordingly, the infrastructure to support these pathways should include a comprehensive roadmap that provides both guidance and opportunities for leaders (Spears, 2003; Wallin, 2010b).

The changing demographical nature of those who lead and serve in higher education today is important academically and in practice to understand the influence and impact of current challenges in the workplace. The need to move from a rigid, formal, and traditional culture to a more inclusive and flexible one is relevant for effective leadership. Accordingly, this approach might also serve as a bridge for narrowing the community college leadership shortage (Ebbers, Conover, & Samuels, 2010; House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004).

The research in this study was bound by limitations due to time constraints and geography. Participants identified for this study through a survey instrument and later interviewed included presidents and vice presidents from six rural community colleges in Illinois. Furthermore, it was assumed that all participants interviewed for this study responded both objectively and candidly to the questions and provided information from their professional and personal experiences. Finally, it was also assumed that such contributions were important in shedding light on the issue of institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges, as well as the problem of leadership shortages currently facing community colleges.

The next chapter, Chapter 2, will provide an in-depth overview of current literature and research regarding institution-based leadership developments programs in community colleges in general, as well as highlighting the nature of such programs in rural community colleges in particular. The chapter also provides the theoretical framework adopted for this study.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

As community colleges move forward into the new millennium, the issue of leadership shortage due to the retirement of many senior-level administrators is becoming a problem, creating hundreds of vacancies, as well as concerns about college presidential tenures being so short. The process for finding qualified senior-level administrators is complicated and not easy. As Roueche, Baker, and Rose (1989) argued, leaders do not just happen, for they have to be both well trained and motivated. As a result, many community colleges, especially rural institutions, are moving towards developing leadership programs that offer training for aspiring employees.

The purpose of this mixed methods multiple case study was to examine the issue of institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges in Illinois and their impact on supporting and preparing future community college leaders. The research explored the efficacy of these programs and whether their implementation aligned with the institutions' culture and goals. Literature and research related to institution-based leadership development programs, historical leadership in the community college, as well as that in rural community colleges was addressed. In addition to a review of the evolving role of future community college leaders, servant leadership theory as a theoretical framework to support institution-based leadership strategies was reviewed.

Leadership in the Community College

Historically, community colleges have experienced remarkable and rapid growth during the 20th century. These institutions, with their openness, affordability, and community service, have managed to transform the outlook of higher education (Cohen & Brawer, 1996). The first community college to open its doors was Joliet Junior College in Illinois in 1901. Within less

than 10 years, an expansion to 25 community colleges had taken place. The 1950s and 1960s saw a 50% increase in student enrollment to community colleges due to their regional location. According to Cohen and Brawer (2002), location played a big role in student enrollment to community colleges, especially when more than 90% of a state's population lived within a 25-mile radius of a community college. This, in turn, signalled a state's possession of an established community college and offered students who were residents of a state easy access to college.

Enrollment in community colleges continued to grow and, by the 1970s, over 1.5 million students were enrolled (Weisman & Vaughan, 2007). However, this expansion came with a downside because it has resulted in colleges that are predominantly vulnerable to the retirement of aging Baby Boomers. For this reason, leadership may very well become the key factor in determining whether an institution will continue to grow or whether it will decline (Amey & Twomby, 1992).

A review of the literature pertaining to community college leadership reflects a focus on community college presidents' life experiences, styles, and careers only, with less empirical evidence examining the career paths of other college administrators (Amey, 2006; Beach, 2006; Weisman & Vaughan, 2007). Moreover, there seems to be no explanation of what organizational strategies might be appropriate for developing and supporting alternative trajectories (Vaughan, 1990). The literature suggests that alternative leadership styles are replacing the traditional ones, as well as providing novel and atypical ways of understanding the concept (Amey, 2006).

The role of community college leaders has evolved throughout the history of higher education (Cohen & Brawer 1996), and as institutions continues to meet the changing needs of the communities they serve, so must the leaders. A clear vision, pragmatic expectations, fiscal responsibility, and competent decision making, coupled with the institution's mission and goals,

must be planned (Boggs, 2004a; 2004b; Boyer 1990). Hence, future leaders must find ways to remain successful and competitive in the marketplace financially, and must remain attentive and responsive to their taxpayers (Wallin, 2006). As the communities they serve become more diversified, community colleges and their leaders must carry on with their mission as gateways of educational opportunities and champions of social change.

Alternative Leadership Models

The changing stance in leadership ideology, coupled with the scarcity of supply, has led to the demand for alternatives. In that regard, as Campbell et al. (2010) explained, the 21st-Century Educational Leadership Profiles project was created. The project aimed at increasing the understanding of leadership qualities and the work style of successful college presidents, especially in an environment that requires skills in transformational management. Moreover, the project presented a number of resources, directed towards professional development of midlevel administrators in the community college pipeline (Campbell et al., 2010).

There is no doubt that the process of addressing and finding leaders with definite traits and skills that constitute the right fit for an institution is a difficult process. In recognition and support of development of community college leadership, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) created the Leading Forward initiative to identify competencies for effective community college leaders. These competencies included organizational strategy emphasizing leaders' ability to improve the quality of their institutions; resource management; the ability to ethically sustain physical and financial assets to fulfil the mission, vision, and goals of the institution; communication; and the ability to use clear listening, speaking, and dialogue to sustain the community college's mission (Ebbers et al., 2010). In addition to collaboration, the AACC cited needs for the ability to develop and maintain responsibility towards internal and

external relationships that nurture diversity; community college advocacy, the ability to understand, commit to, and advocate the mission of the institution to all constituents; and professionalism, the ability of community college leaders to work ethically by setting high standards for themselves as well as demonstrating accountability to and for the college and community.

Further research conducted by the 21st-Century Leader Profiles project paralleling the AACC's competencies initiative also found that retirement of current community college leaders was having a major impact on specialized administrative positions such as college registrars and financial aid directors (Campbell, 2007). The research also suggested that the skills and competencies required for specialized administrative positions were changing and expanding. Recommendations were suggested for examining and understanding the deficiencies that exist, as well as the expertise required for these leadership positions.

The community college leaders of today are in a rare position to facilitate collaboration and partnerships through nontraditional means such as providing customized educational programming through distance education, or through multisite options specifically geared to meet the needs of their local and regional stakeholders, in addition to forging national alliance with nonprofit organizations (Wallin, 2004). Moreover, as Greenleaf (1977) and Greenleaf et al. (2003) suggested, future community college leaders must be channels also for institutional change while remaining a natural partner as a servant leader, making decisions and taking the political risks necessary to offer fair and reasonable opportunities for those they serve within and external to the institution. Whether the leadership style is transactional, transformational, or servant, the leader must be a motivator and provider, and must engage and inspire those he or she leads and serves, creating an institutional culture that promotes teamwork and collaboration to

face the challenges and opportunities of the future community college (Gould & Caldwell, 1998; Stubbs, 1997).

Faced with the escalating challenges due to the anticipated retirement of current leadership, community college leadership development programs are fast becoming the sign of the changing environment of higher education. Existing research proposes that there are substantial approaches regarding the skills and qualities required for generating future leadership (Amey et al., 2002).

Institution-Based Leadership Development Programs

At a time when many veteran leaders are retiring and the challenges facing potential administrators are escalating, many in the field of higher education are speculating about where and how future leaders will be identified. According to Friedel (2010), the exodus of senior-level administrators is likely to create new leadership opportunities for the next generation of community college leaders, especially in middle-level management. With many senior-level administrators now approaching retirement age, there is growing concern that the pipeline is not producing new leaders rapidly enough to fill all the resulting vacancies. According to a report by the AACC (as cited in Shults, 2001), 79% of current community college leaders plan to retire by 2011. The problem of community college leaders retiring is so grave that, in 2006, the California legislature took action by passing Senate Bill 724, which amended California's master plan for higher education to authorize the California State University to award doctoral degrees in leadership for the community college (Friedel, 2010).

Complicating this issue in community colleges is that retirement among senior-level administrators is not only among college presidents, but also among vice presidents. In 2001, projections indicated that 33% of senior-level administrators (vice presidents) would be retiring

by 2006 (Shults, 2001). This trend, according to Bagnato (2004), would soon create a major problem as years of experience and expertise would be lost due to these retirements. Currently, there are three types of leadership programs available: (a) university-based graduate programs; (b) short-term leadership programs such as institutes and academies; and (c) institution-based leadership development programs, known as GYOs within community colleges that are tailored by the colleges and available to their employees (Manzo, 2003; Shults, 2001).

University-Based Leadership Development Programs

Despite a plethora of information pertaining to these types of programs, the literature suggests that not all have been successful in addressing the issue of leadership development (Bagnato, 2004; Campbell et al., 2010; Cloud, 2010; Dembicki, 2006; Eddy, 2009; Jeandron, 2006). For example, recent studies show that neither university-based programs nor short-term leadership programs have been meeting the demand of preparing new leaders to replace those retiring and filling the shortage gap (Eddy, 2009).

Questions have also been raised as to whether these university-based and short-term leadership programs are effective in preparing employees for community college leadership positions because since they seem to focus more on theory and are not sensitive to the community college context, as well as ignoring important local leadership conditions that may vary according to location/region or state (Eddy, 2009; Eddy & Murray, 2007; Manzo, 2003; Piland & Wolf, 2003; Shults, 2001). In fact, literature suggests that campus-based leadership programs and GYOs may be more effective than an advanced degree or a statewide or nationwide leadership development program because it can be tailored to the institution's culture and goals (Stone, 1995).

According to Hull and Keim (2007), 70% of today's leaders believe that there is a need to expand in-house development programs. However, despite the interest in such programs, very few colleges actually have one in place (Jeandron, 2006). The need for institution-based leadership development programs in general seems to be gaining momentum as a means for cultivating new leadership in community college, and more so in rural institutions. Clearly, these institutions face issues and challenges that are noticeably different from their urban and suburban counterparts especially when it comes to mission, location, and limited resources (Morelli, 2002). Hence, from a leadership perspective, these differences, coupled with the challenges they create, has led many in the field of rural community colleges to take a closer look at the merits of institution-based leadership development programs, as well as GYO, as a means for filling the void created by retiring senior-level administrators.

Nevertheless, all types of leadership programs are beginning to gain strength, both at the national level and the state level in an attempt to alleviate leadership shortages (Ebbers et al., 2010). A good example includes university-based leadership programs built on the foundation of GYO leadership programs (Jeandron, 2006). Some of these programs designed for middle- and upper-level administrators can now be found in Iowa, Illinois, Colorado, Massachusetts, Kentucky, Texas, and Louisiana (Ebbers et al., 2010). The University of Texas at Austin's leadership program, for example, stands out as one of the best. The program, which has been in place for over six decades, is a two-year residential program that has resulted in higher graduation rates, especially among minorities, than any other program nationwide (Bagnato, 2004).

These institution-based programs include options such as academies, mentorships, and internships. Such institution-based leadership development programs can be useful because they

can be accessible to mid-level administrators as well. Furthermore, these programs can be tailored to the institutional culture and needs, which in turn can result in effective management (Eddy, 2009). The Community College Leadership Program at Walden University is a program that offers an alternative for working professionals seeking doctoral degrees within the community college. The program offers a doctoral degree through online courses (O'Banion, 2007). In 2006, National Louis University began a doctoral program in Community College Leadership. The program, which is three years long, is designed for professionals who are seeking leadership careers within the community college.

Community College Leadership Development Programs

In addition to university programs, several postsecondary institutions (e.g., community and technical colleges) have invested in the creation of a variety of programs such as institution-based leadership programs, leadership institutions, GYOs, professional organization-based institutions, or a combination of all of these programs, in an attempt to bridge the gap (Friedal, 2010). In a study conducted in 2005 by the AACC (as cited in Dembicki, 2006), administrators at 48 community colleges had created GYO programs, enrolling 1,000 participants. According to Hull (2005), 86% of community colleges currently have some form of GYO leadership training. Cumberland County College in New Jersey, for example, began a personal and professional development program, addressing its institution's leadership and learning strategic goals (Jeandron, 2006). Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College has also created a leadership program to promote and examine institution cohesiveness among its many campuses.

Other GYO programs extend to regional or state community college systems, such as the Kentucky Community and Technical College System that offers a program that emphasizes the institution's culture, and California's community colleges, which offer a leadership skills

seminar that provides personal and professional development to its employees (Jeandron, 2006). With this in mind, leadership programs are beginning to gain strength, both at the national level and the state level, with professional associations now offering leadership development programs as well (Ebbers et al., 2010). An example is the Future Leaders Institute, organized and promoted by the AACC. The program is offered as seminars designed for midlevel community college administrators ready to move on to higher levels of leadership. Other national programs also intended for senior-level candidates include the Executive Leadership Institution, sponsored by the League for Innovation in the Community College, the AACC Trustees president preparation workshops, and the National Institute for Leadership Development that prepares women for community college leadership (Ebbers et al., 2010).

Furthermore, in 2001, the W. K. Kellogg Foundation awarded $1.9 million to the AACC to create an initiative to address the leadership shortage within community colleges. The project, known as the Leading Forward initiative, sought to develop a plan to identify the qualities and skills needed for future leadership, assess past and present programs, as well as create a roadmap for the future of community colleges (Jeandron, 2006). Another organization is the Institute for Community College Development, which offers leadership training and research support for business professionals that want to transition into community college leadership (Jeandron, 2006).

In regard to the rural community college environment, GYO and institution-based leadership development programs seem to be a trend that emphasizes a more holistic approach, focusing on personal growth through the acquisition of leadership skills. Such programs seem also more suitable for some rural community colleges that do not use a selection committee for acceptance to these programs. For example, at Parkland College, a rural community college

located in Illinois, the president and the vice president select the participants (Jeandron, 2006). Moreover, institution-based leadership development programs "continue to create a climate of learning and leadership for their communities (Jeandron, 2006, p. 39), which is the driving force behind leadership in the 21st century, in community college in general and rural institutions in particular.

Rural Community Colleges in Context

The problem of leadership shortage in community colleges has been escalating for more than a decade. In an effort to try and combat the crisis, many institutions have sprung into action by initiating several plans such as creating institution-based leadership development programs, as well as other initiatives that focus on community college leadership. What is missing from this plan is the recognition of the critical issues that rural community colleges and their leaders are facing, among which lack of financial resources is a priority (Eddy, 2009). Historically, rural community colleges have often served as the cultural and community center for their communities (Miller & Kissinger, 2007). For more than half a century, rural community colleges have influenced the activities, status, and identity of the communities they serve by offering programs in cultural enrichment, economic development, credit programs, and continuing education.

However, a closer look at rural community colleges shows that there are still a number of challenges facing these institutions. Rural community colleges, for example, serve communities that may be geographically isolated and have less diversity in the type of businesses operating in their districts, even if this isolation provides an advantage for these institutions because they can be seen as the only resource (Leist, 2007). Rural community colleges tend to focus more on maintaining a sense of community and economic development by offering services geared

towards small business, rather than focusing on academics and university transfer (Eddy & Murray, 2007). It is therefore important to create strategies for the future institutional leadership that sees leadership differently and establishes institutional collaborations among their peers to share resources and address community needs. Given the predicated leadership turnover, it is also important to consider how rural community colleges will cultivate, sustain, and prepare new leaders within their institutions who will continue to adhere to the college's mission and vision (Shults, 2001).

Defining Rural

Rural community colleges make up 60% of all two-year institutions and educate one third of all community college students each year (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2010). *Rural community colleges* are defined as public two-year institutions with an address outside the 100 largest standard or consolidated metropolitan statistical areas. According to Whitaker (1982), "rural" was first used by the U.S. Bureau of the Census in 1874, when it was defined as indicating the population of a county, exclusive of any cities or towns with 8,000 or more inhabitants. Modified over the years, by the 1980 census, rural became known as a population not classified as urban constitutes (Rios, 1988).

Classification

In regard to postsecondary institutions (e.g., community and technical colleges) in the United States, rural institutions are classified as " small" when enrollments are below 2,500 students, "medium" when enrollments are above 2,500 but below 5,000 students, and "large" when enrollments exceed 5,000 students (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2010). Rural colleges serve fewer students, with more of their students being full-time, and less diverse than that of urban or suburban community colleges. Low enrollments in smaller

and medium-sized rural colleges also suggest that they may lack sufficient resources to address educational issues, and their cost per student is higher, factors that indicate more budgetary limitations (Fluharty & Scaggs, 2007).

Mission and Vision

Rural community colleges might also have a different mission and vision from their urban or suburban counterparts such as building a sustainable rural community or training a rural workforce, rather than focusing on academics or university transfers (Clark & Davis, 2007). With this difference in mind, rural community college leaders need to know how to build partnerships, collaborate with the community, and identify new ideas, while adapting them to their specific setting and situation (Leist, 2007). Additionally, as community colleges gain more national and political attention, it is important to include rural colleges and to put in context how these institutions should meet the demands placed on them, especially in regard to leadership issues. Thus, from a leadership perspective, these limited resources can often pose a challenge, such as the concern of whether the marketability of rural community college leaders and their institutions require professional qualities different from their urban and suburban peer. If different qualities are required, what qualities do rural leaders view as essential (Leist, 2007)?

Rural Community Colleges in America

There are about 922 rural community colleges campuses throughout the United States (Hardy & Katsinas, 2006). Within rural communities, incomes tend to be lower than urban communities, with poverty rates higher than in urban area. The number of Americans living below the poverty line increased by more than 3.2 million between 2003 and 2008—and a disproportionate number of those newly poor people live in rural America (U.S Census Bureau, 2010). Newly released figures from the U.S. Census Bureau also show that of the 13.2% of

Americans living in poverty in 2008, the highest rate since 1997, in rural counties, that rate had climbed to 16.3%. The increase in the number of poor Americans was heavily weighted in rural communities. As a result, the gap between the poverty rates in urban and rural America widened, doubling between 2003 and 2008 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

In 2003, 12.3% of urban Americans and 13.9% of rural Americans lived below the poverty line. By 2008, the first full year of the current recession, the urban rate has risen to 12.7% and the rural rate had jumped to 16.3%. The gap between the rate of urban and rural poor was 1.6 percentage points in 2003. Just five years later, however, the difference had grown to 3.4 percentage points. A two-person household is considered poor if it had income of less than $14,051 in 2008; the threshold for a family of four was $22,025. Complicating matters is the reality that the rural middle class in America is declining, with more and more young families leaving their home towns to find better jobs in urban areas (Stauber, 2001).

Limited Resources

One of the most important challenges facing rural community colleges in America is the lack of federal funding, as seen in policies that drastically disadvantage the areas served by rural community colleges. Data from the Consolidated Federal Funds Report for 2001 (as cited in Fluharty, 2006) showed that the federal government returned $6,131 on a per capita basis to urban areas, while only returning $6,020 to rural areas. Direct payments to individuals as a percentage of all federal funds per capita were 50.0% in urban areas and 63.9% in rural areas, another example of discrepancies in federal funding for rural communities (Reeder & Calhoun, 2002). In practical terms, this 13% difference in federal funding could very likely affect the capacity and infrastructure of the community college, hindering its ability to strengthen its economy.

New data from the consolidated Federal Funds Report for 2009 (U.S Census Bureau, 2010) show the total federal domestic spending in the government's last fiscal year was $3.2 trillion. An increase of 16% from the previous year, almost entirely because of the government's stimulus package set up to offset the effects of the recession. Despite such fluctuations, the impact on rural areas in America remains the same, and even though individuals may be at an advantage by federal funding policies in the short term, such differences in payments put them at a disadvantage in the long term, forcing them to compete with their urban counterparts and creating an uneven playing field without the benefit of the professional staff, technical assistance, and planning resources this kind of funding provides (Fluharty, 2006).

The Future of Leadership in Rural Community Colleges

With their limited resources, geographic isolation, and stagnant economies, among a number of other problems, rural community colleges face major challenges when it comes to recruiting of future leadership (Morelli, 2002). Typically, board members and those involved in presidential searches often fail to consider the needs and environment of the institution before identifying the necessary professional qualities, choosing to focus on attracting the candidate, while ignoring to point out some of the challenges he or she may have to face (Khurana, 2002). This downplaying of an institution's reality might lead to a mismatched fit between a future leader and a rural community college (Khurana, 2002). Such challenges raise two interconnected questions: Should rural community college presidents have professional qualities that are different from those of their urban and suburban colleagues and, if so, what kinds of qualities should they have?

According to Vaughan and Weisman (1998), future community college leaders, especially in rural institutions, must understand and respond to economic globalization, profound

changes in manufacturing and agriculture, continuing population shifts, persistent rural poverty, and a growing technological divide. Increasingly, the challenge for the rural community college leaders will have to focus on engaging deeply with the community in an attempt to respond to these tides of change. The manner in which rural community college leaders react to such changes will be important because rural institutions must serve as catalysts for economic renewal (S. Rubin & Autry, 1998).

Leadership in community colleges can be a major challenge in itself, and more problematic in a rural college setting. Working in rural areas with few resources requires a blend of originality, entrepreneurship, and resourcefulness. Thus, replacing retiring leadership as well as finding and preparing new ones will not be an easy task. One way to resolve this problem might be to develop institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges that are customized to meet the institutional culture and goals (Eddy & Murray, 2007).

Essential Skills and Competencies

What traits, skills, competencies, and experiences should future rural community college leaders possess? According to Amey et al. (2002), those aspiring to senior-level positions need to acquire leadership qualities that originate from a mixture of experiences. Moreover, Pope and Miller (2005) argued that future leaders must possess certain competencies that are unlike those of previous generations, in addition to the capacity to foresee the role of their institution in an era of globalization.

Role of Community College Leaders

The role of contemporary community college leaders is becoming more complex. As leaders, they have to become entrepreneurs, facilitators, fundraisers, collaborators, community partners, team builders, and administrators (Roueche & Jones, 2005).

Shults (2001), for example, found that skills indispensible for leadership success included the ability to construct coalitions, pragmatic governance, as well as negotiation expertise. Boggs (2003) also emphasized that future community college leaders had to present themselves as models of reliability, truthfulness, and moral values while functioning as a medium for change. However, sorting through the various perceptions on leadership traits and skills can be overwhelming, especially when considering the individuality and culture of each institution. Thus, one of the challenges facing future community college leaders is their ability to match their set of skills to those of their institutions and their willingness to handle the unexpected (Vaughan, 2000). Hockaday and Puyear (2000) argued that there are six key obstacles facing future community college leaders in the new millennium, including funding issues, competency-based programs, distance education, privatized competition, unclear mission boundaries, and consequences of a global economy.

Such challenges have forced community college leaders to reassess their perspective of management in light of the changing times. As the cultural composition of community colleges continues to change, so must the attitudes of their leaders. The main purpose of community colleges is to serve the needs of a diverse community, and their mission advocates that objective (Amey, 1999; 2006). However, the fact remains that these same institutions that propagate this message are also refusing to adhere to the demands of a changing environment, possibly the result of an aging leadership that continues to hold on to past traditions.

Factors Contributing to Leadership Shortages

Typically, community college leadership has come from the academic ranks; some began as deans of instruction, others as chief academic officers (Amey et al., 2002). Most were likely to possess a doctorate, according to an AACC survey (Weisman & Vaughan, 2002, 2007). Even

though the majority of doctoral degrees were not related specifically to community college leadership, studies indicated that attainment of such degrees was placed in the top five reasons for being acknowledged as a superior leader. Additionally, any academic preparation specific to community college leadership, research, publication, and knowledge of technology was considered an advantage (Campbell et al., 2010; Eddy, 2009; McFarlin, Crittenden, & Ebbers, 1999). Given the global changes taking place and likely to affect community colleges far into the future, these qualities might not be enough to sustain and safeguard future leaders in their quests. Furthermore, with the retirement of these senior-level administrators, a long history of growth and innovation is gone (Bagnato, 2004).

The results of a study conducted by Mackey (2008) showed that most community college senior administrators were well aware of forthcoming shortages of leadership. More than half of the participants surveyed for the study reported that their institutions were not prepared to handle the problem, while 95% emphasized that the challenge of finding new leadership was a daunting one. Other factors contributing to the shortage were highlighted in a study by Carlson (2007), which indicated that even though many community college administrators acknowledged the need for succession planning, in reality many institutions did not have any such plans.

As Amey (2006) suggested, future community college leaders must also project an environment that is tolerant, inclusive, accepting of diversity and ideas, or take the risk of being perceived as authoritative, an image by which no leader wants to be recognized. Future community college leaders must remain leaders in the truest sense: operating in a multiracial, diverse society that is constantly feeling the impact of various national and international policies (Betances, 2007; Gardner, 1990; Harvey & Anderson, 2005). This image eventually results in

transforming the leadership role from that of an administrator to analytical predictor and servant leader, the leader serving others first, while leading (Greenleaf, 1977; Greenleaf et al., 2003).

Additionally, as Alfred, Ewell, Hudgins, and McClenney (1999) noted, future community college leaders will have to address the changing context of their institutions to ensure effectiveness in the 21st century. One major implication for such efficacy in community colleges is the need to provide numerous active systems in place institutionally such as constructing transparent institutional infrastructures. This placement, in turn, will enable the institution to competently address issues of accountability and responsiveness to internal and external stakeholders (Alfred et al., 1999). As Cohen (1998) pointed out, the ability to adjust to changing circumstances must be preceded by an eagerness to adapt, realistically, to the ever-changing character and conditions of the institution lead.

Leadership Theory and the Rural Community College

Johnson and Christensen (2008) referred to theory as "an explanation or explanatory system that discusses how a phenomenon operates and why it operates as it does" (p. 20). Using a well-developed theory allows researchers to describe a phenomenon, make sense of it, and construct precise predictions (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). As Creswell (2003) further explained, after predictions are tested several times, a theory begins to transpire that provides a clarification for the predictions. From these definitions, one can predict the applicability of one preferred possibility over another, and its significance in understanding community college leadership.

Leadership in the 21st century can be identified in terms of team leadership, transformational leadership, servant leadership, or inclusive leadership (Amey, 2006). The historical development of community colleges provides a wide-angle lens demonstrating a shift

in leadership perception. Twombly (1995), for example, reviewed four eras of community college leadership, beginning with 1900-1930, when the "great man" theory dominated; 1940-1960, when leaders began creating an identity for themselves as well as establishing their independence from secondary schools; 1960-1980, when the contemporary version of the prominent community college leadership was born; and 1980-2000, when the paradigm shifted towards resource issues, efficiency, and strategic planning (Amey, 2006).

According to Cloud (2010), there is a growing shift in the perception of leadership behavior. Transactional and transformational leadership, the more traditional models, are no longer adequate in meeting the pressing challenges that face community colleges. Current and future leaders must understand the new culture of change that pervades these two-year institutions and embrace the opportunities intrinsic in that culture. The contemporary leader has the opportunity of serving, leading, and transforming individuals and institutions through technological advancements and investments (Gould, 2007). The old ways of managing, organizing, and leading are no longer producing sustainable results. The new millennium calls for a special set of leadership skills that are different from those used in the past. The old ways of rational theories of management and bureaucratic order developed by Frederick Taylor and Max Weber no longer seem to work (Mintz, 1998; Wallin & Ryan, 1994).

A study conducted by Padilla (2005), who profiled six college and university leaders, echoed this new thinking. In his study, Padilla argued that leaders who were flexible with a tendency to think globally and use information from varied sources to address concerns were more likely to succeed. They were also more adaptable to changes around them, and had the ability to see the complex relationships of parts of a problem that may include internal and external consequences. According to Padilla, these leaders were confident in themselves, as well

as aware of their strengths, weaknesses, and limitations. In addition to being optimistic, they were persistent, possessing a high emotional intelligence, strong personal skills, and empathy. They demonstrated an ability to rein in their emotions while not coming across as arrogant, aloof, overambitious, passive-aggressive, negative, or seeking to be popular.

Community colleges are changing and so should the roles of college leaders. M. D. Cohen and March (1986) seemed to have anticipated these changes when they pointed out that "leadership [seemed] to be less a matter of straightforward instrumental action and hierarchical control than [was] anticipated by classical descriptions" (p. xiv). Within community colleges in general and rural colleges in particular, leaders who are genuinely interested in addressing the leadership gap, facilitating positive changes within their instutions, as well as dealing with other challenges, must rethink their approach to governance (Wallin & Ryan, 1994). One such approach involves adopting a servant leadership mentality, which promotes and advocates a leader who serves first.

In other words, a philosophy that emphasizes the role of a leader as one who is interested in serving his people the highest priority (Greenleaf, 1977; Greenleaf et al., 2003). In efforts to be a servant leader in its truest form, it is important that leaders of community colleges develop a sound understanding of the needs of the constituency they serve and lead (Greenleaf, 1977; Greenleaf et al., 2003). The practice of servant leadership, a concept founded on ethical beliefs, enables leaders to focus their authority internally and externally on serving their institutions unconditionally. By doing so, they can reverse the trends of social injustices, and create an environment of respect for human life and spirit (Greenleaf, 1977; Greenleaf et al., 2003). Over time, the leader can redefine, redesign, and renew any support and services to ensure his or her institution remains current and competitive. According to the literature, the significance of

remaining attentive to the changing social context and strengthening the institution internally and externally is critical to the culture of the institution (Boggs & Irwin, 2007; Wallin & Ryan, 1994).

Transactional and Transformational Leadership

There is no doubt that the roles of community college leaders today are different from those in the past. Today's leaders need to be seen as serving more (servant leaders) and dictating less (transactional, transformational). On one hand, transactional leadership is nothing more than a system where leaders and followers are locked into a reward-for-service mentality and, depending on the leader's values and personality; there may be no reward, just conditional approval (Roueche et al., 1989). In other words, transactional leadership is more of a relationship between the leaders and the led within a narrow utilitarian context of services required. Transformational leadership, on the other hand, even though still operating on a top-down management, utilizes the leader's ability to elevate followers thorough shared governance and shared rewards. However, as Roueche et al. (1989) argued, it is not the leader per se who makes the difference as much as his or her promotion of a transformation ideology in the followers that actually defines transformational leadership. As Eddy (2009) suggested, there might be a need to reconsider some of the traditional leadership styles and provide new and different ways to understand leadership.

Burns (1979) described transformational leadership as aligning the different interests of people together in the pursuit of higher goals, which results in significant change representing the interests of leaders and followers. According to Bass and Avolio (1994), transformational leaders motivate others to achieve more by setting higher expectations. They suggest that this kind of leadership is an expansion of transactional leadership, which involves an exchange

between leaders and followers whereby the leader spells out the expectations and the rewards that the followers will receive for meeting the expectations. Bass and Avolio also asserted that transformational leadership is more than simple exchanges or agreements, and that such leaders usually achieve superior results by employing one or more of what they identify as the four I's: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.

Trying to figure out which leadership style best suits an institution requires an understanding of the process itself (Greenleaf et al., 2003). This process begins by acknowledging that leadership is not static, and that it is a process involving followership and context for action based on external and internal events, or what Padilla (2005) calls adaptive behavior. Accordingly, Stanton and Pitsvada (1993) found that an important trait future community college leaders will need is their ability to exercise this adaptive behavior. In a case study of transactional and transformational leadership, Bensimon (1993), found that a combination of leadership styles might be the best pathway for community college leaders. Successful leaders adapt to situations, while their leadership style evolves as well. Consequently, they become aware of the need to communicate the institution's mission and vision, while at the same time inspiring others to continue their own growth (Burns, 1979).

Servant Leadership Theory

Servant leadership theory is more complex than either transactional or transformational leadership theory. Whereas transactional leadership focuses mainly on maintenance and management of the status quo with incremental changes as needed, transformational leadership facilitates systemic change through the leader's articulated vision and a motivated workforce (Roueche et al., 1989). Servant leadership or change leadership, in contrast, facilitates change

and transformation in both employees and institution promoting an open climate that is trusting and flexible. Community college servant leaders also create a culture of change in which all members within the college are encouraged to brainstorm and provide their recommendations for change. Such leaders seek out employees with leadership potential and prepare them for future leadership roles through a formal succession plan, thus ensuring the stability and continuity in the college administration (Mathis & Jackson, 2008). According to Greenleaf (1977), the servant leader represents the moral leader, a caregiver who is seen as a servant first. "It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first" (Greenleaf, 1977, p. 13).

Drawing from this concept, Fullan (2001) added that there are strong reasons to believe that "moral purpose" can be an important component of effective leadership. According to Fullan, moral purpose represents the intention to act in a positive manner in order to make a positive difference in the lives of those around you, which can be critical to the long-term success of any institution. Sergiovanni (1999) also adhered to this philosophy when he proposed that followership should precede leadership, thus the combination leading to the entire change of an institution.

This philosophy could result in eradication of bureaucratic hierarchy with the leader on top; instead, the institution is based on followership and is guided by ideas, values, and commitments. The institution is transformed from its traditional base of bureaucratic authority to authority based on professional and moral principles. This authority base comes from the leader's "demonstrated devotion and success as a follower" (Sergiovanni, 1999, p. 67). Leaders become both followers as well as leaders, their roles constantly changing allowing them to emerge and work together to influence the direction of the institution and to inspire those around them (Sergiovanni, 1999).

Such performance could also be vital in addressing the leadership gap challenge especially if the leaders are authentically interested in doing do. Hence, community college servant leaders must remain attentive to their institution's culture and goals. According to Wallin and Ryan (1994), paying attention to the changing social context and helping grow the institution internally and externally is critical to the culture and climate of the college. Healthy culture promotes honesty, respect, and meaningful work in an adaptable and responsive environment that supports both professional and personal growth (Boggs & Irwin, 2007; Wallin & Ryan, 1994). Servant leadership, sometimes referred to as "change leadership," is a four-part process that involves (a) anticipating change, (b) analyzing the internal and external environment, (c) acting on the basis of appropriate and timely data and the strengths of team members, and (d) affirming institutional actions with the goal of continuous institutional improvement.

According to Drucker (1999), people cannot manage change in itself, but rather can only be ahead of it. Accordingly, community college leaders must always be one step ahead by recognizing the need for change, creating a vision for that change, and institutionalizing changes (Wallin, 2010a). One of the important things any servant leader must do is to act as an advocate for change, both internally and externally. As Beach (2006) pointed out, servant leaders should only proceed on this path if they are confident of the outcome. This path, in turn, involves assessing the institution's environment, both internally and externally, to ensure success. Beach added that a leader's job, first and foremost, is to make his or her institution a viable player by fostering an understanding of these two environments, thus giving him or her ability to anticipate opportunities and threats, with the goal of surviving and thriving.

Results from a longitudinal study conducted by the Gallup organization on leadership (Rath, 2007) showed that employees who had the opportunity to focus more on their strengths

than weaknesses were 6 times more likely to be engaged in their jobs. Thus, if a community college leader is to act on developing an atmosphere of insight and integrity, he or she must use the community college's resources in developing and growing its internal leadership at all level, not just at the top (Riggs, 2009). According to Evans (2000), trust is the most important bond between leaders and their followers. Community college leaders need to be able to inspire trust in their followers if they intend on maintaining change. As O'Banion (as cited in Wallin, 2010b) suggested, "being reflective and affirming in implementing and sustaining change is one of those special skills and abilities required of today's [servant] leaders" (p. 9).

Characteristics of Servant Leaders

According to Greenleaf (1977) and Greenleaf et al. (2003), servant leaders are devoted to the growth and development of others; they have the capacity to bring about personal and institutional change. Hence, a servant leader in an institution of higher education must develop a sound understanding of the needs of his or her constituency. Through exposure to servant leadership, others are inspired to grow, and so are the leaders. This style of leadership promotes a change in the lives of people and institutions. However, Cloud (2010) suggested that implementation of this form of leadership with its four core philosophies of change (anticipation, analysis, action, and affirmation) is difficult for a number of reasons.

Successful servant leaders listen more than they talk, and do not see themselves as superior with the right to intimidate subordinates, or force institutional change without collective input, for they consider themselves to be first among equals. As Greenleaf (1991) pointed out, effective servant leaders understand that they lead with the consent of the led. Concurring with this concept, Kim (2002) noted that the true leader is a servant first who has the power of choice and role of a vision maker, with the ability to transform commitment to people.

Servant leaders are also motivated to serve before they aspire to lead dedicated to helping colleagues and students become prudent, dynamic, and more autonomous because of their experiences at the college (Greenleaf, 1991). Moreover, servant leaders express a vision for their institution, convincing others to help with its implementation, and do not use coercion or alienate those who oppose; their objective is teamwork, not domination (Cohen & Brawer, 2002). Effective servant leaders have a high degree of emotional intelligence, meaning they are highly motivated, disciplined, empathic, and compassionate people (Goleman, 2004). They treat others with respect and empower those around them, question existing policies and procedures, encourage colleagues to be innovative and resourceful, and are always willing to share their ideas. Emotionally intelligent leaders also show respect to the institution's heritage and are careful to not offend faculty, staff, or alumni (Cloud, 2010).

Successful servant leaders also exercise their decision-making power when making risk-taking decisions such as the development of functional policies and procedures that enrich and enhance, and are inclusive of diverse and fair processes (Wallin & Ryan, 1994). They understand the nature of the racial, historical, political, and socioeconomic factors, both internally and externally, that have an impact the decision-making process (Boggs & Irwin, 2007; Wallin & Ryan, 1994).

Finally, servant leaders are genuine individuals who detest deception and are comfortable with themselves as well as open to others. They are leaders who respect power but are not intimidated by it and treat everyone the same, regardless of their status (Starratt, 2004). However, past practices have perpetuated a view of leadership quite different from the philosophy of care and servant leadership. College leaders who do not possess all or most of these qualities might find themselves facing more issues. It is therefore important to understand

the means needed to establish pathways to leadership that can provide insight for the future of community college.

In addition to such qualities and skills, emerging leaders of community colleges must possess special competencies that enable them to manage the challenges they may face. Acknowledging this fact, the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, in collaboration with the AACC, initiated a grant in 2003 entitled the Leading Forward Initiative to host a number of leadership summits. These summits sought to develop a framework that identified key competencies needed by two-year college leaders. Upon approval in 2005 by the AACC board of directors, it was recommended that community college leaders use the six competencies outlined in the Leading Forward Initiative as standards for performance assessment:

- Organizational strategy. An effective community college leader improves the quality of the institution, protects the long-term health of the organization, promotes the success of all students, and sustains the college mission.
- Resource management. An effective community college leader equitably and ethically sustains people and processes as well as institutional assets to fulfil the mission, vision, and goals of the college.
- Communication. An effective community college leader uses clear communication skills to engage in the honest, open dialogue at all levels of the college and its surrounding community to promote the success of students and to sustain the college mission.
- Collaboration. An effective community college leader develops and maintains cooperative, mutually beneficial, and ethical relationships that nurture diversity and

sustain the college mission. Change leaders, in particular, must be adept at conflict resolution and consensus building.

- Community college advocacy. An effective community college leader understands, commits to, and advocates for the mission, vision, and goals of the college.
- Professionalism. An effective community college leader works ethically to set high standards for him or her and others, continuously improves his or her surroundings, demonstrates accountability to and for the institution, and ensures the long-term viability of the college and community. (AACC, 2005).

Servant Leadership in Context

Undoubtedly, servant leaders within community college in the 21st century must remain attentive to the institution's culture and goals. In due course, such leaders will have to redefine and redesign their services in an attempt to remain competitive. The significance to such detail becomes critical to the culture and climate of the institution's mission (Boggs & Irwin, 2007; Wallin & Ryan, 1994), the result being a strong culture that encourages respect and promotes honesty, as well as creates an environment that supports professional and personal growth (Peterson, Dill, & Metz, 1997).

Such performance could also be vital in addressing the leadership gap challenge, especially if the leaders are authentically interested in doing do. Hence, community college servant leaders must remain attentive to their institution's culture and goals. As Wallin and Ryan (1994) noted, paying attention to the changing social context and helping grow the institution internally and externally is critical to the culture and climate of the college. Healthy culture promotes honesty, respect, and meaningful work in an adaptable and responsive environment that supports both professional and personal growth (Boggs, 2007; Wallin & Ryan, 1994).

In the context of leadership, the literature also suggests that in a global world, future leaders must be careful not to become culturally blind, eliminate traditional approaches when leading across cultures, and adjust their interpersonal behaviour while assisting intercultural change (Valverde, 2003). The changing demographical nature of those who lead and serve in higher education today is important academically and in practice to understand the influence and impact of current challenges in the workplace. The need to move from a rigid, formal, and traditional culture to a more inclusive and flexible one is relevant for effective leadership. Accordingly, this approach might also serve as a bridge for narrowing the community college leadership shortage (House et al., 2004).

Chapter Summary

A review of current literature revealed that there is a growing shortage of future leaders to compensate for those on the brink of retirement (Amey, 2006; Cloud, 2010; Eddy, 2009). As community college leaders who are expected to lead their institutions into the domain of a global society, the deficit of eligible candidates represents a crucial predicament. The next generation of leaders will have to be receptive to the political, economic, cultural, and societal changes taking place on college campuses (Campbell, 2007). The research on the ever-changing demands on community college leaders suggests careful attention must be given to the knowledge, skills, traits, and abilities of these future leaders. In addition, careful consideration and selection of individuals for developing new leadership within the institution, as well as developing succession plans is also an important component of this transition (Beach, 2006; Carlson, 2007).

If community colleges in general and rural institutions in particular are sincere about growing and developing their own leaders, consideration must be given to identifying institution-based leadership development programs and pathways for aspiring individuals and senior-level

administrators who are interested in pursuing such careers (Jeandron, 2006). Accordingly, the infrastructure to support these pathways should include a comprehensive roadmap that provides both guidance and opportunities for leaders (Spears, 2003). Leadership development and training of future community college leaders is fast becoming an issue of concern, particularly in rural institutions (Clark & Davis, 2007; Fluharty & Scaggs, 2007). Furthermore, careful though should be directed to leadership styles of governance, whereas community college leaders who have governed in a traditional top-down, transactional approach and/or transformational style may need to revaluate this direction. The blend of leadership traits, skills, and personality found in servant leadership might be a useful approach to consider for the next generation of leaders.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

Over the next two decades, more than half of all community college leaders will retire, creating new opportunities for the next generation of community college leaders (Jensen, 2000). As a result, community colleges throughout the United States will soon begin experiencing a growing shortage of leaders ready to assume senior-level administrative positions (AACC, 2008). Additionally, administrators in the traditional leadership pipeline are also aging and retiring, creating a vacuum of knowledge, expertise, and culture (Shults, 2001). Such challenges only highlight the need for more and better community college leaders, as well as programs to help train them. Many in the field of higher education have predicted that fulfilment of future senior-level positions will have to begin with identifying and developing leaders in the middle (Amey et al., 2002). These efforts to "develop leaders in the middle" include such wide-ranging institution-based programs such as GYO leaders, mentorships, internships, and academies.

The large number of retiring community college leaders has resulted in a number of challenges for their institutions. This turnover of leadership also provides important opportunities for community colleges to cultivate new leadership reflective of emerging economic and cultural demands. According to Cohen (1998), the most important trait any community college could possess is its ability to adapt to shifting circumstances. Such opportunities could lead to strategies that might develop effective institution-based leadership development programs that mitigate the issues of succession (AACC, 2002, 2005).

Given the renewed interest in community colleges by the federal government (Boggs, 2003; Katsinas, 2009) as well as student enrollment fluctuations due to economic shifts, community colleges will need to identify the kind of leadership best suited to meet their local

and regional needs. One strategy to resolve the predicament of leadership quality and preparedness could involve developing or reenergizing institution-based leadership development programs to provide the essential tools for attainting these goals (Boggs, 2003).

Significance of the Study

American community colleges have continued to demonstrate their strong commitment to expanding education opportunity for all (Vaughan, 2000). As educational progression continues in the 21st century, demands on community colleges are increasing, and challenges are beginning to emerge. Vaughan (2000) concurred, noting that "in the 21st century, the community college's success will continue to depend on its ability to respond to a changing environment" (p. 29). One of these changes involves leadership. Presently, there is a growing concern regarding the quality and preparedness of future leaders who will be replacing those retiring (Wallin, 2006). The mass departure of experienced upper-level administrators who started their careers in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s (Duree, 2007; Shults, 2001) forms the basis of the challenge facing community colleges at present and in the near future.

Furthermore, due to dwindling state funding to community colleges, cost effectiveness becomes a priority, which might make the external hiring process of senior-level administrators expensive, tedious, and time-consuming (Campbell, 2007). One way to resolve this predicament of leadership quality and preparedness, as well as to cultivate and nurture a new class of leaders, involves developing institution-based leadership development programs that provide the essential tools for attaining these goals. By approaching the issue of identifying and developing leadership internally versus externally, institution-based leadership programs might also provide a sustainable and resourceful alternative to current practice.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges in Illinois and the impact of these programs in supporting and preparing future community colleges leaders. The study also explored the efficacy of these programs and whether their implementation aligns with the institutions' culture and goals.

Research Questions

The research questions developed to examine institution-based leadership development programs included the following:

1. How can institution-based leadership development programs provide the skills and leadership competencies needed for future leadership?
2. What specific leadership development strategies are employed in institution-based leadership programs in rural community colleges in Illinois?
3. In what ways have institution-based leadership development programs addressed the issue of succession planning in rural community colleges in Illinois?
4. What are the criteria for participating in institution-based leadership development programs?
5. What role does the board of trustee play in institution-based leadership development programs?
6. How are institution-based leadership development programs assessed and/or evaluated (specifically, to what extent do institution-based leadership development programs align with the institutional culture and goals)?

Research Design

The research strategy that best addressed the research questions in this study was a mixed methods design. The study used a dominant-status sequential paradigm, wherein the qualitative multiple-case study was dominant. According to Johnson and Christensen (2008), a mixed methods design provides a framework for conducting a study that incorporates both a quantitative and qualitative approach. Mixed methods research also permits researchers to address more complicated research questions and collect a wealthier and stronger array of evidence than might not be accomplished by a single method alone (Yin, 2009).

This study employed a mixed methods design for data collection, whereby both qualitative and quantitative methods complement each other by providing a more comprehensive view of the subject (Custer, 1996). The study was also structured as a dominant-status sequential design, where qualitative data gathering (semistructured interviews) was dominant, although quantitative data gathering (online demographic survey) occurred first.

"In each mixed research study, a combination of quantitative and qualitative data is collected, analyzed, validated, and interpreted using systematic principles" (Johnson & Christensen, 2008, p. 445). One of the benefits of using mixed methods design is that researchers could employ a number of perspectives, theories, and educational research methods to strengthen their research, thus producing "a study that is superior to one produced by either quantitative research or qualitative research alone" (Johnson & Christensen, 2008, p. 443).

Multiple-Case Design

According to Feagin, Orum, and Sjoberg (1991), case studies are multiperspective analyses that enable the researcher to consider not just the voice of prospective actors, but also the relevant groups of actors and the interaction between them. In other words, case studies are

designed to bring out the details from the viewpoint of the participants by using multiple sources of data (Stake, 1995). Yin (2009) noted that researchers attempting to use this methodology must possess the following skills: the ability to ask quality questions and interpret the answers, be good listeners, be flexible, have a strong grasp of the issues being studied, and be unbiased by predetermined concepts.

This study employed a multiple-case design to examine institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges in Illinois, allowing the researcher more insight into the research topic by studying multiple cases concurrently in one overall research study (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). This type of design has several advantages, providing the researcher with a number of options such as conducting a comparative type of study in which several cases are compared for similarities and differences, being able to test a theory effectively by observing the results of multiple cases, as well as the ability to generalize the results from these multiple cases rather than from a single case (Johnson & Christensen, 2008).

According to Yin (2009), single-case designs are vulnerable in that the researcher might be putting all his or her "eggs in one basket" (p. 61). Moreover, the analytic benefits a researcher gathers from two or more cases might be considerable, in addition to having the possibility of direct replication of the study. In this design, if the subsequent findings support the hypothesized contrast, the results represent a strong start towards theoretical replication and strengthening the researcher's findings compared to those from a single case alone (Eilbert & Lafronza, 2005).

Data Collection Procedures

This study used a mixed methods design of both qualitative and quantitative methods for data collection. The study also made use of a dominant-status sequential design in which

quantitative data was gathered first, followed by the qualitative data (Johnson & Christensen, 2008).

Site and Participant Selection

Community colleges selected for this multiple-case study (see Appendix A) included 25 rural community colleges located throughout the state of Illinois (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2010). Participant selection began with a web-distributed survey (see Appendix B) sent to each of the chief academic officers and presidents of the 24 selected rural community colleges. Participants were asked to identify the institution-based leadership development programs they provide. Finally, the survey asked if the respondents would be interested in participating further through a semistructured interview process. Based on responses to the survey, six participants (two each from classification, "rural small," "rural medium," and "rural-large") were selected for semistructured interviews.

Interview Protocol

Mixed methods design relies on mixing approaches to help answer the research questions posed. The framework used for this study followed two of the tenets for a mixed methods research as follows: triangulation, whereby the researcher seeks corroboration of results from different methods leading to more substantial conclusions, and development, whereby the researcher uses the results from one method to help inform the results from another method (Johnson & Christensen, 2008).

Data collection sources included a web-distributed survey, demographic survey of research participants, and semistructured interviews. Field notes were also used to describe observational insights of the researcher, as well as descriptive statistics to organize the survey data, and to provide a tool to reference the qualitative information to follow. The researcher

interviewed each participant face to face on the campus of each institution. All interviews were recorded digitally and the results were transcribed and analyzed. Each personal interview was approximately one hour in length. If needed, follow-up interviews for the purposes of gathering supporting data and rechecking/sharing interview information from participants occurred via e-mail or telephone.

Semistructured Interviews

One of the important sources of case study information is the interview, which should be conducted as guided conversations rather than structured queries. In other words, although the researcher's purpose is to obtain information, the actual flow of questions in a case study interview should be smoother than strict (Rubin H. & Rubin, 1994). For this reason, case study interviews require the researcher to operate on two levels at the same time: one, by fulfilling the needs of his or her line of inquiry, and two, by putting forth friendly and not intimidating questions in the open-ended interviews (Yin, 2009).

Semistructured interviews (see Appendix C) were conducted with senior-level administrators at the selected Illinois rural community colleges. The interviews were transcribed and coded to identify themes addressing the research purpose. The semistructured interview process allows the researcher to obtain in-depth information about a specific topic. Following the interviews, field notes including the researcher's observations and reflections were assembled.

Document Review

Documents are a major type of secondary data that are helpful for a researcher in gathering facts about an institution (Yin, 2009). Yin (2009) noted that documents are useful tools even though they might not always be accurate and could reflect bias. It is pertinent that documents be used carefully and not be accepted as literal recordings of events that have taken

place. For case studies, the most important use of documents is to corroborate and augment evidence from other sources (Yin, 2009).

Mixed methods research is dependent on multiple data sources beyond surveys and interviews to portray information. A review of documents included a list of institution-based leadership development programs, as well as any documents addressing the following six competency domains identified by the AACC's *Competencies for Community College Leaders* (2005): organizational strategy, resource management, communication, collaboration, community college advocacy, and professionalism.

Demographic Survey

A demographic survey (see Appendix B) was distributed online to solicit such descriptive information as whether participants have participated in an institution-based leadership development program, whether the current institution hosts a leadership development program, and if the respondent to the survey had participated or would consider participating in institution-based leadership development programs if offered. In addition, the demographic survey solicited permission from the survey respondents as to their willingness to participate in Part 2 of the planned data collection, the personal interview(s).

Expert Review

Expert review or peer review is a useful method of having outside readers who are familiar with the research, but not directly involved, review questions posed by the study, as well as challenge the researcher's interpretations or conclusions to provide the researcher with objectivity (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Accordingly, the researcher has the opportunity to defend his or her work to an outside expert/peer in what Creswell (2007) identified as a liberating and inspiring experience. Two experts/peers chosen for this study were identified

based on their educational background (appropriate doctoral degree from an accredited institution) and their experience in rural community colleges. The experts then reviewed the proposed data collection strategies and instruments, and provided recommended changes to the final online survey (see Appendix B) and interview questions (see Appendix C).

Process Pilot

According to Johnson and Christensen (2008), one of the fundamental rules of research dictates that the researcher "try out" or pilot test his or her data collection instruments before using them in the study. Because the survey (see Appendix B) was distributed online, an online pilot test of the survey instrument was conducted, too (sent to five senior-level administrators at Illinois community colleges not classified as rural). This pilot testing process helped to ensure that the questions developed would elicit the relevant information needed to address the research questions for the project.

Pilot interviews using the interview questions for this study (see Appendix C) were conducted with two senior-level administrators from rural institutions outside the state of Illinois. The pilot interviews helped familiarize the researcher with the interview process, tested the time demands needed for answering the interview questions, and allowed the researcher the opportunity to rehearse appropriate interviewing method(s)/technique(s).

Data Analysis Procedures

Because this study employed mixed methods paradigm using both quantitative and qualitative sources of data, analysis was performed using descriptive statistics (correlations and measures of central tendency) coupled with cross-case analyses. After the initial data analysis took place, and in order to transform one source of data to the other, the researcher quantified qualitative findings, allowing the data to be mixed in the analysis, compared, and correlated to

identify relationships between the categories such as institution-based leadership development programs and preparedness of senior-level administrators. The data analysis was conducted using coding and theme development, as well as descriptive and inference conclusions for the quantitative data analysis.

Coding Procedures

According to Johnson and Christensen (2008), "coding is the process of marking segments of data with symbols, descriptive words, or category names" (p. 534). In other words, coding is the method of transferring of labels to data for analysis to get the data organized. Coding methods could be performed with the use of computer software or be done manually. This study used the latter approach.

By using a manual coding method, the researcher began by looking for similar occurring patterns obtained from the semistructured interviews. Once a meaningful section of the interview transcript was found, the researcher followed it by assigning a code or category name to identify that particular section. This process was followed by identifying similar patterns and ranking them in terms of importance and association to the posed research questions in the study. Data collected was then categorized to establish a relation to a priori codes. Finally, a method for recording and storing date was selected, combining both hard copy and computerized versions.

Theme Identification Techniques

According to Creswell (2007), the next step after data is gathered and clarified is for the researcher to begin conducting thematic analysis of all data collected to create prospective themes. As Stake (1985) noted, a number of measures need to be followed for the researcher to end up with a comprehensive study. Among these measures are finding meaningful associations with the research questions posed by the study and establishing thematic patterns for connections

between identified categories. Tracing emerging and/or a priori themes that might appear in multiple situations provide the basis for analysis and generalization.

Limitations

The limitations of this study were as follows:

1. The study examined institution-based leadership development programs in 25 rural community colleges in the state of Illinois, which is the total number of rural community colleges identified within the Carnegie classification of "small," "medium," and "large" rural community colleges throughout the state of Illinois.
2. The study was limited further to Illinois rural community colleges that provide one or more institution-based leadership development programs.

Delimitations

The delimitations for this study include the following:

1. The research was framed to incorporate only geographically accessible participants who responded to the initial web-distributed survey.
2. The total number of community colleges selected in Illinois was limited to no more than 25 institutions, which encompassed the total number of rural community colleges in the state.
3. The time frame to complete the data collection for this study was limited by program design to three months.

Assumptions

This research proceeded with the following assumptions:

1. Institution-based leadership development programs can assist in preparing future leadership in the community college.

2. Institution-based leadership development programs can be effective in providing the skills and training necessary for future community college administrators and leaders.
3. Information gathered from this study could help community colleges develop and/or revise effective institution-based leadership development programs.

Role of the Researcher

Johnson and Christensen (2008) noted that researcher bias could be overcome with close commitment to validity and trustworthiness. Adherence to these concepts establishes the plausibility, credibility, and trustworthiness of qualitative research, rendering it defensive (Johnson & Christensen (2008). Lincoln and Guba (1985) shed light on this issue by recommending four criteria for judging the accuracy of qualitative research: credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability. Recognizing the potential for bias, the researcher made every attempt to minimize researcher bias through established data analysis procedures.

The researcher has been in higher education for over a decade, primarily as a faculty member at a number of community colleges. Prior to becoming a member of the faculty, she began her career as a junior-level administrator at her current institution. Over time, the researcher has observed leadership at various levels through work-related experience, as well as institution-based interactions with both midlevel and senior-level administration. Being immersed in the community college environment has provided the researcher with a point of interest in institution-based leadership development programs, coupled with a motivation for this work. Eventually, the researcher has an interest in providing an in-depth view of how institution-based leadership development programs, especially in rural community colleges, could benefit these institutions in preparing and cultivating effective leadership for the new millennium.

Ethical Consideration: Protection of Human Subjects

It is important that data collected for this study through web-based surveys and interviews be conducted with the participants' consent to ensure the privacy and anonymity of the respondents (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The researcher took into account all ethical issues such as providing participants with consent forms, which included a description of the study and its purposes. The researcher also took all appropriate steps to gain approval from the colleges in which the research took place, as well as maintained the privacy and confidentiality of all subjects by ensuring that only those participants who signed those forms were included in the study. Additionally, all data gathered in the course of this study, whether in paper form or electronically, was and will continue to be protected from unauthorized access and available only to the researcher of this study.

Interviews were also performed in accordance with National Louis University Institutional Research Review Board (IRRB) standards. This application was based on the university's IRRB Criteria for Ethical Research policy implemented on October 1, 1997, revisions of the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 45, Public Welfare, Part 46, and Protection of Human Subjects. Accordingly, each participant was provided with an informed consent form (see Appendix E) to ensure that their participation was voluntary and remained anonymous throughout the research process. All participants were also provided with a written transcript of their interviews for their review, as well as being assigned a pseudonym in all transcripts. Finally, all rural community colleges mentioned in the research were assigned fictitious names.

Chapter Summary

This study examined institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges throughout the state of Illinois by using a mixed methods research design.

This research examined the efficacy of these programs in preparing and cultivating future leadership. By combining both quantitative and qualitative data through the use of web-based surveys, semistructured interviews, field notes, and document reviews, the researcher sought to identify overarching themes and best strategies of institution-based leadership development programs that could benefit community colleges in general, as well as provide a potential roadmap for succession planning in the near future.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to examine institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges in Illinois and the impact of these programs in supporting and preparing future community colleges leaders. The study also explored the efficacy of these programs and whether their implementation aligned with the culture and goals of the institutions. The research strategy used to address the research questions in this study was a mixed methods approach wherein the qualitative multiple-case study was dominant (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). According to Johnson and Christensen (2008), a mixed methods design provides a framework for conducting a study that incorporates both a quantitative and qualitative approach. Hence, this study was structured as a dominant-status sequential design, where qualitative data gathering (semistructured interviews) was dominant, although quantitative data gathering (online demographic survey) occurred first.

Background and Context of the Study

The significance of the study lies in the leadership shortage facing community colleges today. This shortage has been acknowledged as a dilemma that needs immediate attention as community colleges, especially rural institution, face new challenges of the 21st century (Campbell, 2007; Jeandron, 2006; Shults, 2001). Consequently, institution-based leadership development programs are proposed as one approach to the leadership shortage dilemma. Faced with the escalating challenges due to the anticipated retirement of current leadership, community college leadership development programs are fast becoming the sign of the changing environment of higher education. Existing research proposes that there are substantial approaches regarding the skills and qualities required for generating future leadership (Amey et

al., 2002; Campbell et al., 2010; Jeandron, 2006). Therefore, it is imperative that close examination of institution-based leadership development programs be studied and identified in an attempt to establish their effectiveness in cultivating the future leaders of community colleges.

According to Hull and Keim (2007), 70% of today's leaders believe that there is a need to expand in-house development programs. However, despite the interest in such programs, very few colleges actually have one in place (Jeandron, 2006). The need for institution-based leadership development programs in general seems to be gaining momentum as a means for cultivating new leadership in community college, and more so in rural institutions. Clearly, these institutions face issues and challenges that are noticeably different from their urban and suburban counterparts, especially when it comes to mission, location, and limited resources (Miller & Kissinger, 2007; Morelli, 2002). Hence, from a leadership perspective, these differences, coupled with the challenges they create, have led many in the field of rural community colleges to take a closer look at the merits of institution-based leadership development programs, as well as GYO programs as a means for filling the void created by retiring senior-level administrators.

Included in this chapter is a review of the research questions, the quantitative survey instrument results, institutional profiles, and qualitative data findings (participant profiles). The chapter also includes a review of three *a priori* themes, four emerging themes, in addition to the chapter summary.

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to examine institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges in Illinois and the impact of these programs in supporting and preparing future community colleges leaders. The study also explored the efficacy of these programs and whether their implementation aligned with the institutions' culture and goals.

The research questions developed to examine institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges included the following:

1. How can institution-based leadership development programs provide the skills and leadership competencies needed for future leadership?
2. What specific leadership development strategies are employed in institution-based leadership programs in rural community colleges in Illinois?
3. In what ways have institution-based leadership development programs addressed the issue of succession planning in rural community colleges in Illinois?
4. What are the criteria for participating in institution-based leadership development programs?
5. What role does the board of trustee play in institution-based leadership development programs?
6. How are institution-based leadership development programs assessed and/or evaluated (specifically, to what extent do institution-based leadership development programs align with institutional culture and goals)?

Participants

Community colleges selected for this mixed methods research (see Appendix A) included 25 rural community colleges located throughout the state of Illinois (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2010). Participant selection began with an online survey (see Appendix B) accompanied by a cover letter (see Appendix C) sent to each of the chief academic officers and presidents of the 24 selected rural community colleges (one community college, for the pilot process, was not included otherwise in the data collection). Participants were asked to

provide select demographic information and to identify and describe the institution-based leadership development programs they provide.

Six senior-level rural community college administrators (four women and two men) were interviewed regarding institution-based leadership development programs in their institutions. All participants contributed significant insights regarding such programs, as well as providing unique perceptions pertaining to the process of cultivating and training of future leadership in community colleges. The interview format was a formal conversational type, intended to facilitate specific issues of importance related to the study.

The president of community college 1 (CC1) came to his position bringing with him a wealth of knowledge and over 30 years of experience in higher education leadership. Prior to becoming president, he served in a number of senior-level positions in four-year institutions as well as community colleges throughout the South and Midwest regions. He credited his success to being on both sides of the aisle, first as a faculty member and later as an administrator.

The vice president of academic affairs for community college 2 (CC2) had been an administrator at CC2 for over 27 years. She started as an instructor at the college, working her way to the position of dean, followed by her current position as vice president of academic affairs, which she had held for the past two years. She credited her extensive experience as an instructor teaching speech, drama, and English to her ability to communicate better as an administrator. She also attributed her success to mentoring she received from the current president of her college.

The president of community college 3 (CC3) had been an administrator for 25 years, of which 12 have been as the president of CC3. Prior to her current position, she had served as president of another rural community college, as well as other senior-level positions in a number

of community colleges in the Midwest, and East and West Coast. She credited her success to her early work experience in business, which she believed provided her with a solid understanding of financial matters within the college system.

The vice president for planning and institutional effectiveness at community college 4 (CC4) had been in her current position for two years. Prior to becoming vice president for planning and institutional effectiveness, she held a number of senior-level positions at a four-year institution, and later upon joining CC4, had been an active member of the CC4 board of trustees. She credited her success to personal and professional mentoring and job coaching, as well as the experience gained from holding a number of different positions at a four-year institution.

The president of community college 5 (CC5), the oldest among the six participants, had been a community college administrator for over 30 years, 20 of them served at CC5. He began his career at CC5 as vice president for instructional services, a position he held for nine years before becoming president. Prior to coming to CC5, he worked at another community college, in addition to his earlier work experience as a superintendent in the public school system. He credited his success to being embedded in education, both in public schools and later in higher education. He also indicated that consistency (working within the same community) and transitioning from its public school system to its higher education system had provided him with a clear perspective on some of the intricate details that bound these two systems together. He also mentioned his plans to retire soon.

The vice president of academic affairs for community college 6 (CC6) was the youngest of the participants to assume this position. Her experience on how she became vice president of academic affairs was an interesting one; she credited her success in this position to the unique

college process enabling her in reaching this position. She had been in her current position for nearly four years. Prior to that, she began her career at CC6 as an instructor and later as an assistant to the department chair. Because her college encouraged individuals pursuing leadership positions through their strong GYO culture, she was advised to use "professional development money to pursue community college leadership credentials," which later helped her become the assistant to the department chair, followed by the chair position, and finally the vice president of academic affairs. She also credited a strong support system and mentoring to her job success and transparent and open-door leadership style.

Quantitative Findings

Quantitative Research Protocol

An online survey (see Appendix B) was distributed to the presidents and chief academic officers of 24 rural Illinois community college (48 in total). The survey was divided into two parts. The first part (Demographic Data) sought to gather information regarding (a) the participants' title, (b) years in office, and (c) total number of college employees. The second part (Leadership Development Programs) sought to gather such information as (a) the types of leadership development programs offered by the college, (b) whether the community college had developed a leadership succession plan (including any criteria for selection to programs, (c) whether any of the senior-level administrators currently holding a position in the institution was a product of an institution-based leadership development program, (d) if the institution had participated in a GYO program, and (e) if the participants would agree to a face-to-face semistructured interview.

The survey sought responses to (a) multiple-choice selections, (b) "Yes" or "No" questions, and (c) open-ended questions with comments. The survey remained available until six

participants self-identified and agreed to a face-to-face interview (about three weeks). From the 48 surveys distributed, 17 responses were returned, resulting in a response rate of 35.4%.

Quantitative Findings: Demographic Data

The demographic data collected sought to gather information related to the title of the participants, numbers of years in office, and total number of employees serving the participating institution. Findings revealed that, of the 17 responses, 10 (66.7%) identified themselves as college presidents, three (20.0%) as vice president of academic affairs, and two (13.3%) as holding a different senior-level position other than the two identified, while two (11.76%) did not answer the question (see Figure 1).

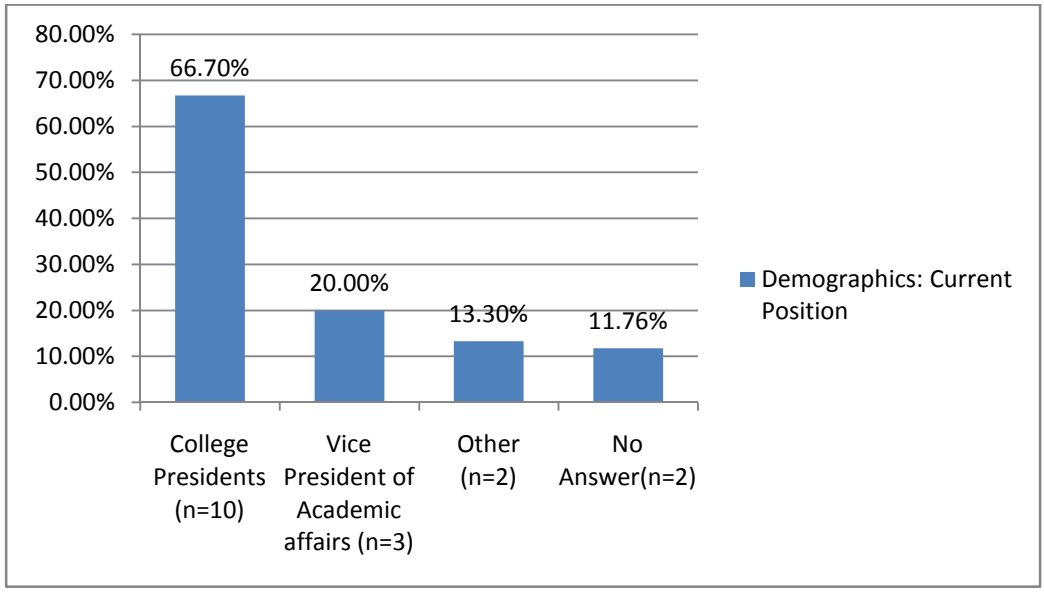

Figure 1. Demographics: Current positions.

In regard to the number of years served in office, four (25.0%) of the participants indicated they had served one to five years, three (18.8%) six to 10 years, four (25.0%) 11-15 years, while five (31.3%) indicated they had served 16 years or more, while one (5.8%) did not answer (see Figure 2).

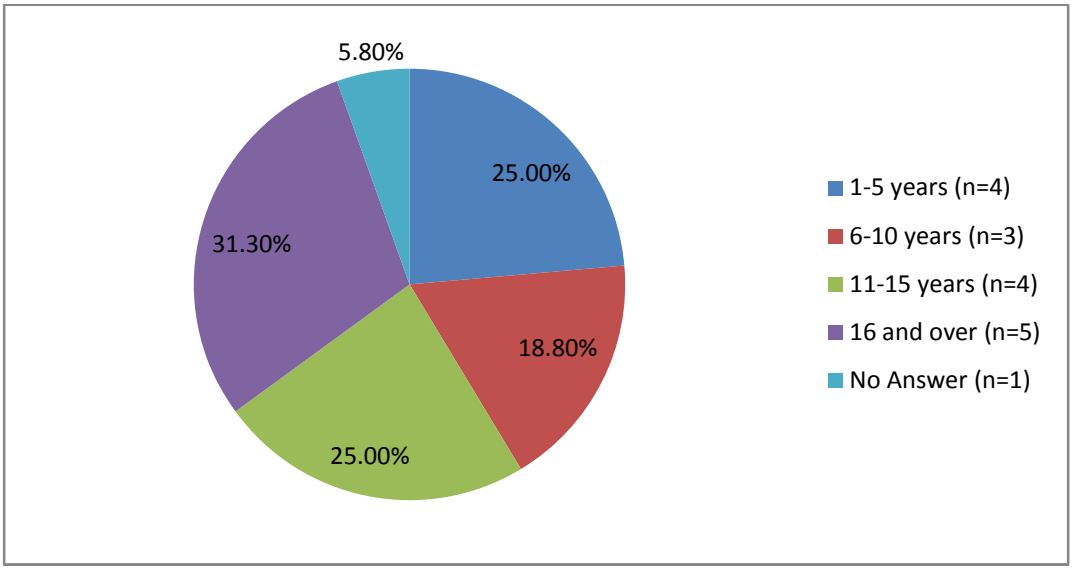

Figure 2. Demographics: Number of years served in the institution.

In regard to total number of employees, three participants put the total of employees in their institution (including both full-time and part-time, staff, and administrators) at a range between 200 and 250 employees, two participants put the range between 350 and 368, five between 400 and 450, and five between 700 and 1,000, while two did not provide any information (see Table 1).

Table 1.
Demographics: Total Number of Employees

Total employees	Responses (*n*)
200-250	3
350-368	2
400-450	5
700-1000	5
No answer	2

Quantitative Findings Related to Research Questions

The second part of the survey pertained to leadership development programs within the institution. Questions 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 (see Appendix B) of the survey related to leadership development programs and practices employed by the institutions, while questions 11 and 12 asked whether the participants would agree to a face-to-face interview, and if so, to provide their contact information.

Research Question 1: Leadership skills and competencies. There was no specific question included in the online survey addressing Research Question 1. However, participants agreeing to a face-to-face interview did answer this question at a later stage during the semistructured qualitative interview phase.

Research Question 2: Leadership development program strategies. Question 4 (see Appendix B) asked if the participant's community college provided professional development programs or activities for individuals aspiring to assume leadership roles as presidents or vice presidents. Eleven (64.7%) of the respondents answered "Yes," while four (23.5%) answered "No," and two (11.7%) did not answer the question (see Figure 3).

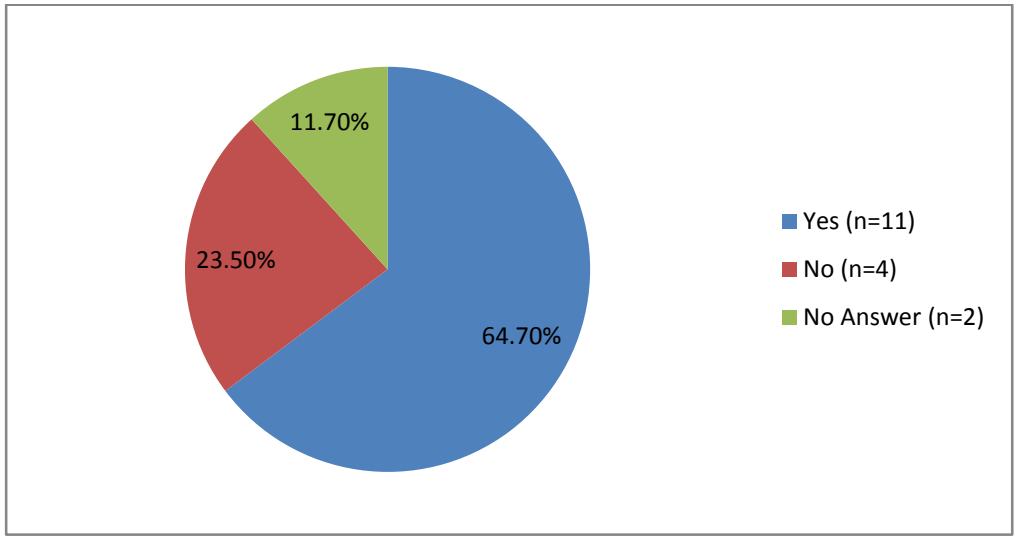

Figure 3. Survey Question 4: Does your community college provide professional development programs or activities for individuals aspiring to assume leadership roles as presidents or vice presidents?

Question 5 (see Appendix B) sought to identify the type of professional development programs offered for individuals aspiring to assume leadership positions (see Table 2). Twelve of the 17 responses (70.5%) identified the nine types of leadership development programs and/or activities offered by their institutions for faculty, staff, and administrators, while five (29.4%) participants indicated that their institution did not provide professional development programs and/or activities.

Table 2.

Survey Question 5: Types of Professional Development Programs Available for Individuals Aspiring to Assume Leadership Positions Within Their Institutions

Program	Responses (*n*)
Leadership conferences and academics	3
Business training	2
Leadership certificate program	1
Supervisor training	1
Leadership and core values workshops	1
Leadership retreats	1
Financial support for graduate courses	1
Leadership professional development	1
Leadership development lecture series	1
No answer	5

Research Question 3: Succession planning in rural community colleges. Question 6 of the online survey (see Appendix B) sought to determine whether the participating institutions had a developed succession plan for identifying and preparing employees for senior-level positions within their organization. Five participants (29.4%) responded "Yes" and 10 (58.8%) responded that no succession plan(s) had been developed, while two (11.7%) did not provide any information (see Figure 4).

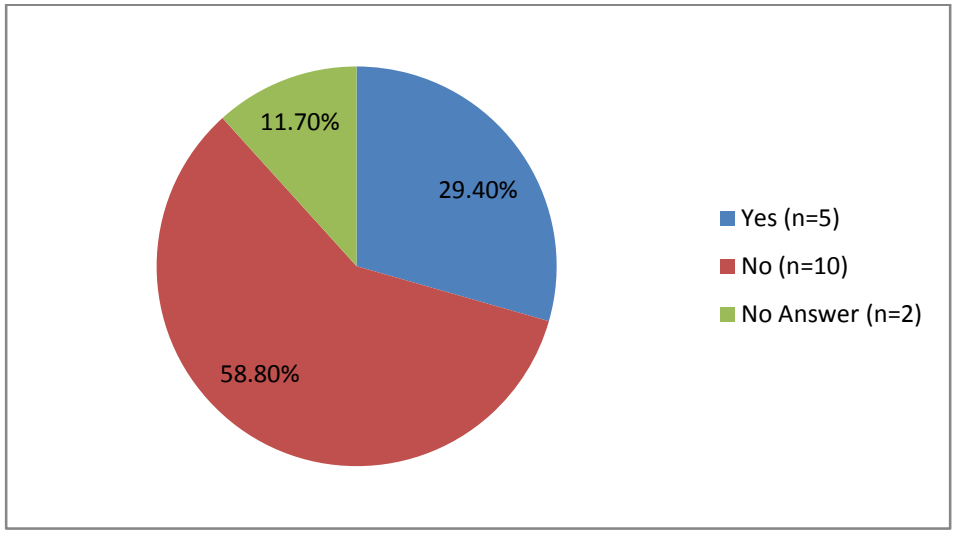

Figure 4. Survey Question 6: Is there a succession plan for administrators at your community college?

Survey Question 7 (see Appendix B) was a follow-up to the previous question, where participants answering "Yes" to whether they had developed a succession plan were asked to further explain how individuals were identified and selected to participate in the succession planning process. Fifteen participants responding to the question identified four strategies listed used by their institutions to identify individuals for participation in the succession planning process (see Table 3).

Table 3.

Survey Question 7: How Are Individuals Identified and Selected to Participate in the Succession Planning Process?

Program	Responses (*n*)
Informal identification of leaders	2
Cross-training/manual creation	1
Creation of new academic departments	1
Mentoring programs	1
No answer	12

Question 8 (see Appendix B) asked the participants if any of their senior-level administrators currently holding a position at their institution was the product of a completed institution-based leadership development program. Of the respondents, nine (52.9%) answered "Yes" to the question, six (35.2%) answered "No," while two (11.7%) did not provide an answer (see Figure 5).

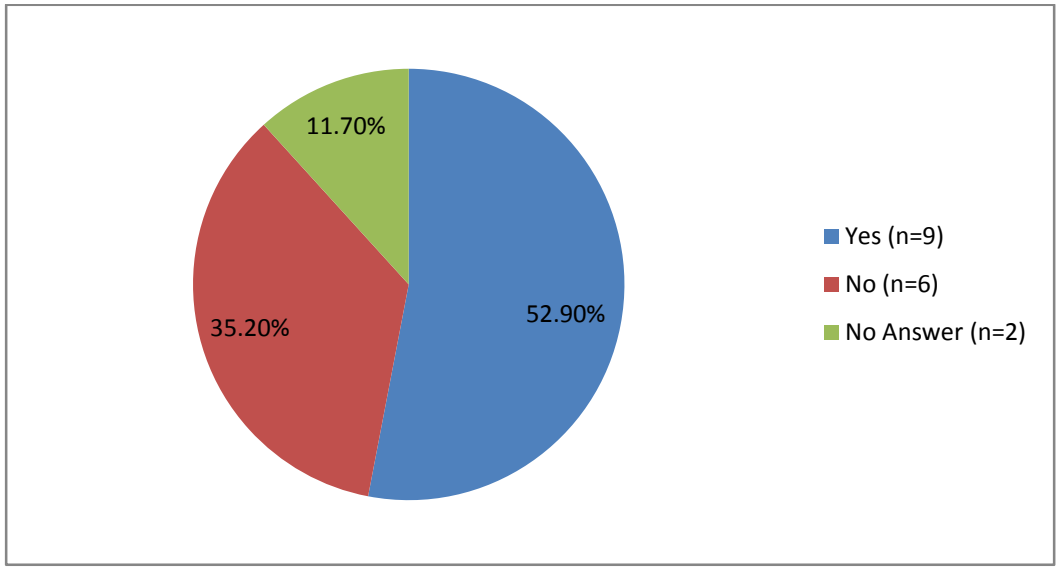

Figure 5. Survey Question 8: Have any of your institution's current senior-level administrators completed (an) institution-based leadership development program(s) and assumed leadership positions at your institution?

Research Question 4: Participation criteria. Question 9 (see Appendix B) asked if the community college participated in GYO programs. Three (17.6%) participants responded "Yes" and 12 (70.5%) said "No," while two (11.7%) did not provide any information (see Figure 6).

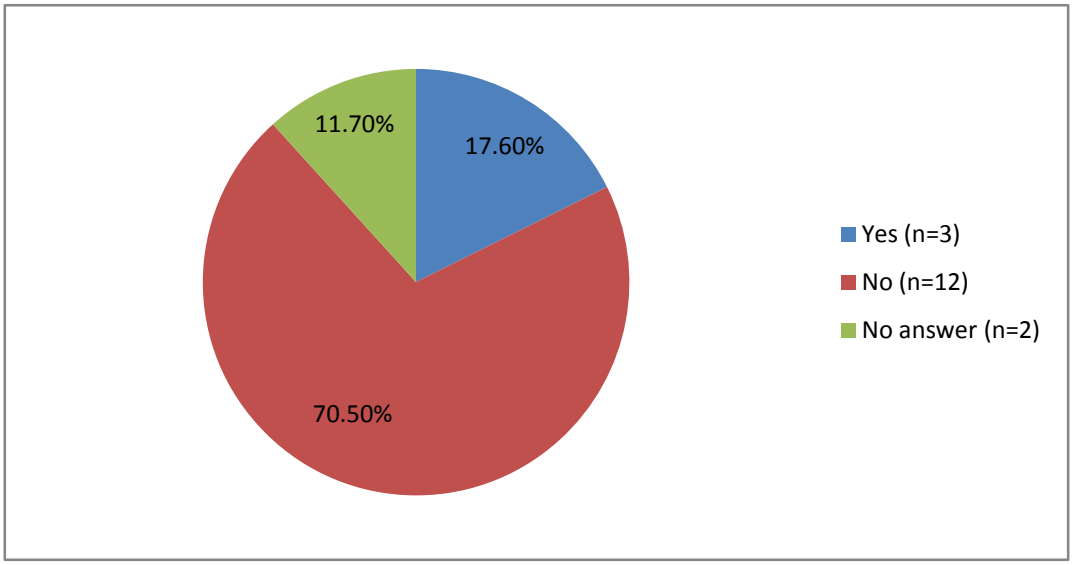

Figure 6. Survey Question 9: Does your community college participate in a "grow your own leaders" program?

Question 10 (see Appendix B) was a follow-up to the previous question, where participants answering "Yes" were asked to further explain how individuals were identified and selected to participate in a GYO leaders program (see Table 4).

Table 4.

Survey Question 10: How Are Individuals Identified and Selected to Participate in a Grow-Your-Own Leaders Program?

Program	Responses (*n*)
By applying to the vice president	1
Informal identification of leaders	1
Mentoring programs	1
No answer	14

Research Question 5: The role of the board of trustees. There was no specific question included in the online survey addressing Research Question 5. However, participants agreeing to

a face-to-face interview did answer this question at a later stage during the semistructured interview phase.

Research Question 6: Assessing and evaluating institution-based leadership development programs. There was no specific question included in the online survey addressing Research Question 6. However, participants agreeing to a face-to-face interview did answer this question at a later stage during the semistructured interview phase.

Question 11 (see Appendix B) asked if the participants would be interested in participating in a face-to-face interview concerning institution-based leadership development programs. Six (35.2%) responded "Yes," nine (52.9%) responded "No," while two (11.7%) did not provide any information (see Table 5).

Table 5.

Survey Question 11: Would You be Interested in Participating in a Face-to-Face Interview Concerning Institution-Based Leadership Development Programs?

Answer	%	*n*
Yes	35.2	6
No	52.9	9
No answer	11.7	2

Survey Question 12 (see Appendix B) asked participants who agreed to a face-to-face interview to provide their contact information. Out of the 17 participants who responded to the online survey, six participants representing six community colleges agreed to a face-to-face interview.

Summary of Quantitative Findings

The online survey included in this study was divided into two parts: demographic data and leadership development programs. The first part sought to gather information regarding the participants' title, years in office, and total number of college employees. The second part sought to gather such information as (a) the types of leadership development programs offered by the college, (b) if the community college had a succession plan, (c) the criteria for selection for these programs, (d) whether any of the senior-level administrators currently holding a position in the institution was a product of these programs, (e) if the institution had participated in a GYO program, and (f) if the participants would agree to a face-to-face interview. Out of the 48 online surveys sent to senior-level administrators, 17 responded. Of those 17, six rural community colleges were selected.

Furthermore, the survey provide information pertaining to the six research questions posed in this study including (a) leadership skills and competencies, (b) leadership development program strategies, (c) rural community college leadership demands, (d) leadership program participation criteria, (e) the role of the board of trustees, and (f) assessment and evaluation of leadership development programs.

Survey findings, while modest in number, indicated 17.6% of rural community colleges did participant in a GYO program (see Figure 6). However, survey results also showed that, on a larger scale, 70.5% of rural community colleges did, in fact, provide professional development programs and/or activities for individuals aspiring to assume leadership roles as presidents or vice presidents within their institutions (see Figure 3). Furthermore, survey results indicated that 29.4% of rural community colleges did have a succession plan for administrators by which

suitable employees were identified and prepared for a position or replacement of an employee within the institution through job rotation, training, and mentoring (see Figure 4).

Qualitative Findings

Qualitative Research Protocol

This sequential mixed methods study included six interviews, an online survey, and field notes. Participants interviewed for this study were referred to by a pseudonym to ensure confidentiality. The six participants included three presidents and three vice presidents of academic affairs from six rural community colleges in Illinois. The participants included four women and two men. The study employed a multiple-case design in order to examine institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges in Illinois. Six institutions were selected for this study representing two each from classifications of rural large, rural medium, and rural small community colleges throughout the state of Illinois. All six rural community colleges were located in the southern part of Illinois. Rural community colleges profiled in this study were referred to by pseudonym to ensure confidentiality.

The six senior-level community college administrators selected for face-to-face interviews were identified and selected as a result of invitations sent to them via an online survey (see Appendix B) and who had agreed to represent their institutions in a face-to-face interview. A diverse sample of rural community colleges varying in size were specifically chosen for a number of reasons: (a) to examine the kinds of institutions-based leadership development programs offered, (b) whether the financial resources of an institution based on its size was a factor, (c) the impact of these programs in preparing future leaders and narrowing the shortage gap, and (d) whether internal leadership development posed a more sustainable alternative to the current external ones.

The interviews were scheduled in advance based on the participants' schedules, and lasted 1 hour. The researcher asked a series of semistructured questions (see Appendix D) supplemented with a number of follow-up questions and prompts when needed. Interviews were audio recorded, supported by field notes, and transcribed with the participants' permission (see Appendix E).

Qualitative Findings: Participant Profiles

Six senior-level administrators (four women and two men) representing six rural community college in Illinois were interviewed regarding institution-based leadership development programs in their institutions. The six rural community colleges selected were classified as rural small, rural medium, and rural large (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2010). All six rural community colleges were two-year public institutions providing instructional programs (associate's degrees). Those classified as rural small enrolled an average of 2,500 students, while colleges classified as rural medium enrolled an average of 4,000 students, followed by rural large at an average of 9,000 students. The colleges were located in the southern part of Illinois, serving mostly surrounding rural communities.

All participants contributed significant insights regarding institution-based leadership development programs, as well as providing unique perceptions pertaining to the process of cultivating and training of future leadership in community colleges. The interview format was a formal conversational type intended to facilitate specific issues of importance related to the study.

Rural community college leader 1. The president of CC1 came to his position bringing with him a wealth of knowledge and over 30 years of experience in higher education leadership.

Prior to becoming president, he served in a number of senior-level positions in four-year institutions, as well as community colleges throughout the South and Midwest regions. He credited his success to being on both sides of the aisle, first as a faculty member and later as an administrator.

Rural community college leader 2. The vice president of academic affairs for CC2 had been an administrator at CC2 for over 27 years. She started as an instructor at the college, working her way to the position of dean, followed by her current position as vice president of academic affairs, which she had held for the past two years. She credited her extensive experience as an instructor teaching speech, drama, and English to her ability to communicate better as an administrator. She also attributed her success to mentoring she received from the current president of her college.

Rural community college leader 3. The president of CC3 had been an administrator for 25 years, of which 12 had been as the president of CC3. Prior to her current position, she had served as president of another rural community college, as well as other senior-level positions in a number of community colleges in the Midwest, as well as on the East and West coasts. She credited her success to her early work experience in business, which she believed provided her with a solid understanding of financial matters within the college system.

Rural community college leader 4. The vice president for planning and institutional effectiveness at CC4 has been in her current position for two years. Prior to becoming vice president for planning and institutional effectiveness, she held a number of senior-level positions at a four-year institution, and later upon joining CC4, had been an active member of the CC4 board of trustees. She credited her success to personal and professional mentoring and job

coaching, as well as the experience gained from holding a number of different positions at a four-year institution.

Rural community college leader 5. The president of CC5, the oldest among the six participants, has been a community college administrator for over 30 years, 20 of them served at CC5. He began his career at CC5 as vice president for instructional services, a position he held for nine years before becoming president. Prior to coming to CC5, he worked at another community college, in addition to his earlier work experience as a superintendent in the public school system. He credited his success to being embedded in education, both in public schools and later in higher education. He also indicated that consistency (working within the same community) and transitioning from its public school system to its higher education system had provided him with a clear perspective on some of the intricate details that bound these two systems together. He also mentioned his plans to retire soon.

Rural community college leader 6. The vice president of academic affairs for CC6 was the youngest of the participants to assume this position. Her experience on how she became vice president of academic affairs had been an interesting one because she credited her success in this position to the unique college process enabling her in reaching this position. She had been in her current position for nearly four years. Prior to that, she began her career at CC6 as an instructor and later as an assistant to the department chair. Because her college encouraged individuals pursuing leadership positions through their strong GYO culture, she was advised to use "professional development money to pursue community college leadership credentials," which later helped her become the assistant to the department chair, followed by the chair position, and finally the vice president of academic affairs. She also credited a strong support system and mentoring to her job success and transparent and open-door leadership style.

Qualitative Findings Related to Research Questions

Six senior-level rural community college administrators (four women and two men) were interviewed regarding institution-based leadership development programs in their institutions. All participants contributed significant insights regarding such programs, as well as providing unique perceptions pertaining to the process of cultivating and training of future leadership in community colleges. The interview format (see Appendix D) was a formal conversational type, intended to facilitate specific issues of importance related to the study.

Qualitative findings related to skills and leadership competencies for future leaders (Research Question 1). Interview findings related to skills and leadership competencies based on participations' responses indicated the following:

Leader 1. The president of CC1, a small rural institution in Illinois, addressed this issue by emphasizing the importance of organizational skills as a way for identifying what needed to be attended to first and foremost. He added that he had his own mission statement (hanging in his office) that said that the mission of the "office of the president was to make sure that we operate efficiently and effectively." The president also stressed the value of having "good people skills," which he pointed out lead to better communications, as well as the knowledge that enables a president to play a role in the process of fundraising.

Leader 2. According to the vice president of academic affairs of CC2, a small, rural institution in Illinois, attitude is everything. She elaborated by saying that, in her mind, "attitude meant a willingness to constantly be flexible and willing to listen." This, she added, is important because relying on old traditions of doing things is counterproductive. A quick look at any institution will show that things are constantly changing. She pointed out that being flexible and

adapting to changes taking place in your college is a skill every leader should aspire toward. The vice president of academic affairs offered these comments:

> [We] have to respond to those changes. The make-up of the students is changing. The skills they are coming with to our institutions, the way that you know have changed. And I'm not saying anything new, but it's just that constant need to adapt. To ever be in adaptive mode. So, if I were going to emphasize a competency, it would be that.

The vice president of academic affairs of CC2 also addressed the importance of communication as a skill required for any leader. However, she was quick to indicate that by communication, she did not just mean talking, but rather the listening part, "being willing to listen with an open mind and [a] learning mindset." She went on to say that because her background was in communication, it helped her in understanding the demands put on her in this position. "[Communication] is a huge component of leadership." Accordingly, communication also played a vital role in the process of fundraising; she added, "Fundraising is more and more important, particularly in the state of Illinois."

Leader 3. With 25 years of experience in higher education and 12 years at her current institution, the president of CC3, a medium-sized rural institution, had a lot to say about the skills and competencies needed for future leaders. She began by saying that, in her experience, she found the ability to work collaboratively was critical for community college leaders, not only within the institution, but also externally in addition to problem solving and conflict resolution. "Conflict resolution is essential, especially in the times that we are in now." She added that communication skills were also important, coupled with strong negotiation skills as well. The president's comments were as follows:

> You certainly need to be able to communicate with all the constituents of the community college. I think it is critical to be persuasive. It's important to be able to influence and persuade the board, the faculty, the public. It's all of the stakeholders in the community college system. Negotiation skills. Even if we weren't in a collective bargaining environment.

Moreover, she added that in today's world, cultural competency is really critical in addition to fundraising:

> If we're preparing students to serve as global citizens, then that's an important part of being a community college leader. Fundraising is [also] critical. I'm thankful that I enjoy fundraising. I would hate to be community college leaders in this juncture of our development. I'm not sure if it is a skill, but it certainly [is] a competency.

The president of CC3 also believed in the importance of have a "holistic" understanding of how a community college functions as another much needed competency:

> I think a leader is at an advantage when he or she has some knowledge and exposure to all of the different aspects of a comprehensive community college. Finance. I am so thankful that I've had accounting. I would hate to be a community college person who couldn't read a financial statement because then you're at the mercy of what other people want to tell you.

Leader 4. The vice president of planning and institutional effectiveness at CC4, a medium-sized rural institution in Illinois, spoke specifically saying that the 21st century has changed how institutions of higher education view skills and competencies. She added that all leaders today must possess skills and competencies in financial leadership, planning, visioning, innovation, building partnerships, and collaborations, in addition to fundraising. She commented,

> I believe in order to leverage dwindling financial resources, financial leadership is key to understanding all the different funding streams community colleges must take advantage of, as well as managing and prioritizing expenditures. Building partnerships is also vital to survive. The community college may not be able to continue its comprehensive mission without utilizing strategic partners to share resources. Building partnerships is important to community colleges to continue to meet their missions.

Leader 5. With 30 years of experience as a president and senior-level administrator, the president of CC5, a large rural institution in Illinois, offered an interesting perspective regarding the type of skills and competencies for future leaders. He began by saying that, realistically, what new community college leaders of today needed were vision and an understanding of the importance of innovation in higher education: "A leader has to be innovative and visionary." He

also pointed out that leaders must possess great interpersonal skills that enable them to work with people in tactful ways. He added that communication was another vital skill all leaders should learn to master: "You have to communicate; miscommunication can cause all kinds of problems."

The president of CC5 was also eager to emphasize the importance of fundraising. The president commented,

> Fundraising is becoming more and more important all the time. We have a foundation here at the college which [*sic*] deals with fundraising matters and is under my umbrella as president. We even brought a new executive director in and we're putting a lot more emphasis on fundraising because our state funding is becoming more of a problem all the time. We rely on state funding for a lot of our funds but only 42% of our revenue comes from the state, I think we got [*sic*] to come up with other resources. We are a rural community college and don't have much business and industry to enhance our corporate tax base.

Leader 6. The vice president of academic affairs for CC6, a large rural institution in Illinois, was the youngest of the participants to assume this position. She began by saying that leaders of the 21st century must be "incredibly flexible." In other words, she went on to say, they have to learn not to be comfortable in their positions, but also be willing to be "a jack of all trades."

Another important skill, she added, is communication, especially in the way information is communicated back to different audiences, such as stakeholders. Additionally, leaders of today, she said, had to have knowledge of public policy and be constituent-based: "They have to be servant leaders." They have to think in terms of everyone they serve on an individual level, and are willing to listen: "Those people who want to stand out and be the John Waynes, or the solitary men or women with all the answers are not going to work well in community colleges." The vice president of academic affairs' comments regarding servant leadership supports the literature that suggests that community college servant leaders create a culture of change where

all members within the college are encouraged to brainstorm and provide their recommendations for change. Such leaders seek out employees with leadership potential and prepare them for future leadership roles through a formal succession plan, thus ensuring the stability and continuity in the college administration (Mathis & Jackson, 2008). According to Greenleaf (1977), the servant leader represents the moral leader, a caregiver who is seen as a servant first. "It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first" (Greenleaf, 1977, p. 13).

The vice president of academic affairs also explained that leaders of today must rely on themselves first in terms of their knowledge of issues, and not just on those who surround them. In other words, they have to understand the role of technology, have budgetary skills, have working knowledge of trends and how they affect education, as well as a solid appreciation of fundraising.

Qualitative findings related to leadership development strategies employed in institution-based leadership programs (Research Question 2). Interview findings related to skills and leadership development strategies employed in institution-based leadership programs based on participations' responses indicated the following:

Leader 1. Specific leadership development strategies are an ideal way of providing administrators aspiring for leadership positions at a rural community college with guidelines. However, because CC1 is classified as a small institution, the president of CC1 pointed out that it does not have "a lot of tiers and is very flat," and because a lot of these institution-based leadership programs are seen as "stepping stones," it is unfortunate that CC1 "does not have many of these steps." The president was quick to add that despite such strategies not being fully developed at CC1, they did nevertheless include informal strategies such as identifying

individuals who show potential for leadership, as well as investing the time and financial means to support and develop those individuals who showed interest.

In regard to incentives, the president of CC1 indicated that "unless the board of trustees buys into the fact that the devil they know is better than the devil they don't," there are really no specific or formal incentives outlined at his institution. The closest he could think of an incentive was as follows:

> If the [administration] felt that we had a sitting vice president who understood them and who understands that they can see in that person perhaps a good transition, then I think that would be what the incentive would be. I think that they would want to give that person a head's up, like two or three years out, saying to him that the sitting president is going to be leaving us in two years. We want you to work with him more, and we'll increase, perhaps, your salary.

He also added that incentives could include involving the vice president in some of the leadership decisions, as well as accompanying the president to meetings.

Leader 2. The vice president of academic affairs of CC2 seemed to agree with the significance of having specific leadership development strategies as a way of providing administrators aspiring for leadership positions at rural community colleges with guidelines. However, because CC2 is classified as a small institution, she pointed out that the institution did not have a formal program. The remarks by the vice president of academic affairs on this issue, coupled with those of the president of CC1, speak to the first emergent theme that indicates that institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges are more of an informal process than a formal one. Her comments were as follows:

> We do not have a formal program. [What] is kind of unique at [our college] is we don't have people moving in and out a lot. They come here, they stay. We just had someone that retired last year; they'd [*sic*] been here 40 years. Development comes because we're part of this community college, because we're part of this family and we . . . aspire to be a leader because we care and we become compassionate about what's going on and we want to effect change. Our people see that in others, they see that you have qualities that you should consider. As a dean position becomes [available], or an associate dean, we

> start putting people in line for those positions as we see retirements starting to happen. . . . So I think, informally, just in our relationships, we're very collaborative and we tend to be here for the long haul. So our leaders tend to naturally grow out of that commitment to what we're doing here, and so, yes, I think we have it informally, [and] no, we don't have it formally.

According to the vice president of academic affairs at CC2, because the college does not have any formal institution-based leadership programs, they do not have any specific strategies pertaining to such programs. However, she added that in addition to the informal process she mentioned, as a vice president, she has encouraged and helped those who have showed interest in assuming senior-level positions to do so. She referred to a situation that had taken place at the institution when four department chair positions were suddenly vacated (including her position) and three others due to retirements: "We had four people moving up into those positions, leadership positions all at once." Additionally, as far as incentives, candidates interested in these positions are also encouraged to participate in leadership institutes as well as conferences.

Leader 3. The president of CC3, based on her extensive experience, seemed to agree with the merits of having defined leadership development strategies as a way of providing administrators aspiring for leadership positions at rural community colleges with a roadmap. However, due to her college's limited resources, she pointed out that the institution did not have a formal program in the first place. The president's remarks regarding the issue of limited financial resources at rural community colleges speak to the third of the emergent themes. The president's comments were as follows:

> Yes, [they] are important. But the reason [we] do not have them is because of the resources issues. Not only resources to carry out the leadership development but also the resources of the people, the time of the people who are participating. If we had more resources, we would have had spent more time on these [programs] and strategies.

In regard to incentives, the president of CC3 emphasized that having them is an ideal way for ensuring that people within the institution who have aspirations to move forward in their

careers are not overlooked. She also added that incentives can be a positive way to bring employees closer together within the working environment, thus creating a better work place. She stated,

> We have some responsibility for ensuring that there are people within our institution who are interested in advancing and so just maintaining a qualified workforce in the organization is an incentive. It's an opportunity for the president and a select group of college employees to work together and get to know each other better. [And] as a spin-off, there will be an improved working relationship between the leader who is involved in this and all those who are participating.

Leader 4. In regard to strategies and incentives, the vice president for planning and institutional effectiveness at CC4 mentioned that when it came to leadership development programs at her institution, what they offered was a series of courses that led to a leadership certificate. Because the college did not offer any formal leadership programs, these courses are offered as a way to help individuals aspiring for leadership positions. She also made reference to the significance of these courses, due to the fact that a number of incentives were actually embedded in them. These incentives included taking these courses during the workday, tuition waivers, and no-cost burdens to individuals taking these courses for their books, in addition to the recognition gained for completion of these certificates. The vice president for planning and institutional effectiveness commented,

> We have a series of courses offered that lead to a leadership certificate. The courses are offered during the workday, and employees may be excused from their jobs to take advantage of such courses. They are offered [with a] tuition wavier, and the college pays for the books or other instructional materials. [These] opportunities and the opportunity to pursue this certificate during working hours are the main incentives. The fact that the completed certificate is viewed favourably in hiring decisions or decisions to offer committee or leadership opportunities, hopefully, is also an incentive.

Leader 5. In regard to incentives, the president of CC5 added that on an individual level, participation in these programs can be a means to an increase in their salary, as well as a way to further advance their careers within the institution. He went on to illustrate by saying that in the

last two years, 19 positions at CC5 were filled from inside. He suggested that when there are "internal people interested in the job," the chances of them getting them are very high. He also added that a situation will soon be presented where a search for a new vice president for instruction would be taking place. The president of CC5 followed this by saying that he was going to be coordinating that search: "We are going to be opening that up to external applicants, but I know of some internal applicants that [*sic*] will be in the mix."

Leader 6. According to the vice president of academic affairs of CC6, having leadership development strategies and incentives to attract potential leaders is very important. She explained she was the product of these strategies that were employed at her institution for aspiring individuals (when she first showed interest in further advancing her career): "Right from the get-go, there was a program where I was heavily mentored, [and] later invited to go to a leadership retreat at a rural resort." She added that the institution-based leadership program created at CC6 offered many incentives, of which the most significant was to cultivate leaders from within the college. Additional incentives also focused on investing in individuals that represent the culture of CC6. It is important to note that CC6 was the only institution among the six profiled in this study that did have an institution-based leadership development program.

Qualitative findings related to succession planning (Research Question 3). Interview findings related to succession planning based on participations' responses indicated the following:

Leader 1. Succession planning is one of the most important strategies considered in any community college. However, the steps taken in developing and executing such a plan are not without their challenges. According to the president of CC1, such planning, unfortunately, does not exist at his institution. Instead, in most cases, all senior-level leadership positions are filled

through an open search. As a concept, he agreed that it could work if an internal candidate was identified and showed interest. The president also added that his leadership philosophy was to "hire the best candidate and not just the person who is considered a lock." He illustrated by saying that a situation did arise when an internal candidate for the position of vice president was not hired because he was not seen as the best candidate for the position.

However, the president was quick to emphasize that he was not suggesting that this should be the way colleges operate, but rather that they should consider a broad perspective of ideas. He added that when it comes to succession planning, "if you only promote from within, you're limiting your knowledge base and your experience and not growing, to me it's incestuous."

Leader 2. When it came to succession planning, the vice president of academic affairs at CC2 was quick to point out the importance of such a plan, however, only if it aligned with the needs and goals of the institution. The remarks of the vice president of academic affairs of CC2 pointed to the second emergent theme that indicates that succession planning at rural community colleges does not exist unless it is conducive to the culture of the institution. However, she added that there is no such plan at CC2:

> There is no plan, we kind of respond to it as the need arises. [There] is a tendency here [when] we see where certain people are naturally going to succeed and we sort of hand-pick those people. Informally, perhaps, even into the presidency, the last several presidents have come out of the upper cabinet level. And so even though there's not a plan, there has been sort of a typical way of it being implemented.

She went on to say that out of the last four presidents who served at CC2, only one was brought in from outside the institution, and "he did not last very long." The reason offered was

> [i]t wasn't a good fit for him and it wasn't a good fit for the college. And I'm not going to say all our other presidents were terrific. You know, there's always problems with every administration, but [those from within] knew the college, they'd been here. They had relationships with people. And I think that helps. That makes a difference. It's easier if

> you have someone that you already have a trust relationship with and already respect. [It's also] hard to bring ideas from a suburban area to a [rural] area. You're trying to bring someone from the outside, it doesn't always work. We tend to grow leaders from within, because by the time we've been here for a while, we're more accustomed to that. You bring someone from the outside, and it sounds cliché, but it could be an oil-water mix.

Leader 3. In regard to succession planning, the perspective of the president of CC3 seemed to be similar to those of both the president of CC1 and the vice president of academic affairs of CC2, as well as consistent with the previously mentioned second emergent theme. However, the president did make it clear that her institution was in the process of developing a plan, something the board of trustees had delegated her to do. She commented,

> There is no [succession] plan now, but one of the goals that the board has given me to work on over the next year is to do some work on a succession plan. We haven't until now. But I would say it's in the head. Just not on paper yet.

Leader 4. In regard to succession planning, the comments made by the vice president for planning and institutional effectiveness of CC4 seemed to once again parallel those of her peers regarding the lack of a formal succession plan in rural community colleges. The vice president for planning and institutional effectiveness addressed the fact that her institution did not have a formal succession plan, even though she believed that having a succession plan in place would be very beneficial. However, she added that having one would represent a cultural change that would require an open mind because "changes move slowly," especially at her institution. She went on to say that currently, the way the system worked to compensate for a lack of a formal succession plan was through an informal process that involved appointing an interim (when a leadership vacancy is available) for a period of a year or more. Individuals interested in performing as an interim are then encouraged to apply.

Leader 5. According to the president of CC5, there was no formal program at the institution. The process, he added, was "more of a one-on-one thing." The president went on to say,

> I have had people come to me and say, "[What do] I do if I want to be a vice president or I want to be a president?" You kind of mentor those people and give them advice on what they need to do to be able to aspire to that level. [The] plan, you could say, is implied because we're here to help people. I mean, I know there are people on campus that [*sic*] want to be president at some point in the future. And I've had conversations with them. [But] if I don't see potential in that, I would need to be tactfully direct with them about that, too, and they might not want to consider that. With those type of people, you need to let them know what is entailed in those aspirations and if they really want to pursue that or not. There are certain steps you need to go through to prepare for a presidency or vice president [position].

Leader 6. According to the vice president of academic affairs of CC6, there is no formal succession plan at the institution; there is "an informal [one], nothing on paper. We're constantly grooming." The vice president of academic affairs commented as follows:

> We're constantly talking with people about [what] they want to do, and then trying to help them make the best plans. So, informally, in my head, if I were to leave [CC6] tomorrow, do I have a couple of people in mind who I think could step into this office and be successful? I do. I think we'd like to think a couple of steps ahead and figure if there's going to be an opening someplace, who's ready.

Qualitative findings related to criteria for participation in leadership development programs (Research Question 4). Interview findings related to criteria for participation in leadership developments programs based on participations' responses indicated the following:

Leader 1. According to the president of CC1, participation for such programs should be open for anyone aspiring to senior-level positions. However, because CC1 does not have a formal institution-based leadership development program, there are no specific criteria for participation. But he pointed out that the college does encourage everyone from faculty to staff to administrators to participate in nationwide programs available, such as doctoral programs in community college leadership, leadership academies, conferences, and the League of Innovation.

Leader 2. According to the vice president of academic affairs of CC2, participation for such programs should be open for anyone aspiring to senior-level positions. However, because CC2 does not have a formal institution-based leadership development program, she pointed out that there were no specific criteria for participation. She did add that CC2 did encourage everyone interested in senior-level positions including faculty (part-time and adjuncts), staff, and administrators to participate in nationwide programs available, such as leadership academies and statewide workshops.

Leader 3. According to the president of CC3, participation for leadership programs is highly encouraged at her institution. She added that her philosophy is that everyone aspiring to advance their careers should be given an opportunity. Hence, one of her initiatives as president was to make sure that if someone from CC3 showed potential, to have him or her participate in leadership programs nationwide. She also added that these opportunities are of great importance, especially for women seeking senior-level positions and credits the programs for helping her in her career. The president's comments were as follows:

> The reason that I do that is because that was very helpful to me. I can tell you that I never aspired to be a president until I attended one of those leadership institutes, and it was one put on by the AACC. At the time, it was called Leaders for the 80s. And it was for women. So I know how powerful those experiences can be.

Leader 4. According to the vice president for planning and institutional effectiveness of CC4, participation for leadership programs is highly encouraged at her institution. Because CC4 offers a series of courses that lead to a leadership certificate, anyone at the college who is interested in senior-level positions is encouraged to participate. Such individuals are usually identified through a number of ways, such as from their leadership duties on committees or task forces, or those that are part of the college's continuous quality improvement or accreditation programs. The vice president for planning and institutional effectiveness commented,

> If an individual expresses an interest in planning, for example, I might ask that person to be on the Strategic Leadership and Planning Council, where he or she would have opportunities to learn and grow in an area of interest.

Leader 5. In regard to participation in leadership programs, the president of CC5 agreed that anyone interested in pursuing this leadership path is welcome to participate. He added that this would include both full-time and part-time faculty, as well as members of the college staff and administrators. He also emphasized that he had always encouraged individuals interested in senior-level positions to apply to leadership academies offered throughout the state or attend conferences. He also mentioned that the college was always willing to appropriate funds, if necessary, to help out.

Leader 6. According to the vice president of academic affairs at CC6, participation in these leaderships programs at her institution was totally optional and everyone was welcome; however, according to her knowledge, she has not seen any part-time faculty included. She also pointed out that the college tries hard to create an atmosphere where people want to attend these programs voluntarily, and feel supported in doing so. She added that she always encourages people to get involved as part of her philosophy, which is both transparent and fair: "I want people to understand this group, the executive group, and [how] they make decisions, [and] to understand that these are not slam-dunk or easy decisions." The vice president of academic affairs also emphasized how fortunate these individuals were to have such programs because the college was more than willing to provide funding, saying,

> [Y]es, we're considered rural, but our tax base, our local tax base, is a lot stronger than other community colleges that are classified as rural, [and] our dependence on the state is less than most rural community colleges. We suffer, but not as dramatically, so we have been able to continue to fund all of our leadership development programs. They are a priority.

Qualitative findings related to the role of the board of trustees (Research Question 5). Interview findings related to the role of the board of trustees based on participations' responses indicated the following:

Leader 1. Board trustees at community colleges usually play an important role not only in the hiring of college presidents and senior-level administrators, but also in the decision-making process, which could include the type of leadership programs implemented. The president of CC1 emphasized that even though the board of trustees see themselves as responsible for policy making and governance, they do not always see eye to eye on matters that can help the institution grow. The remarks of the president of CC1 point to the fourth emergent theme that indicates that conflicting perspectives between the administration and board of trustees sometimes occur within the culture of the college. He remarked as follows:

> They hire a president to do the job, but some are still unwilling to let him do his job. Others are a little incensed that they weren't being asked about every little detail. They ask, "Why aren't we informed?" I tell them, "That's the reason you hired me to do the job, [so] I am the one who has to make the decisions." This is the kind of person I am and I don't mind sharing my opinions. We have seven trustees, [but] the magic number is four because that's the majority. If you can get four of 'em that are on your side, you can get them to do what you want.

Additionally, the president suggested that given the size of his institution, having an institution-based leadership development program might be an uphill battle with the board of trustees because of limited resources of the college. But he added that if there was a growing demand for such programs, as well as reasonable justification, he thought that the board of trustees would be more than willing to collaborate and consider the matter through consultation with his office. Board trustees at community colleges usually play an important role not only in the hiring of college presidents and senior-level administrators, but also in the decision-making process, which could include the type of leadership programs implemented.

Leader 2. According to the vice president of academic affairs at CC2, the board of trustees "tended to be a very cooperative board [that] do [*sic*] not micromanage." The vice president of academic affairs added that because her institution did not have any formal institution-based leadership development programs, she could not tell what their involvement would be.

Additionally, based on her experience with the board of trustees during her 27 years at the college, she mentioned that "the only time they would ask questions is if they felt that steps were skipped or procedures were not followed as outlined." She reiterated the good working relationship that the board has with the president and vice presidents, and speculated that were the issue of institution-based leadership development programs to arise in the future at CC2, there would be no doubt in her mind the trustees would be on board, too. Unlike some of the "horror stories" she said that one hears about board members in other community colleges, the board of trustees at CC2 were very supportive.

Leader 3. According to the president of CC3, having a supportive board of trustees at community colleges is very important, but it was sometimes evident they did not share the same views with senior-level administrators. She pointed out that at her institution, the board was always invited and encouraged to get involved. However, the issue of creating any programs at the CC3 always comes down to cost. She added that "stretching it out [to them] means more cost." But she went on to say that if you were able to have "a couple of trustees speak to the panel" on the merits of a leadership program, "they might be interested." But again she cautioned that, in the end, the two main reasons for not following through were "time commitment and limited resources."

Leader 4. According to the vice president of planning and institutional effectiveness at CC4, having a supportive board of trustees at community colleges was very important. The vice president for planning and institutional effectiveness went on to say that, unfortunately, due to the college's culture, it was sometimes evident that the board might not share the same concerns as that of the president or cabinet of the institution, especially when it came to creating new leadership programs. She added that sometimes the board of trustees did not recognize the value of having such programs for two reasons, one related to financial issues, while the other was more systemic.

Leader 5. The president of CC5 discussed the relationship between the board of trustees and the senior-level administration by highlighting the role they play in setting policy. He explained board members at CC5 were very involved with the state and national board for AACC and that one of the members of board was also a member of the Illinois Community College Board as well, which was significant because he was the only trustee in the state who had been in that position. He added that the board was always willing to listen to new ideas, in addition to their own ideas that they would have liked to see implemented, too. This, he said, they communicated through him. However, he added that this did not mean that the board had to be or was willing to be involved in every little detail. The president commented as follows:

> I mean, the board does not need to get involved in micromanaging and getting too involved in some of these things, but they can give input to the president on what they would like to see in their leadership-type programs and what type of traits they'd want the administrators to have. They do have the power to hire and fire. [But] I know of cases throughout the state where board members get too involved in the day-to-day operations, [which] makes it more difficult for the president when that happens.

Leader 6. Having a supportive board of trustees was something the vice president of academic affairs strongly believed in as a criterion for the success of community college

leadership programs. This, she said, was important because "if you have a grow-your-own philosophy, you better hope that your board has a grow-your-own philosophy, [too]." She added,

> If the board has a mentality that they're always going to hire externally for senior leadership positions, well, you better not build up your faculty and staff into thinking that, someday, they can move up in the institution.

The vice president of academic affairs pointed out that members of the board at CC6 have always made the effort to attend leadership retreats and meet with the candidates. However, she added that although the board might be supportive on many levels, it did not mean that they were necessarily always "on the same page" with the college president and senior-level administrators.

Qualitative findings related to criteria for leadership program assessment/evaluation and helping the institution produce well-trained leaders (Research Question 6). Interview findings related to criteria for leadership program assessment/evaluation and helping the institution produce well-trained leaders based on participations' responses indicated the following:

Leader 1. Regardless of not having such programs at his institution, the president of CC1 pointed out that assessment and evaluation of such programs should be based on feedback from the participants and whether their experiences and training resulted in them achieving their goal.

Finally, the president added that he saw institution-based leadership development programs as useful tools in helping rural community colleges in particular achieve their goals of producing well-trained and prepared leaders. However, he cautioned that this really depended on whether these were covered during those staff development workshops. Additionally, the college encourages individuals to participate in other leadership programs that were offered throughout the state. The president commented,

> We might not have [programs] under that specific title, but we've had a lot of our own people grow professionally within our institution, [and] I think we are going to see more

> of that in the future. We have a committee that plans our staff development programs for our administrators on campus. And we have two sessions per year that we provide. We [also] have special [workshops] periodically, like the sustainable financial planning workshop.

Leader 2. Despite not having an institution-based leadership program at her institution, the vice president of CC2 pointed out that assessment and evaluation of any program remains a priority that should be based on feedback from the participants to determine whether their experiences and training resulted in them achieving their goal. But because CC2 had an informal program, the vice president of academic affairs added that this meant that "probably our assessment [is] informal as well." She went on to add,

> that since the issue has been brought up to my attention; I would need to ponder that more. I don't think I've ever thought about assessing an informal procedure. But I can tell you that performance would be something that I would consider as a measure for assessment and evaluation, too. We need a better collective sense of how to assess . . . how our leaders are performing and whether we've got the right people in the right spots and that sort of thing.

In her closing remarks, the vice president of academic affairs of CC2 addressed the issue of whether having institution-based leadership programs would help the college in producing well-trained leaders by saying,

> We're growing and maturing. And one of the ways that we will continue to evolve is by examining how we grow our leaders here, how we develop them, and how we measure that procedure. We have been lucky so far, and I think we can't continue to rely on good luck. We've always had successful leaders here at our college, but that's because we've always had the right people in every position. But I guess we will need to adapt and change the way we look at developing our leaders.
>
> If we're preparing students to serve as global citizens, then that's an important part of being a community college leader. Fundraising is [also] critical. I'm thankful that I enjoy fundraising. I would hate to be community college leaders in this juncture of our development.

Leader 3. Concurring with the previous participants' opinion on the value of program assessment and evaluation, the president of CC3 emphasized the issue of feedback. She added that her institution usually sent out surveys to participants who had taken part in a leadership

development program. Based on their feedback, she could determine whether the program was a success or not, which so far has been at CC3.

Finally, in regard to whether these leadership development programs had helped the institution achieve its goals of producing well-trained and prepared leaders, the president of CC3 remarked by saying that "[she] wished we could do more." She added that she was particularly proud to see more women at her institution participate and start seeing themselves in leadership roles: "I believe this to be true, that sometimes women don't see themselves as leaders and need someone to tell them, to encourage them."

Leader 4. In regard to this issue, the vice president for planning and institutional effectiveness of CC4 pointed out that, despite not having formal programs at her institution but rather a series of courses that lead to a leadership certificate, the college does have a system for assessment and evaluation. She remarked,

> We assess the individual leadership courses through course evaluations. We are currently putting together a mechanism to look at the leadership certificate graduates in terms of movement within (or outside of) the organization. For example, do [leadership certificate] grads move higher on the salary scale, or higher (vertically) in the organization? Do [leadership certificate] grads take on new committees or other assignments that go beyond their departmental responsibilities? We are just putting this together for the leadership certificate, now that we have accumulated a large enough number of grads.

Finally, in regard to whether these leadership development programs had helped the institution achieve its goals of producing well-trained and prepared leaders, the vice president for planning and institutional effectiveness suggested that because this method of evaluation is recent, she still did not have enough information to fully determine the outcome. However, she added that preliminary results indicated a step in the right direction for her institution toward cultivating well-trained and prepared leaders, especially in rural community colleges.

> We might not have [programs] under that specific title, but we've had a lot of our own people grow professionally within our institution, [and] I think we are going to see more of that in the future. We have a committee that plans our staff development programs for our administrators on campus. And we have two sessions per year that we provide. We [also] have special [workshops] periodically, like the sustainable financial planning workshop.

Leader 5. Addressing this issue, the president of CC5 stated that input from participants who had taken these leadership programs would be very valuable. He also explained that feedback regarding institution-based leadership programs could be an advantage to the institution because, on one hand, it would shed light on the merits of such programs, and on the other hand, provide a cost-effective justification for having internal programs. However, he cautioned that by having institution-based leadership programs, the college would have to have someone in charge to direct and coordinate such programs.

Finally, the president of CC5 concluded by saying that if his institution had the revenue, he would be more than willing to implement such programs: "if [we] were big enough and had the revenue to do it, I would have a vice president on leadership development, as one of their responsibilities." He added that internal leadership programs today can definitely provide community colleges with the benefit of developing and tailoring leaders to meet the needs of their own institutions. He ended by saying that he continued to follow what other rural colleges were doing in regard to such programs and that he had been thinking about "getting involved in one of those programs" in the near future.

Leader 6. Having a supportive board of trustees was something the vice president of academic affairs at CC6 strongly believed in as a criterion for the success of community college leadership programs. The vice president of academic affairs pointed out that members of the board at CC6 have always made the effort to attend leadership retreats and meet with the candidates. However, she added that although the board might be supportive on many levels, it

did not mean that they are necessarily always "on the same page" with the college president and senior-level administrators.

Qualitative Findings Related to a Priori and Emergent Themes(s)

A priori theme 1. Community colleges in general and rural colleges in particular offer some type of professional development programs for individuals aspiring to assume senior-level positions within their institutions.

As the literature illustrates, several postsecondary institutions (e.g., community and technical colleges) have invested in the creation of a variety of programs such as institution-based leadership programs, leadership institutions, GYO, professional organization-based institutions, or a combination of all of these programs, in an attempt to bridge the gap (Friedel, 2010). The vice president for planning and institutional effectiveness at CC4 made remarks regarding the issue that suggest that community colleges in general and rural colleges in particular offer some type of professional development programs for individuals aspiring to assume senior-level positions within their institutions. The president's comments were as follows:

> We have a series of courses offered that lead to a leadership certificate. The courses are offered during the workday, and employees may be excused from their jobs to take advantage of such courses. They are offered [with a] tuition wavier, and the college pays for the books or other instructional materials. [These] opportunities and the opportunity to pursue this certificate during working hours are the main incentives. The fact that the completed certificate is viewed favourably in hiring decisions or decisions to offer committee or leadership opportunities, hopefully, is also an incentive.

In a study conducted in 2005 by the AACC (as cited in Dembicki, 2006), administrators at 48 community colleges had created GYO programs, enrolling 1,000 participants. According to Hull (2006), 86% of community colleges currently have some form of GYO leadership training. Cumberland County College in New Jersey, for example, began a personal and professional

development program addressing its institution's leadership and learning strategic goals (Jeandron, 2006). Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College has also created a leadership program to promote and examine institution cohesiveness among its many campuses.

Other GYO programs extend to regional or state community college systems, such as the Kentucky Community and Technical College System that offers a program that emphasizes the institution's culture, and California's community colleges, which offer a leadership skills seminar that provides personal and professional development to its employees (Jeandron, 2006). With this in mind, leadership programs are beginning to gain strength both at the national level and the state level, with professional associations now offering leadership development programs as well (Ebbers et al., 2010). An example is the Future Leaders Institute, organized and promoted by the AACC. The program is offered as seminars designed for midlevel community college administrators ready to move on to higher levels of leadership. Other national programs also intended for senior-level candidates include the Executive Leadership Institution, sponsored by the League for Innovation in the Community College, the American Association of Community College Trustees president preparation workshops ACCT, and the National Institute for Leadership Development that prepares women for community college leadership (Ebbers et al., 2010).

Furthermore, in 2001, the W. K. Kellogg Foundation awarded $1.9 million to the AACC to create an initiative to address the leadership shortage within community colleges. The project, known as the Leading Forward initiative, sought to develop a plan to identify the qualities and skills needed for future leadership, assess past and present programs, as well as create a roadmap for the future of community colleges (Jeandron, 2006). Another organization is the Institute for Community College Development, which offers leadership training and research support for

business professionals who want to transition into community college leadership (Jeandron, 2006).

A priori theme 2. This theme suggests the lack of institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges due to limited financial resources.

The problem of leadership shortage in community colleges has been escalating for more than a decade. In an effort to try and combat the crisis, many institutions have sprung into action by initiating several plans such as creating institution-based leadership development programs, as well as other initiatives that focus on community college leadership. What is missing from this plan is the recognition of the critical issues that rural community colleges and their leaders are facing, among which lack of financial resources are a priority (Eddy, 2009).

The president of CC3 made remarks regarding the issue of limited financial resources at rural community colleges. The president's comments were as follows:

> Yes, [they] are important. But the reason [we] do not have them is because of the resources issues. Not only resources to carry out the leadership development, but also the resources of the people, the time of the people who are participating. If we had more resources, we would have had spent more time on these [programs] and strategies.

A closer look at rural community colleges shows that there are still a number of challenges facing these institutions. Rural community colleges, for example, serve communities that may be geographically isolated and have less diversity in the types of businesses operating in their districts, even if this isolation provides an advantage for these institutions because they can be seen as the only resource (Leist, 2007). One of the most important challenges facing rural community colleges in America is the lack of federal funding, as seen in policies that drastically disadvantage the areas served by rural community colleges. Data from the Consolidated Federal Funds Report for 2001 (as cited in Fluharty, 2006) showed that the federal government returned $6,131 on a per capita basis to urban areas, while only returning $6,020 to rural areas. Direct

payments to individuals as a percentage of all federal funds per capita were 50.0% in urban areas and 63.9% in rural areas, another example of discrepancies in federal funding for rural communities (Reeder & Calhoun, 2002). In practical terms, this 13% difference in federal funding could very likely affect the capacity and infrastructure of the community college, hindering its ability to strengthen its economy.

New data from the consolidated Federal Funds Report for 2009 (U.S Census Bureau, 2010), show the total federal domestic spending in the government's last fiscal year was $3.2 trillion. An increase of 16% from the previous year, almost entirely because of the government's stimulus package set up to offset the effects of the recession. Despite such fluctuations, the impact on rural areas in America remains the same, and even though individuals may be at an advantage by federal funding policies in the short term, such differences in payments put them at a disadvantage in the long term, forcing them to compete with their urban counterparts and creating an uneven playing field without the benefit of the professional staff, technical assistance, and planning resources this kind of funding provides (Fluharty, 2006).

A priori theme 3. This theme suggests a low rate of participation by rural community colleges in GYO programs.

In regard to the rural community college environment, GYO and institution-based leadership development programs seem to be a trend that emphasizes a more holistic approach, focusing on personal growth through the acquisition of leadership skills. Such programs seem also more suitable for some rural community colleges that do not use a selection committee for acceptance to these programs. For example, at Parkland College, a rural community college located in Illinois, the president and the vice president select the participants (Jeandron, 2006). However, institution-based leadership development programs "continue to create a climate of

learning and leadership for their communities (Jeandron, 2006, p. 39), which is the driving force behind leadership in the 21st century, in community college in general and rural institutions in particular.

Emergent theme 1: Informal leadership development programs are more dominant in rural community colleges than formal leadership development programs. Interview findings suggest that despite an agreement present among rural community college senior-level administrators on the merits of institution-based leadership developments programs, a formal implementation process is not yet present. However, because one of the major problems facing community colleges today is finding and identifying new and qualified leaders ready to replace those retiring (Weisman & Vaughan, 2007), there is some consensus that informal strategies should be employed.

Research conducted on the value and need for such programs indicate that 90% of future community college leaders will come from within their institutions (McFarlin et al., 1999). Hence, it is vital that such leadership development programs be considered even if execution is done informally. This is not to suggest that all institution-based leadership development programs should be treated that way, but rather as temporary strategies that would allow community colleges to identify aspiring administrators' decisions to move up through a professional process. This concept seems to align with research that suggests that leadership development is both a formal and informal process that intends to expand institutional and individual efficacy (Wallin, 2006).

Emerging theme 2: Succession planning. The outlook on succession planning in the 21st century within community colleges is changing. Duree (2007) argued that 85% of future leaders aspiring to senior-level positions participated in either a formal or informal mentor-

protégé relationship. Interview findings also suggest that there are indications that succession planning at rural community colleges is taking a more informal direction in light of the absence of a formal plan. Accordingly, senior leaders are now more inclined to identify potential leaders through informal means and give them an opportunity to engage in leadership experiences. There is no doubt that the implementation and development of a succession plan in community colleges is a daunting process. Charan et al. (2001) argued that succession planning in general requires serious attention to performance, preparation, and replacement planning.

Emerging theme 3: Financing leadership development. It has often been said that rural community colleges differ significantly from their suburban and urban peers, especially when it comes to financial resources. Understanding the similarities and differences between rural community colleges of different sizes and their counterpart suburban and urban institutions is very important because not all two- year colleges operate on a fiscally even playing field (Hardy & Katsinas, 2006). Interview findings suggest that limited financial resources can indeed constitute barriers for developing institution-based leadership development programs. Furthermore, lack of financial resources in rural community colleges can also be a determining factor in the decision of an institution on whether or not to implement leadership programs or pursue other alternatives for cultivating new leadership.

Emerging theme 4: Conflicting perspectives. Interview findings from all six participants suggest that they all agreed that having a supportive board of trustees is an important factor for the success of community college leadership programs. However, as suggested by most of the participants, support might not be enough if board members are not willing to engage in dialogue or approve tangible measures. This appears to be sometimes related to the culture of the college, where it is evident that some boards of trustees might not share the same concerns as

those of the president or cabinet of the institution, especially when it comes to creating new leadership programs. This can be, in part, because the board of trustees do not recognize the value of having such programs, as well as for a number of other reasons, including financial resources of the institution.

Summary of Qualitative Findings

According to Friedel (2010), the significant exodus of senior-level administrators is likely to create new leadership opportunities for the next generation of community college leaders, especially in middle-level management. With many senior-level administrators now approaching retirement age, there is growing concern that the pipeline is not producing new leaders rapidly enough to fill all the resulting vacancies.

The organizational structure utilized in this study to collect qualitative data included the use of semistructured interviews and field notes. Semistructured interviews were based on both the research and interview questions conducted with six participants including three presidents and three vice presidents of academic affairs from six rural community colleges in Illinois. Qualitative data findings sought to examine institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges in Illinois. Six institutions were selected for this study representing two each from classifications of rural large, rural medium, and rural small community colleges throughout the state of Illinois. All six rural community colleges profiled in this study were referred to by pseudonyms to ensure confidentiality.

The six senior-level community college administrators selected for face-to-face interviews were identified and selected as a result of invitations sent to them via an online survey (see Appendix B) who had agreed to represent their institutions in a face-to-face interview. A diverse sample of rural community colleges varying in size were specifically chosen for a

number of reasons: (a) to examine the kinds of institutions-based leadership development programs offered, (b) whether the financial resources of an institution based on its size was a factor, (c) the impact of these programs in preparing future leaders and narrowing the shortage gap, and (d) whether internal leadership development posed a more sustainable alternative to the current external ones. Qualitative findings also provided a relation to a priori themes that were illustrated and supported by the literature, as well as introducing four emergent themes that transpired due to the findings.

Chapter Summary

Presented in this chapter are the findings from both the quantitative and qualitative data collected for this study. The purpose of this study was to examine institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges in Illinois and the impact of these programs in supporting and preparing future community college leaders. The study also explored the efficacy of these programs and whether their implementation aligned with the culture and goals of the institutions.

Quantitative data gathered for this study included an online survey divided into two parts: demographic data and leadership development programs. The first part sought to gather information regarding the participants' title, years in office, and total number of college employees. The second part sought to gather such information as (a) the types of leadership development programs offered by the college, (b) if the community college had a succession plan, (c) the criteria for selection for these programs, (d) whether any of the senior-level administrators currently holding a position in the institution was a product of these programs, (e) if the institution had participated in a GYO program, and (f) if the participants would agree to a

face-to-face interview. Out of the 48 online surveys sent to senior-level administrators, 17 responded. Of those 17, six rural community colleges were selected.

Furthermore, the survey provide information pertaining to the six research questions posed in this study including (a) leadership skills and competencies, (b) leadership development program strategies, (c) rural community college leadership demands, (d) leadership program participation criteria, (e) the role of the board of trustees, and (f) assessment and evaluation of leadership development programs

Findings from interviews conducted with senior-level administrators in six rural community colleges in Illinois established a relationship to three a priori themes: (a) that community colleges in general and rural colleges in particular offer some type of professional development programs for individuals aspiring to assume senior-level positions within their institutions, (b) the lack of institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges was due to limited financial resources, and (c) a pattern suggesting a low rate of participation by rural community colleges in GYO programs.

In addition to a priori themes, findings from interviews suggest four emerging themes: (a) despite an agreement present among rural community college senior-level administrators on the merits of institution-based leadership developments programs, a formal implementation process is not yet present; (b) there is evidence to suggest that succession planning at rural community colleges is taking a more informal direction in light of the absence of a formal plan; (c) there are conflicting perspectives among community college boards of trustees and senior-level administrators in rural community colleges regarding the implementation of institution-based leadership development programs; and (d) limited financial resources of rural community

colleges can constitute barriers for developing institution-based leadership development programs.

Qualitative data gathered for this study included the use of semistructured interviews and field notes. Semistructured interviews were based on both the research and interview questions conducted with six participants including three presidents and three vice presidents of academic affairs from six rural community colleges in Illinois. Qualitative data findings sought to examine institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges in Illinois. Six institutions were selected for this study representing two each from classifications of rural large, rural medium, and rural small community colleges throughout the state of Illinois. All six rural community colleges profiled in this study were referred to by pseudonyms to ensure confidentiality.

The six senior-level community college administrators selected for face-to-face interviews were identified and selected as a result of invitations sent to them via an online survey (see appendix b) who had agreed to represent their institutions in a face-to-face interview. A diverse sample of rural community colleges varying in size were specifically chosen for a number of reasons: (a) to examine the kinds of institutions-based leadership development programs offered, (b) whether the financial resources of an institution based on its size was a factor, (c) the impact of these programs in preparing future leaders and narrowing the shortage gap, and (d) whether internal leadership development posed a more sustainable alternative to the current external ones.

CHAPTER 5

DISSCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter discusses the findings from the mixed-methods study of institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges in Illinois, and the impact of these programs in supporting and preparing future community college leaders. The study also explored the efficacy of these programs and whether their implementations aligned with the institutions' culture and goals. Findings from the research revealed four themes: (1) despite a consensus among rural community college leaders regarding the merits of institution-based leadership development programs, few formal programs exits, (2) there is no formal direction present regarding succession planning in rural community colleges, (3) limited financial resources constitute barriers for developing institution-based leadership programs in rural community colleges, and (4) conflicting perspectives between presidents and boards of trustees exist in rural community colleges.

At a time when many veteran leaders are retiring and the challenges facing potential administrators are escalating, many in the field of higher education are speculating about where and how future leaders will be identified. According to Friedel (2010), the exodus of senior-level administrators is likely to create new leadership opportunities for the next generation of community college leaders, especially in middle-level management. With many senior-level administrators now approaching retirement age, there is growing concern that the pipeline is not producing new leaders rapidly enough to fill the resulting vacancies. Further complicating this issue in community colleges is that retirement among senior-level administrators is not only among college presidents, but also among vice presidents. In 2001, projections indicated that

33% of all senior-level administrators including vice presidents would be retiring by 2006 (Shults, 2001).

The role of community college leaders has evolved throughout the history of higher education (Cohen, 1998) and, as institutions continue to meet the changing needs of the communities they serve, so must the leaders. A clear vision, pragmatic expectations, fiscal responsibility and competent decision making, coupled with the institution's mission and goals, must be planned (Boggs, 2004a; 2004b; Boyer 1990). Hence, future leaders must find ways to remain successful and competitive in the marketplace financially, and must remain attentive and responsive to their taxpayers (Wallin, 2006). As the communities they serve become more diverse, community colleges and their leaders must carry on with their mission as gateways to educational opportunities and champions of social change.

Discussion

Escalating challenges due to the anticipated retirement of current leaders community college leadership development programs are fast becoming the sign of the changing environment of higher education. Existing research proposes that there are substantial approaches regarding the skills and qualities required for generating future leadership (Amey, VanDerLinden, & Brown, 2002; Campbell, Syed & Morris, 2010; Jeandron, 2006). Therefore, it is imperative that a close examination of institution-based leadership development programs be studied and identified in an attempt to establish their effectiveness in cultivating the future leaders of community colleges.

The community college leader of today is in a rare position to facilitate collaboration and partnerships through non-traditional means such as providing customized educational programming through distance education, or through multi-sites options specifically geared to

meet the needs of their local and regional stakeholders, in addition to forging national alliance with non-profit organizations (Wallin, 2004). Moreover, as Greenleaf (1977, 2003) suggests, future community college leaders must also be channels for institutional change while remaining natural partners as "servant leaders" making decisions and taking the political risks necessary to offer fair and reasonable opportunities for those they serve within and external to the institution.

Whether the leadership style is transactional, transformational, or servant, the leader must be a motivator and provider, and must engage and inspire those he or she leads and serves creating an institutional culture that promotes teamwork and collaboration needed to face the challenges and opportunities of the future community college (Gould & Caldwell, 1998; Stubbs, 1997). Boggs (2003) questioned whether the next generation of community college leaders will be prepared and skilled enough to take on the complex responsibilities of their institutions. Furthermore, the challenges of the 21st century might require future leaders to restructure and redirect their energies that will result in leadership that can help facilitate dialogue, erase trepidations, and forecast opportunities.

Alternative Leadership Models in Community Colleges

Research and literature pertaining to community college leadership reflects a focus on community college presidents' life experiences, styles, and careers only, with less empirical evidence examining the career paths of other college administrators (Amey, 2006; Beach, 2006; Weisman & Vaughan, 2007). Moreover, there seems to be no explanation of what organizational strategies might be appropriate for developing and supporting alternative trajectories (Vaughan, 1990). However, literature suggests that alternative leadership styles are replacing the traditional ones, as well the role of community college leaders which evolved throughout the history of higher education (Cohen, 1998) and continues as institutions today try to meet the changing

needs of the communities they serve (Amey, 2006; Bagnato, 2004; Campbell, 2007; Duree, 2007).

The changing stance in leadership ideology, coupled with the scarcity of supply of leaders in community colleges, has led to the demand for alternatives. In that regard, as Campbell, Syed, and Morris (2010) explained, a number of initiatives (such as the 21st-Century Educational Leadership Profiles project) have been created. The ELPP aimed at increasing the understanding of leadership qualities and enhance the work style of successful college presidents, especially in an environment that requires skills in transformational management. Moreover, the project presented a number of resources, directed towards professional development of mid-level administrators in the community college pipeline (Campbell et al., 2010).

There is no doubt that the process of addressing and finding leaders with definite traits and skills that constitute the right fit for an institution is a difficult process. In recognition and support of development of community college leadership, the AACC created the Leading Forward initiative to identify competencies for effective community college leaders. These competencies included an organizational strategy emphasizing leaders' ability to improve the quality of their institutions, resource management, as well as the ability to ethically sustain physical and financial assets to fulfil the mission, vision, and goals of the institution. Furthermore, the competencies also highlighted the leaders' communication ability to use clear listening, speaking, and dialogue to sustain the community college's mission (Ebbers et al., 2010).

In addition to collaboration, the American Association of Community Colleges cited needs for the ability to develop and maintain responsibility towards internal and external

relationships that nurture diversity and community college advocacy. The AACC also emphasized the leaders' capability to understand, commit to, and advocate the mission of the institution to all constituents, as well as being professional. Another important skill suggested, is the ability of community college leaders to work ethically by setting high standards for themselves, and demonstrating accountability to and for the college and communities they serve. The latter being demonstrated by providing novel and atypical ways of understanding the concept (Amey, 2006).

Interview findings support the implications that without proper leadership skills and competencies, future community colleges leaders will end up facing a number of challenges. Hence, it is critical that the leaders of tomorrow acquire and develop skills and leadership competencies that will help leaders assume their responsibilities. Among those skills and competencies needed, according to president of CC1, were organizational skills. The president also stressed the value of having good people skills and great communication, as well as knowledge of fundraising.

The vice president of academic affairs at CC2 also emphasized the need for good communication skills and the importance of a positive attitude. She suggested that a positive attitude meant the willingness to be flexible and ready to listen to others. The president of CC3 also agreed with her colleagues regarding the skills and competencies needed for future community college leaders. However, she added that in her experience she found the ability to work collaboratively was also critical not only within the institutions, but externally too, in addition to problem solving and conflict resolution. Conflict resolution she suggested, was essential, especially in times when many community colleges and rural instutions are facing budget cuts and less state and federal funding.

The president of CC5 and vice president of academic affairs at CC6 both concurred with their colleagues and suggested that another skill all leaders should posses is the willingness to adapt to the changing environments around them. The president of CC5 remarked that adapting to changing times requires having a vision and an understanding of the importance of innovation in higher education. The vice president of CC6 also talked about change and the importance of being flexible, as well as the willingness to serve on an individual level and the ability to listen to others. Findings are supported by literature (Greenleaf 1977, 2003), suggesting future community college leaders must be channels for institutional change while remaining a natural partner as a servant leader making decisions and taking the political risks necessary to offer fair and reasonable opportunities for those they serve within and outside the institution.

Currently, there are a number of leadership approaches regarding the skills and qualities required for generating future leadership (Amey, VanDerLinden, & Brown, 2002). It is therefore imperative that close examination of institution-based leadership development programs be considered as one measure of securing future leaders preparedness in community colleges. Given the predicated leadership turnover, it is also important to consider how rural community colleges will cultivate, sustain, and prepare new leaders within their institutions that will continue to adhere to the college's mission and vision (Shultz, 2001).

For more than half a century, rural community colleges have influenced the activities, status, and identity of the communities they serve by offering programs in cultural enrichment, economic development, credit programs, and continuing education. The leadership predicament can also be seen as an opportunity to explore the changing needs of these institutions and its leadership. To accomplish this and address these changes, it is necessary to examine leadership

programs in rural institutions, in order to fill the growing retirement void, as well as prepare future leaders (Jeandron, 2006, Pilard & Wolf, 2003, Wallin, 2006).

Institution-Based Leadership Development Programs in Rural Community Colleges

A closer look at rural community colleges reveals that there are still a number of challenges facing these institutions. Rural community colleges, for example, serve communities that may be geographically isolated, and have less diversity in the type of businesses operating in their districts, although isolation may provide an advantage for these institutions as they can be seen as the only resources within a community (Leist, 2007). Rural community colleges tend to focus more on maintaining a sense of community and economic development by offering services geared towards small business, rather than focusing primarily on academics and university transfer (Eddy, & Murray, 2007).

Several rural community college leaders agreed with the significance of having specific leadership development programs as a way of providing administrators aspiring to leadership positions with options. However, this outlook is problematic due to a number of factors, among which is the size and culture of the institution. Hence, they argue that informal programs might be a more valuable alternative to providing pathways for administrators aspiring to senior-level positions.

Survey respondents were asked whether their institutions provided any leadership development program strategies, with 64.7% of the respondents answering “Yes.” However, survey participants elaborated by contending that despite having leadership development program strategies, there were no formal institution-based leadership development programs in place at their institutions. One of the academic vice presidents seemed to agree with the

significance of having specific leadership development strategies as a way of providing administrators aspiring to leadership positions at rural community colleges with guidelines.

This same VPAA pointed out that his institution did have a formal program and went on to say that what they had at her institution was unique because of the college's culture where people were not moving in and out a lot. She added that the philosophy centered on staying rather than moving "they come here, they stay" illustrating how someone who had just retired after serving at the college for 40 years. She also suggested that leadership development at her college evolved from the idea that people were part of a family who were here to stay. This mentality, she added, inspired individuals to grow and become leaders, knowing that their institution would embrace them.

Other findings suggest that the majority of participants interviewed agreed that their institutions identified internal candidates for senior-level positions and provided them with opportunities to acquire leadership skills to help advance them through the process. Furthermore, when survey respondents were asked if their community colleges provided opportunities for professional advancement for senior-level positions, the majority said they did.

Among respondents interviewed and surveyed, it was concluded that rural community colleges did provide opportunities for leadership development. However, the process was more informal than formal, with most rural community colleges offering some form of leadership development opportunities, such as leadership retreats, leadership development lecture series, leadership conferences and academies, and business training. But in reality, no formal institution-based leadership development program for aspiring individuals existed, nor were there any formal succession planning procedures in place at these institutions. Interview findings also suggested that when it came to hiring for senior-level positions, very few participants

indicated that their institution would seek external candidates from outside the college, or out-of-state . Only one college president mentioned that his college sought external candidates, and even so, the only reason was to "test the waters."

Research (Dureen, 2007, Eddy, 2007, Fluharty & Scaggs, 2007, Miller & Kissinger, 2007) indicates that individuals aspiring to senior-level positions and who are involved in their rural institutions might have a better chance at attaining these goals because upward career mobility in rural community colleges seems to be prevalent. However, findings also support the implications for leadership programs needed to cultivate future leaders as suggested by current literature. Lack of implementation of such programs might constitute a barrier for rural community colleges because of the challenges they face due to their location and their culture. Therefore, it is important that these colleges set new pathways for aspiring administrators to move up within their institutions. Rural community colleges might also consider the implementation of formal leadership programs as a way of attracting outside leaders to their institutions that might otherwise focus their attention on their urban or suburban counterparts.

Succession Planning: A Challenge in Rural Community Colleges

The outlook on succession planning within community colleges in the 21st century is changing (Duree, 2007), but the issue of succession planning still remains the measure by which a leadership position within an institution can be guaranteed. In other words, succession planning can illustrate when and how future leaders within the same college will evolve. Charan, Drotter, and Noel (2001) argue that succession planning in general requires serious attention to performance, preparation, and replacement planning.

Participants' responses during interviews revealed that succession planning in rural community colleges was more of an informal process than a formal one. These findings are

consistent with current literature, which suggests that 85% of future leaders aspiring to senior-level positions had participated in either a formal or informal mentor-protégé relationship (Duree, 2007). Furthermore, interview findings also suggest that there are indications that succession planning in rural community colleges is taking a more informal direction in light of the absences of a formal plan. Research findings from interviews and surveys also suggest that even though succession planning was regarded by community college leaders as a great tool for cultivating new leadership, none of those interviewed had any formal succession planning in their institution.

The findings supported the literature in that currently there is no serious consensus among leaders in higher education regarding the necessity of adopting formal succession plans (Charten, Drotter, & Noel, 2001; Duree, 2007; Mackey, 2008; Pilard & Wolf, 2003). These findings are significant, as rural community colleges face major challenges when addressing the issue of their retiring leaders and their replacements. Presently, most rural institutions have yet to develop a plan that meets the demand of filling these upcoming vacancies.

All six participants commented on the unique nature of succession planning in their institutions. According to the president of CC1, succession planning does not exist at his institution. Instead, in most cases, all senior-level leadership positions are filled through an open search. As a concept, he agreed that it could work if an internal candidate were to be identified and showed interest. The president also added that his leadership philosophy was to always hire the best candidate and not just the person who is available.

The president elaborated by saying that a situation did arise when an internal candidate for the position of vice president was not hired because he was not seen as the best candidate for the position. However, the president was quick to emphasize that he was not suggesting that this

should be the way colleges operate, but rather that they should consider a broad perspective of ideas among which was seeking internal candidates.

Another vice president of academic affairs was quick to point out the importance of such a plan. However, only if it aligned with the needs and goals of the institution. She added that, currently there was no formal succession planning in place at her institution, but rather an inclination to respond to such issues as they arise. The vice president suggested that there was a tendency at her institution to observe those who showed interest in assuming senior –level positions and to help them through the process. She added that, in fact, the last several presidents had come out of the upper cabinet, despite not having such a plan and out of the last four presidents, only one was brought in from outside the institution and he, she said, did not last very long because he was not considered a good fit. She suggested that not fully understanding the culture of the institution and its dynamics, as well as not having had any prior relationships with the college community, were major barriers to success.

A president of one of the participating institutions shared the same views as his colleagues by saying that at his institution, the process of succession planning was informal and more on a case by case basis. On many occasions, he would be asked by individuals aspiring for senior-level positions what the process involved. He would answer them by suggesting they voice their interest in the position so that he and others would begin mentoring them through the process. He also suggested that, due to the culture and location of these areas, rural community colleges were less likely to draw the attention of applicants for senior-level positions from outside the community, while those heavily invested in their communities and the college would be which made it easier to select candidates for senior-level positions. He added that having

formal succession planning procedures nevertheless would still be considered a benefit for his institution.

Financial Challenges Facing Rural Community Colleges

It has often been noted that rural community colleges differ significantly from their suburban and urban counterparts, especially when it comes to financial resources (Fluharty, 2006). Understanding the similarities and differences between rural community colleges of different sizes and their counter suburban and urban institutions is very important because not all two- year colleges operate on a fiscally even playing field (Hardy & Katsinas, 2007).

One of the most important challenges facing rural community colleges in America is the lack of federal funding, as seen in policies that drastically disadvantage the areas served by rural community colleges (Fluharty & Scaggs, 2007). Data from the Consolidated Federal Funds Report for 2001 (as cited in Fluharty, 2006) showed that the federal government returned $6,131 on a per capita basis to urban areas, while only returning $6,020 to rural areas. Direct payments to individuals as a percentage of all federal funds per capita were 50.0% in urban areas and 63.9% in rural areas, another example of discrepancies in federal funding for rural communities (Reeder & Calhoun, 2002). In practical terms, this 13% difference in federal funding could very likely affect the capacity and infrastructure of the community college, hindering its ability to strengthen its economy.

Literature supported by interview findings from all six participants suggest that limited financial resources can indeed constitute barriers for developing institution-based leadership development programs. Furthermore, lack of financial resources in rural community colleges can also be a determining factor in the decision of an institution on whether or not to implement leadership programs or pursue other alternatives for cultivating new leadership. One of the

presidents remarked that formal leadership development programs, as well as a specific process and strategy for succession planning, is something his institution would like to have, but, because of limited financial resources, that is not currently a possibility. He also pointed out that such programs are considered stepping stones for many institutions, especially those with secure financial resources. One of the vice presidents of academic affairs also agreed that a main barrier to implementation of such programs is monetary constraints.

Conflicting Views among Institutional Leaders and Boards of Trustees

Conflicting perspectives on implementation and efficacy of leadership development programs in community colleges among administration and boards of trustees create challenges. It is therefore important that college presidents and boards of trustees reach a compromise that unifies their voices and moves them forward towards a practical vision. Such steps require more transparency and involve opening a path for dialogue regarding long and short term leadership development strategies that on one hand address the crisis of leadership shortages, and on the other hand aligns these strategies with the institution's culture. It is important that institution-based leadership development programs have a top-down support system from not only senior-level leadership, but also from the board of trustees. This in turn will create a more effective and equipped plan that could capitalize many college resources and ensure that such programs become a priority among others at the institution.

The survey findings are also supported by the interview findings from six rural community colleges leaders in Illinois. All six participants commented on the conflicting perspectives among senior-level administers and the boards of trustees regarding the issue of institution-based leadership developmement programs, and their value for their institution.

One of the presidents emphasized that even though the board of trustees see themselves as responsible for policy making and governance at his institution, they do not always see eye to eye on matters that can help the college grow. He added that sometimes their unwillingness to let the college president do his job and make the decisions can constitute a barrier for improvement. This, he said, extends to the issue of leadership development programs and whether they are willing to negotiate if there is no reasonable justification offered, regardless of the benefits.

Another president held similar views. She commented by saying that even though the concept of having a supportive board of trustees at any community college is very important, it is sometimes evident that they do not share the same views with senior-level administrators. She pointed out that at her institution, the board is always invited and encouraged to get involved. She added that the issue of creating any programs always comes down to cost, and stretching it out to include a formal leadership development program might mean more cost to the board. However, if at least two trustees can agree on the merits of a leadership development program, they might be interested and help convince the other board members. But again she cautioned that in the end it might still come down to time commitment and limited resources as a justification by the board for not agreeing on the need for institution-based leadership development programs.

Accordingly, a vice president of planning and institutional effectiveness commented by saying that, unfortunately the conflicting perspectives between the administration and the board of trustees stems from the college's culture. "It is clear", she said, that the board might not share the same concerns as that of the president or the cabinet, especially when it comes to creating new leadership development programs at her institution. She added that sometimes the board of trustees do not recognize the value of having such programs for two reasons: one related to

financial issues, while the other being more systemic. These opposing perspectives suggest that further consideration is needed for a pragmatic outlook for cultivating future leaders, given the shortage of qualified individuals available to fill senior-level positions, especially in rural community colleges.

Conclusions and Implications

The purpose of this study was to examine institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges in Illinois and the impact of these programs in supporting and preparing future community colleges leaders. The study also explored the efficacy of these programs and whether their implementation aligned with the culture and goals of the institutions.

Conclusions and implications of the research were framed by the following research questions developed to examine institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges included the following:

1. How can institution-based leadership development programs provide the skills and leadership competencies needed for future leadership?
2. What specific leadership development strategies are employed in institution-based leadership programs in rural community colleges in Illinois?
3. In what ways have institution-based leadership development programs addressed the issue of succession planning in rural community colleges in Illinois?
4. What are the criteria for participating in institution-based leadership development programs?
5. What role does the board of trustees play in institution-based leadership development programs?

6. How are institution-based leadership development programs assessed and/or evaluated (specifically, to what extent do institution-based leadership development programs align with institutional culture and goals)?

Conclusions Related to Research Question 1

The first research question asked how institution-based leadership development programs can help provide the skills and competencies needed for future leadership. The research concluded the following:

1. While current rural community college leaders do possess a number of leadership skills and competencies, such as communication, fund raising, and organization, the process of cultivating new leaders to meet the challenges of the 21st century requires a closer look at leadership development programs offered by these institutions and the set of new skills, leadership development, and training they can provide future leaders.
2. It is important for rural community colleges to hire leaders that possess traits and skills necessary to lead, it is imperative that these institutions take a closer look at the type of skills needed to develop future leaders. This direction begins first by developing a new and realistic approach towards leadership development programs in their institutions that can help produce a breed of leadership that is skilled, qualified and prepared to lead the college into the new millennium, while adhering to its culture and values.
3. The research also concludes that while rural Illinois community college leaders agree that institution-based leadership development programs are an important tool for providing the skills and competencies needed for future leadership, there is no

indication among the community college senior-level administrators surveyed and interviewed that such programs for the purpose of developing future leaders do exist at their institutions. However, there is evidence to show that leadership development opportunities are available within these institutions.

Implications Related to Research Question 1

The first research question asked how institution-based leadership development programs can help provide the skills and competencies needed for future leadership. This research indicated the following:

1. That community college leadership is changing rapidly due to a large number of senior-level administrators retiring, and suggesting that instutions-based leadership development programs might be a way to prepare new leaders that will fill future vacancies.
2. Survey results support the need for leadership development. According to the survey completed for this research study 64.7%; (n=11) of respondents indicated their institution provided professional development programs or activities for individuals aspiring to assume leadership roles as presidents or vice presidents (see Figure 3), while 70.5%;(n=12) identified nine types of leadership development programs and/or activities offered by their institution. These findings are consistent with Friedel's (2010) research, which states that the exodus of senior-level administrators is likely to create new leadership opportunities for the next generation of community college leaders. Findings are also consistent with Hull and Keim's (2007) research, which indicates that 70% of today's leaders believe that there, is a need to expand in-house development programs.

3. The anticipated retirement and shortages of leaders within community colleges may be seen as an opportunity to address the issue of leadership development as a means of attracting a diverse pool of applicants, especially to rural community colleges. The research suggests that many rural community colleges do not aggressively employ an internal process that prepares future leaders.
4. Rural community colleges make up 60% of all two-year institutions and educate one-third of all community college students (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2010). Hence, it is imperative that these institutions specifically articulate how and why institution-based leadership development programs are beneficial for developing future leaders. If institutions can demonstrate why developing future leaders are critical, then the developing process will likely attract the attention from stake holders.

Conclusions Related to Research Question 2

The second research question sought to identify specific leadership development strategies employed in institution-based leadership development programs in rural colleges in Illinois. As a result the research concluded the following:

1. It appears that currently there is no formal leadership development strategies employed mostly due to the institutions' limited financial resources. However, there is evidence to suggest that there are a number of informal strategies that are utilized to identify individuals who are interested in leadership positions. Hence, it is important that these institutions find ways to purposely plan for ways to make this a reality considering the challenges they face which are noticeably different from their urban and suburban counterparts (Jeandron, 2006; Morelli, 2002).

Implications Related to Research Question 2

In regard to the specific leadership development strategies employed in instutions-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges in Illinois, this research indicated the following:

1. While there is conflicting literature regarding the merits, implementation and number of institution-based leadership development strategies currently employed in community colleges, the data concludes that more informal strategies continue to exist, including succession planning. According to Hull (2006), 86% of community colleges currently have some form of grow-your –own leadership training. Cumberland County College in New Jersey, for example, began a personal and professional development program, addressing its institution's leadership and learning strategic goals (Jeandron, 2006). Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College has also created a leadership program to promote and examine institution cohesiveness among its many campuses.

Other grow your own (GYO) programs extend to regional or state community college systems, such as the Kentucky Community and Technical College System that offers a program that emphasizes the institution's culture, and California's community colleges which offer a leadership skills seminar that provides personal and professional development to its employees (Jeandron, 2006). With this in mind, leadership programs are beginning to gain strength both at the national level and the state level, with professional associations now offering leadership development programs as well (Ebbers, Conover, & Samuels, 2010).

An example of such programs is the Future Leaders Institute (FLI), organized and promoted by the AACC. The program is offered as seminars designed for midlevel community

college administrators ready to move on to higher levels of leadership. Other national programs also intended for senior-level candidates include the Executive Leadership Institution ELI, sponsored by the League for Innovation in the Community College, the American Association of Community College Trustees president preparation workshops (ACCT), and the National Institute for Leadership Development that prepares women for community college leadership (Ebbers et al. 2010).

2. As a result, higher education must include a specific plan that addresses the issue of instution-based leadership development programs in all community colleges in general, with an emphasis on rural institutions in particular. Having this plan would accomplish three important things. First, it would make it clear that home- grown programs that align with the institution's culture and values are more effective in cultivating new leadership. Second, such programs might be cost effective in the long run and would not require candidates to travel around to other leadership programs. Third, it ensures that individuals seeking senior-level positions would more likely remain at their instutions given the opportunities and training available for them, especially in rural community colleges where turnover is higher due to the lack of such programs.

Conclusions Related to Research Question 3

The third research question sought to identify how institution-based leadership development programs have addressed the issue of succession planning in rural community colleges in Illinois. Succession planning in higher education is usually seen as a method that outlines how leaders will emerge, be trained, and eventually acquire leadership positions. The research concluded the following:

1. Succession planning in rural community colleges is taking a more informal direction in light of the absence of a formal plan. The research also suggests that Illinois rural community college presidents are more inclined to identify potential leaders through informal means and give them an opportunity to engage in leadership experiences. The results of a study conducted by Mackey (2008) suggested that most community college senior-administrators were well aware of forthcoming shortages of leadership. More than half of the participants surveyed for the study reported that their institutions were not prepared to handle the problem, while 95% emphasized that the challenge of finding new leadership was a daunting one. Other factors contributing to the shortage were highlighted in a study by Carlson (2007), which indicated that even though many community college administrators acknowledged the need for succession planning, in reality many institutions did not have any such plans.

Implications Related to Research Question 3

The third research question sought to identify how institution-based leadership development programs have addressed the issue of succession planning in rural community colleges in Illinois. The research indicated the following:

1. Question 6 (see appendix B) of the research survey asked participants to determine whether participating instutions had a developed succession plan for identifying and preparing employees for senior-level positions. Among those surveyed, 29.4 % (n=5) said they "Yes", while 58 % (n=10) said "No."
2. As a result, higher education might consider taking a serious look at training goals set by community colleges within their strategic plan that aligns with professional development opportunities, rendering precise leadership outcomes. This could result in creation of succession planning that is formal in nature and involves forecasting future needs.
3. To accomplish this, rural community colleges will need to make a commitment to the development of best practices to ensure that they reflect the leadership vision of the institution. This would require college leaders to encourage aspiring employees to get involved in the process, as a way of determining their level of interest, expertise and goals.

Conclusions Related to Research Question 4

The fourth research question sought to identify the criteria for participation in institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges in Illinois. This research concluded the following:

1. In order for rural community colleges to identify criteria for participation, formal institution-based leadership development programs have to be implemented first. Nonetheless, the research indicates that participation in leadership development opportunities is highly encouraged by senior-level administrators.

All participants agreed that individuals seeking senior-level positions at their institutions were welcome to pursue and apply for them. They added that all individuals, whether adjunct, full-time faculty, middle-level administrators or staff, were encouraged to apply to leadership academies offered throughout the state, attend conferences, or pursue any kind of leadership certificate/ degree offered by other higher education instutions. This was particularly apparent when one community college president expressed the general consensus, "I can tell you that I never aspired to be a president until I attended one of those leadership institutes, and it was on put by the AACC."

2. This research concluded that even though few formal institution-based leadership development programs exist in community colleges, rural community colleges could benefit from the development and implementation these programs. There is evidence to indicate that there is a desire to move forward in the direction of cultivating future leadership in rural community colleges by providing different leadership development opportunities. In the absence of criteria that handpicks individuals interested in leadership positions, but encourages anyone to pursue this path, community college leaders might benefit tremendously if they are willing to provide in-house leadership development opportunities. While initiatives can sometimes stir up controversy, reactions are often due to a lack of understanding or an unwillingness to change the status quo. Hence, community college leaders must present a unified vision that explicitly outlines their objectives and goals.

Implications Related to Research Question 4

The fourth research question sought to identify the criteria for participation in institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges in Illinois. This research indicated the following:

1. There are no specific criteria for participation in leadership development opportunities in rural community colleges in Illinois. Since no formal institution-based leadership programs exist at these institutions, a criteria for them is not defined. Instead, an environment that encourages and welcomes individuals to seek leadership positions prevails within these institutions.
2. Institution-based leadership development programs in Illinois rural community colleges require a commitment to the process and in depth look at the merits of such programs. They also require direct communication between senior-level administrators and individuals aspiring for leadership positions, in an attempt to facilitate a mindset that addresses the issue of sustaining future leaders, while working towards the betterment of the community college system as a whole.
3. A clear definition of the requirements needed for participation in such programs must be put in place before the planning process takes place. Institution-based leadership development programs should not be designed for individuals seeking leadership training as a means for professional development, but for a pool of ambitious and competent administrators capable of accepting new opportunities and challenges. Hence, the criteria for participation in institution-based leadership development programs would be specific in nature, meant to train and prepare future leaders and not just fill the void left by retiring administrators.

Conclusions Related to Research Question 5

The fifth research question sought to identify the role board of trustees play in institution-based leadership development programs. Boards of trustees at community colleges play an important role not only in the hiring of senior-level administrators, but also in the decision-making process, which includes determine the type of leadership programs implemented. This research concluded the following:

1. Despite a consensus on the value of having a supportive board of trustees as an important factor for the success of community college leadership programs, support in itself might not be enough if board members are not willing to engage in dialogue or approve tangible measures. As one senior-level participant expressed, "they hire a president to do the job, but some are still unwilling to let him do his job."
2. It was apparent among all participants that even though they agreed that the board of trustees saw itself as responsible for policy making and governance, it did do not always see eye- to- eye on matters that would help the institution grow. The research also suggests that when discussions of major issues were presented, there were noticeable conflicts between board members and the administration. As another participant put it, "it was sometimes evident they did not share the same views with senior-level administrators."
3. If an institution is to move forward with a plan to develop institution-based leadership development programs, a unified vision and stance needs to be present among senior-level administrators and the board of trustees. This can be accomplished if senior leaders are willing to accept boards of trustees as equal partners in this process and share a unified leadership vision for the institution. This in turn will ensure

stakeholders that implementation of new leadership development programs is not about politics, but cultivating well-prepared leaders that will push the institution forward

Implications Related to Research Question 5

The fifth research question sought to identify the role boards of trustees play in institution-based leadership development programs. This research indicated the following:

1. The implementation of institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges in Illinois requires cooperation between senior-level administrators and boards of trustees. Community college boards of trustees are vested with the authority to make policy and major decisions. To do this effectively, a mutual understanding between them and senior leaders must be present.
2. Community college leaders and boards of trustees need to have a transparent relationship that outlines the institution's philosophy towards leadership development and leadership programs. The present system in higher education depends on the competency of college boards of trustees to manage policy-making processes, which tend to be complex and multidimensional in nature. Hence, board members must understand the impact of their decisions and the consequences they will have on the future of the college. As Jeandron (2006) clearly states, board involvement and cooperation is vital for the success and sustainability of any institution-based leadership development program.
3. It is important that community college senior leaders and boards of trustees work in unison towards the improvement of the community college system. This can be accomplished by carefully assessing and evaluating the merits of institution-based

leadership development programs as means of building a sustainable pool of qualified and well trained leaders that will steer the institution into the future. This kind of support will provide the foundation to fully integrate institution-based leadership development programs into the fabric of the institution, as well as allocate the necessary resources and aligning them with the strategic planning process.

Conclusions Related to Research Question 6

The final research question asked how institution-based leadership development programs are assessed and evaluated, and whether these programs align with the institution's culture and goals. In the absence of formal instutions-based leadership development programs, there is no specific criteria by which these programs can be assessed or evaluated. Hence, institution-based leadership development programs are one measure of safe guarding future leadership for community colleges. They provide a road map that demonstrates how leaders will develop, train, and ultimately move into leadership positions. This research concluded the following:

1. Despite not having institution-based leadership development programs at many rural community colleges in Illinois, participants in this study agreed that assessment and evaluation of any program remains a priority that should be based on feedback from individuals in these programs, in order to determine whether their experiences and training resulted in them achieving their goal. Yet, in the absence of formal instution-based leadership development programs, the consensus is that an informal assessment and evaluation process will exit. As one participant summarized: "because CC2 [has] an informal [leadership] program, probably our assessment [is] informal as well."

2. In regards to whether institution-based leadership development programs align with the institution's culture and goals, this research concluded that in the absence of formal leadership programs, it was difficult to measure this outcome. However, evidence suggests that informal leadership development programs, as well as leadership development opportunities, were tailored to align with the institution's culture and goals.

Implications Related to Research Question 6

The final research question asked how institution-based leadership development programs are assessed and evaluated, and whether these programs aligned with the institution's culture and goals. This research indicated the following:

1. The process of assessment and evaluation of institution-based leadership development programs rural community colleges in Illinois requires the development and implementation of such programs in the first place. Currently, what exists is an informal set of criteria for assessment and evaluation, which follows the process of informal instutions-based leadership development programs.
2. Implementation of institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges requires commitment to the process. It also requires an engagement in transparent dialogue between senior leaders and the board of trustees for improving their college and sustaining future leaders.

Recommendations

In light of the anticipated retirement of community college leaders, it is imperative that postsecondary institutions in general and rural community colleges in particular find sustainable ways to compensate for the leadership shortages. Institution-based leadership development

programs are one way of solving the problem, providing an effective tool for preparing and training individuals for future challenges and ensuring the sustainability of community college leadership.

Recommendations for Improvement of Practice

The research findings, both qualitative and quantitative, and the literature review support three recommendations for institution-based leadership development programs as a means for cultivating future leaders in rural community colleges.

1. As a result of the research, it is recommended that rural community colleges consider connecting institution-based leadership development programs to strategic planning. Rural community colleges might also consider introducing a conceptual framework that outlines the benefits of institution-based leadership development programs and articulates their importance for cultivating new leadership within the institution.
2. As a result of this research, it is recommended that community college leaders present a unified vision that explicitly outlines their objectives and goals.

   This can be accomplished through a number of informal meetings throughout the institution, where individuals are given the opportunity to provide input regarding institution-based leadership development programs. It also allows community college leaders to introduce a roadmap to leadership and explain the institutional needs from different perspectives. This can result in eliminating any misunderstandings, while presenting a clear idea of how and why this initiative is connected to the institutions strategic planning, mission, and goals.
3. As a result of this research, it is recommended that community college senior leaders and boards of trustees work in unison towards the improvement of the community

college system. This can be accomplished by carefully assessing and evaluating the merits of institution-based leadership development programs as a means of building a sustainable pool of qualified and well-trained leaders that will steer the institution into the future.

Recommendations for Implementation: The Sherbini Paradigm

Four recommendations for improving implementation practice of institution-based leadership development programs in community colleges emerged. The Sherbini Paradigm is the culmination of the research findings, and presents a roadmap that serves as a guide for the rational, development, and successful implementation of institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges. In addition, the paradigm outlines a tangible process for developing in-house leadership development programs that ensures an approach that satisfies all parties involved. The Sherbini Paradigm includes four components: Cultivate, Appropriate, Incorporate, Realign (CAIR) (see Figure 7).

Component 1: Cultivate

Cultivating a new approach to leadership development in rural community colleges is a task that will require a shift in thinking and abandonment of the status quo mentality that exists in many postsecondary institutions. According to Cloud (2010), there is a growing shift in the perception of leadership behaviour. Transactional and transformational leadership, the more traditional models, are no longer adequate in meeting the pressing challenges that face community colleges. Current and future leaders must understand the new culture of change that pervades these two-year institutions and embrace the opportunities intrinsic in that culture. The contemporary leader has the opportunity of serving, leading, and transforming individuals and institutions through technological advancements and investments (Gould, 2007).

The old ways of managing, organizing, and leading are no longer producing sustainable results. The new millennium calls for a special set of leadership skills and competencies that are different from those used in the past. The old ways of rational theories of management and bureaucratic order developed by Frederick Taylor and Max Weber no longer seem to work (Mintz, 1998; Wallin & Ryan, 1994). Hence, leaders of today must be agents of change and creative thinkers who see themselves as servant leaders reflective and affirming in implementing and sustaining change (Wallin, 2010b).

As a result of this research, it is recommended that community colleges introduce a forum for dialogue that includes a serious discussion about leadership development. The discussion must address the issue of leadership preparedness and outline clearly the skills and competencies that future leaders will need in order to move their institutions forward. The conversation must also include a well defined roadmap of how this process will be accomplished, coupled with a commitment by the president and board of trustees for implementation.

Component 2: Appropriate

Institution-based leadership development programs are a tool for preparing and training individuals for future challenges, as well as a means of ensuring the sustainability of community college leadership. Despite a plethora of information pertaining to leadership development programs currently available nationwide, such as university-based graduate programs and short-term leadership programs, the literature suggests that not all have been successful in addressing the issue of leadership development (Bagnato, 2004; Campbell et al., 2010; Cloud, 2010; Dembicki, 2006; Eddy, 2009; Jeandron, 2006). For example, recent studies show that neither university-based programs nor short-term leadership programs have been meeting the demand of preparing new leaders to replace those retiring and filling the shortage gap (Eddy, 2009).

In fact, literature suggests that campus-based leadership programs and grow-your-own (GYO) leadership programs may be more effective than an advanced degree, or state wide, or nationwide leadership development program because it can be tailored to the institution's culture and goals (O'Banion, 2007; Stone, 1995). According to Eddy (2008), in order for learning to be effective, knowledge acquired through training and practice, has to be applied on campus grounds and be based on institutional culture. This allows institution-based leadership development programs to be customized to meet the college's demands, while also providing the ability to make changes and improvements to the program. This practice can be beneficial for the college because it would increase job satisfaction for the program participants, as well as their loyalty to the institution and interest in staying there rather than finding job opportunities elsewhere (Jeandron, 2006).

As a result of this research, it is recommended that implementation of institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges require a sustainable financial plan. The plan would specifically address how funds will be allocated within the budget, the amount needed, the sources they can be allocated from (i.e., general funds, grants, professional development etc.), which parties will be involved in the planning, and who will be responsible for execution and oversight.

Component 3: Incorporate

Strategic planning in higher education involves a master plan that defines the objectives and assesses both the internal and external situation of the institution in an attempt to formulate and implement strategy and evaluate whether its progress aligns with its mission and goals (Sevier, 2000). Community college leaders interested in adopting a succession ethos must work together to develop a process that facilitates a pathway for cultivating new leadership Piland and

Wolf (2003) assert that developing a succession culture within an institution is an effective way of developing a successful succession plan.

One way to accomplish this objective is by incorporating succession planning into the institution's strategic plan, and aligning it to the institutional goals, mission, and vision. Strategic planning usually incorporates the instutions main objectives and goals, as well as integrating its culture. Furthermore, incorporation of succession planning into the strategic plan will ensure that senior-level administrators and boards of trustees view the plan as being part of the institution's growth, and not just about the individuals aspiring for leadership positions. Institutional goals must articulate and reflect the issue of cultivating new leadership, which can be achieved if there is a defined and transparent process embedded in the college's strategic plan.

Component 4: Realign

It is important that community college senior-level administrators and boards of trustees share a common goal and vision when it comes to leadership development. Weisman and Vaughan (2002) state that the influence of senior-level administrators and boards of trustees is most powerful when they work together. This requires harmony among senior administrators and boards of trustees through a shared vision for institution leadership development. A unified front that represents the institution is important because as one participant stated "the president might favour succession planning but the boards of trustees might not share his views."

As a result of this research, it is recommended that senior-level administrators invest time in developing a process for dialogue that clearly identifies how an institution-based leadership development program will benefit the college. Senior leaders should also anticipate that not all board members will see the value of such programs, which might result in disagreement and discourse. This should not be seen as a dead end, but rather as the beginning of more dialogue between senior-level administrators and boards of trustees that can still lead to successful results.

Furthermore, it should be the responsibility of senior leadership to guide boards of trustees through the process by highlighting the positive impact of leadership development programs in cultivating, preparing and ultimately sustaining future leaders for their instutions. This will require them to emphasize how these programs align with the institution's culture, and to address and answer any questions and concerns the board members may have.

To further nurture a mutual and professional understanding of institution-based leadership development programs with boards of trustees, senior leaders might suggest opportunities while board members might engage in some type of external leadership development such as academies or seminars. It is also recommended that by engaging boards of trustees in the process and encouraging them to take a proactive position, a new relationship between community college leaders and boards of trustees built on transparency and trust will emerge.

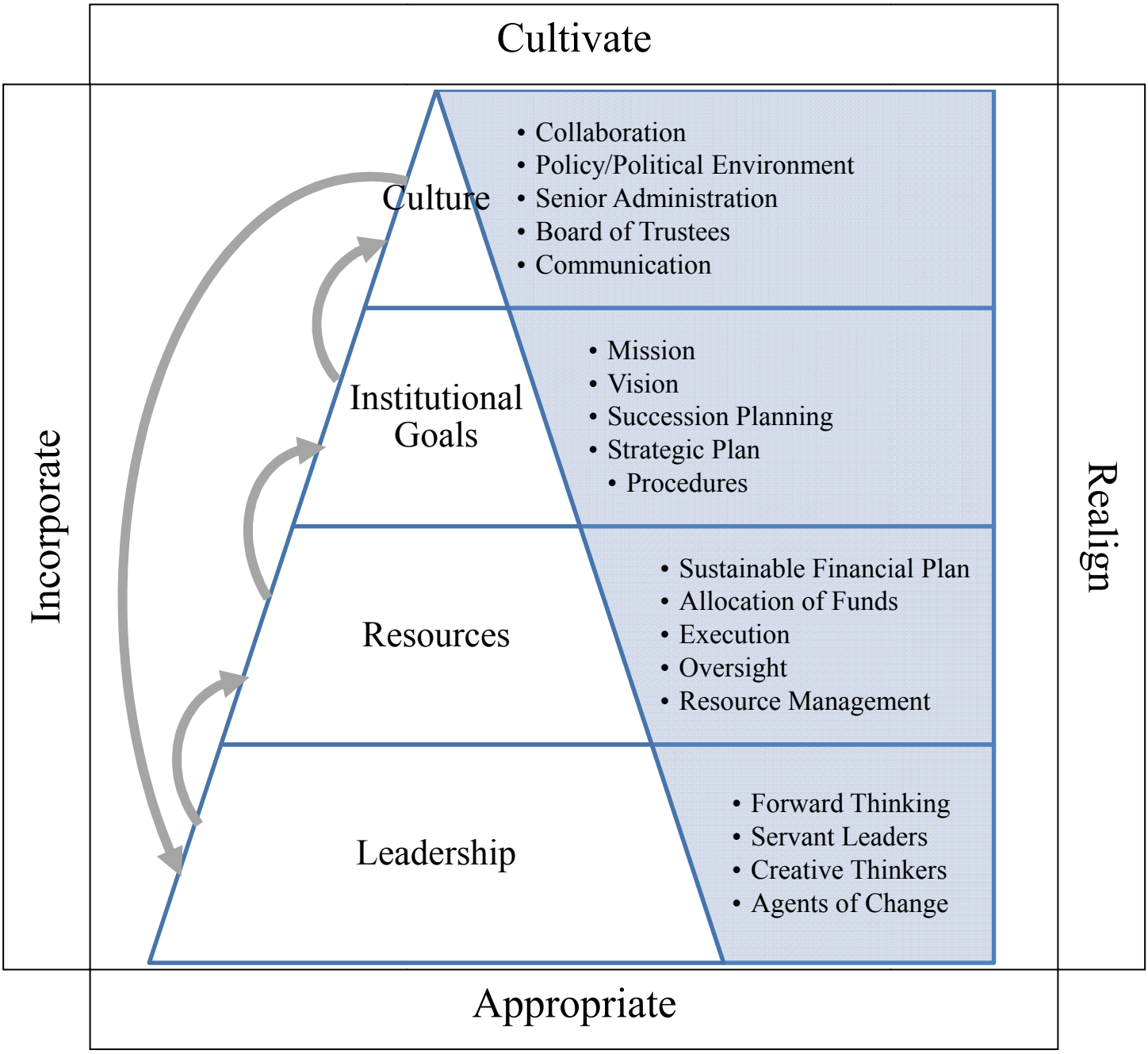

Figure 7. Sherbini Paradigm: Cultivate, Appropriate, Incorporate, Realign (CAIR)

The Sherbini Paradigm in Context

According to the Sherbini Paradigm, the successful implementation of institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges require four main components (cultivate, appropriate, incorporate, and realign,).The components constitute the foundation for the development, implementation, sustainability, and success of these programs. They also represent the overarching mechanism and are interrelated with four main concepts within an institution (leadership, resources, institutional goals, culture).

The success of a community college can be traced back to its leadership. A view the researcher of this study strongly believes in. The Sherbini Paradigm was therefore constructed and evolved from the researcher's observations, data collected for this study, and this premise. Accordingly, the Sherbini Paradigm (see Figure 7) seeks to utilize the inverted pyramid structure with the concept of "leadership" based at the bottom, followed by two concepts (resources and institutional goals), and ending with the concept of "culture" based at the top of the pyramid. Three arrows point upwards demonstrating the flow of the four concepts and hierarchy to show their importance, while a fourth arrow points in the opposite direction illustrating the intertwined connection between leadership and culture. The pyramid is embedded within the four main paradigm components (CAIR).

By putting leadership at the bottom of the pyramid the researcher sought to emphasize the significant role it plays within the institution. While the culture of a community college might denote the direction of the institution and its leadership, it is the researcher's view (based on the research gathered for this study) that the success of a community college stems primarily from its leadership and is influenced by the management style and philosophy of the leaders at the helm. Accordingly, this approach argues that institutional culture as a concept can be changed

depending on the type of leadership and further suggests that leaders play an important role in shaping the culture of their instutions. However, this approach does not negate the impact an institution's culture can have on leader selection and therefore, contends that the concepts of leadership and culture are directly interrelated.

Recommendations for Dissemination of the Research

Leadership shortages resulting from the forthcoming retirement of senior-level administrators is expected to create a challenge for many community colleges. Institution-based leadership development programs are an effective tool that can be utilized to alleviate the problem by providing specific leadership training for aspiring individuals that meets the institutions' present and future needs. Recommendations for the dissemination of this research include the following:

1. Share research findings with different organizations/institutions within higher education, including the researcher's own institution.
2. Provide and share findings with study participants who expressed interest in this study. The researcher will make every effort to provide findings and information regarding this study accessible to all interested parties.
3. Develop a plan for dissemination of this study by the researcher in various academic publications, journals, conferences, and presentations pertaining to community college leadership.

Recommendations for Future Research

Developing new sustainable methods for cultivating and preparing new leaders in community colleges to replace those retiring is a matter of great importance**.** According to a report by the AACC, 79% of current community college leaders plan to retire by 2011. The

problem could further escalate, according to predictions that indicate that retirement of community college leaders could reach an all-time high by 2016 (Weisman and Vaughn, 2006).

This study was intended to examine institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges in Illinois, and the impact of these programs in supporting and preparing future community college leaders. The study also intended to explore the efficacy of these programs and whether their implementation aligned with the institutions' culture and goals.

The anticipated retirement of current leadership and the methods of cultivating new ones for the future are issues that affect community colleges across the board and will require more attention as they unfold. Participating institutions in this study included six rural community colleges in Illinois. Recommendations for future research include the following:

1. Broadening the scope of participating rural community colleges to include institutions in other states and regions. According to the research, rural community colleges make up 60% of two-year institutions and educate one third of all community college students each year (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2010).
2. Expanding the number of participating rural community colleges, and exploring institution-based leadership development programs within a larger sample.
3. Exploring the lack of formal succession planning in rural community colleges and the impact this has on leadership development. It would also be valuable to all higher education institutions if some of these studies involve an in-depth comparative analysis of the pros and cons of formal verses informal succession planning programs in these instutions.

4. Examining the relationship between boards of trustees and senior-level administration in regards to leadership development, and the impact effective boards have on this process. Additional research exploring the role of team work among boards of trustees, as well as their attitudes and roles in cultivating a leadership mentality within the community college would be beneficial.

Chapter Summary

Development and implementation of institution-based leadership development programs require a determination towards building a culture that views leadership development as both a priority and necessity for community colleges. It requires a plan that seeks to diligently allocate resources to train individuals for leadership positions, who in turn will be responsible for moving their institutions forward. It also requires a willingness to formalize leadership development programs by incorporating them into the institution's strategic plan. In addition, it is vital to forge new alliances between boards of trustees and senior-level administrators that aim to cultivate a common ground.

Currently, there is no clear evidence to support the claim that community colleges in general, and rural instutions in particular, are taking any steps towards formalizing leadership development programs. What exists are a handful of programs and professional development initiatives, but no strategic plans tying them to institutional goals. As a result of this research, it is recommended that community colleges introduce a forum for dialogue that includes a serious discussion about leadership development. The discussion must address the issue of leadership preparedness and outline clearly the skills and competencies that future leaders will need in order to move their institutions forward.

It is also recommended that implementation of institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges require a sustainable financial plan. The plan should specifically address how funds will be allocated within the budget, the amount needed, the sources they can be allocated from, which parties will be involved in the planning, and who will be responsible for execution and oversight.

Community college leaders interested in adopting a succession ethos must work together to develop a process that facilitates a pathway for cultivating new leadership. One way to accomplish this objective is to incorporate succession planning into the institution's strategic plan. Institution-based leadership development programs as a concept can also facilitate a path for dialogue among boards of trustees and senior-level administrators.

It is therefore important that community college senior-level administrators and boards of trustees share a common goal and vision when it comes to leadership development. It is recommended that senior-level administrators invest time and effort coming up with a plan that clearly identifies how an institution-based leadership development program will benefit the college.

The impending retirement of community college senior-level administrators, coupled with the dilemma of finding well-prepared leaders to replace those retiring is problematic. However, there is enough evidence to support that community college leadership is a work in progress. With new ideas comes change which can be intimidating to the status quo predominate in community college culture. But the time has come for change to take place.

Institution-based leadership development programs can signal this shift in thinking. Decisive planning to develop and implement such programs can become the tool for cultivating new leaders from within, for the purpose of narrowing the gap of vacancies. Institution-based

leadership development programs might not be the answer to solving the problem of leadership shortages in community colleges, but it can be at least the first step towards creating a process for developing and sustaining a new pool of well prepared leaders for the 21st century.

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A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Jaleh Sherbini is currently a faculty member in the Social Science department at both the College of Lake County (CLC) and Oakton Community College (OCC) where she is professor of Political Science. Jaleh received her Bachelor's degree from the American University in Cairo Egypt, and a Master's degree in International Relations from Northeastern Illinois University. At the age of 24, she moved from her native country of Egypt to the United States with her husband who at the time was pursuing his Masters degree. She continued her career in the United States as an instructor at the College of Lake County (CLC) teaching Business English and Presentation Skills for non-native speakers for corporate sponsor Abbott Laboratories and Baxter.

Upon receiving her Masters degree in Political Science, she began teaching at number of higher education instutions including McHenry County College (MCC) and Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU) specializing in International Relations and Middle East Politics. Jaleh has also been a speaker and a participant in a number of national and international conferences and workshops pertaining to a number of political and educational issues. She has also been invited by a number of colleges and organizations to present on a variety of issues and topics including democratization, women issues in the Arab world, as well as the recent uprisings in Egypt and the Middle East. With 10 years of teaching experience and an investment in the community college culture, Jaleh later decided to pursue her Doctoral degree in Community College Leadership at National Louis University (NLU).

Jaleh also served on multiple grant committees, and is an executive board member of the Illinois Community College Faculty Association (ICCFA). Jaleh currently resides in Chicago, Illinois with her husband and four children.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Participating Rural Community Colleges in Illinois

College	City
Blackhawk College	Moline
Carl Sandburg College	Galesburg
Danville Area Community College	Danville
Frontier Community College	Fairfield
Heartland Community College	Normal
Highland Community College	Freeport
Illinois Central College	East Peoria
Illinois Valley Community College	Oglesby
John A. Logan College	Carterville
John Wood Community College	Quincy
Kankakee Community College	Kankakee
Kaskaskia Community College	Centralia
Kishwaukee College	Malta
Lakeland College	Mattoon
Lincoln Land Community College	Springfield
Lincoln Trail College	Robinson
Olney Central College	Olney
Parkland College	Champaign
Richland Community College	Decatur
Rock Valley College	Rockford
Sauk Valley Community College	Dixon
Shawnee Community College	Ullin
Southeastern Illinois College	Harrisburg
Spoon River College	Canton
Wabash Valley College	Mt. Carmel

Appendix B: Institution-Based Leadership Development Survey

Thank you for agreeing to complete this online survey. As noted in the cover letter accompanying this survey, this research study is entitled: *The Power Within: Exploring Institution-Based Leadership Development Programs in Rural Community Colleges.*

This study will consist of two parts. The first part is the demographic survey, which is intended to collect general information about your institution and its institution-based leadership development practices. The second part of the data gathering process will consist of an in-person interview of those survey respondents who consent to a follow-up an interview. I will be in touch with interested participants to schedule personal interviews once the online survey has been completed.

Please answer each question in this survey. Please note that all responses (from both the online survey and the personal interviews) will remain confidential.

Demographic Data

1. What is your current position?
    a. College president
    b. Vice president of academic affairs
    c. Please state other position: _____
2. Number of years served in this institution (in all positions).
    a. 1-5 years
    b. 6-10 years
    c. 11-15 years
    d. 16 and over

3. What is the total number of employees serving your community college (including staff, faculty and administrators)? _____

Leadership Development

4. Does your community college provide professional development programs or activities for individuals aspiring to assume leadership roles such as president or vice president?

   ☐ Yes

   ☐ No

5. If your answer to the previous question is "Yes," list the professional development programs or activities offered and their frequency.

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

6. Is there a succession plan for administrators at your community college? (i.e., identifying and preparing a suitable employee for a position or replacement of an employee in a different role within the institution through job rotation, training and mentoring).

   ☐ Yes

   ☐ No

7. If your answer to the previous question is "Yes," how are individuals identified and selected to participate in the succession planning process?

   _____

   _____

   _____

_____

8. Have any of your institution's current senior-level administrators completed (an) institution-based leadership development program(s) and assumed leadership positions at your institution?

   ☐ Yes

   ☐ No

9. Does your community college participate in a "grow your own" (GYO) leaders program?

   ☐ Yes

   ☐ No

10. If your answer to the previous question is "Yes," how are individuals identified and selected to participate in a GYOL program?

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

11. Would you be interested in participating in a face-to-face interview concerning institution-based leadership development programs?

    ☐ Yes

    ☐ No

12. If your answer to the previous question is "Yes," please provide your name and contact information below:

    Name: _____

    Institution: _____

E-mail: _____

Phone: _____

Thank you.

Appendix C: Cover Letter to Online Survey Participants

October, 2010

[Insert address]

Dear [insert name]

Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Jaleh Sherbini, and I am currently a doctoral candidate in the Community College Leadership Program at National Louis University in Chicago Illinois. At present, I am also a faculty member at the College of Lake County in Grayslake Illinois where I am a professor of political science.

The purpose of this communication is to ask for your participation in an online survey related to institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges. As you are aware, the future of community college leadership is reaching a pivotal turning point and that there is an urgent need to address the shortage of competent and trained leaders. This online survey is intended to gather data that will assist in exploring how community colleges (specifically rural community colleges) can create institution-based leadership development programs to address the growing demand for community college leaders in the future.

This survey will be sent to rural community college presidents and vice presidents of academic affairs throughout the state of Illinois. Your identification and survey responses will be kept confidential. It will take no longer than 10-15 minutes to complete the online survey available by clicking on the following link:

[Insert here]

Upon completion of the survey, please press the submit button and the responses will be collected and kept confidential in a database. There will be no means of identification unless you self identify at the end of the survey indicating that you would be willing to participate further in a face-to-face interview exploring the topic further. Submitting the survey indicates that you have voluntarily given your consent to participate.

As a community college president or vice president, your input in this study will add significant value to my research. In addition to completing the survey, will you please consider participating in a brief face-to-face interview (no more than an hour) on the subject of institution-based leadership development programs? If so, please check "Yes" on Item 14 of the online survey and I'll follow-up with you to set an appointment for the interview (at a time and place convenient to you).

Thank you for your valuable time and consideration. If you have questions or need additional clarification, please don't hesitate to contact me as follows:

Sincerely,

Jaleh Sherbini

(847)123-4567

Doctoral Candidate

National Louis University

Appendix D: Research/Interview Questions Matrix

Research questions	Interview questions
1. How can institution-based leadership development programs provide the skills and leadership competencies needed for future leadership?	a. What do you consider to be the important skills needed for future community college leaders? b. What type of competencies do future community college leaders need to meet the demands of the 21st century?
2. What specific leadership development strategies are employed in institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges in Illinois?	a. Should institution-based leadership development programs in rural community colleges employ specific strategies tailored to their institution's needs? If yes, which strategies? Why? If no, why not? b. What incentives do community colleges have for establishing institution-based leadership development programs?
3. In what ways have institution-based leadership development programs addressed the issues of succession planning in rural community colleges in Illinois	a. How have your institution-based leadership development program(s) addressed the leadership shortage in your institution? b. Is there a succession plan for administrators at your community college? c. Is your succession planning program related to the leadership development programs at your institution?
4. What are the criteria for participating in institution-based leadership development programs?	a. What are the guidelines for participation in these program(s)? b. How important is it for the institution to have participants enrol in these programs?

Research questions	Interview questions
5. What role do the Board of Trustees play in institution-based leadership development programs?	a. In what capacity should the Board of Trustees be involved in institution-based leadership development programs?
6. How are institution-based leadership development programs assessed and/or evaluated (specifically, to what extent do institution-based leadership development programs align with the institutional culture and goals)?	a. What are the criteria for assessment and/or evaluation of these programs in your institution? b. Do you think have these programs will help your institution achieve its goals of producing well trained and prepared leaders?

Appendix E: Informed Consent—Participant

Thank you for agreeing to participant in this study that will take place from December 2010 to June 2011. This form outlines the purpose of the study and provides a description of your role and rights as a participant.

I consent to participate in a research study conducted by Jaleh Sherbini, a doctoral student at National Louis University Chicago, Illinois.

I understand that the study is entitled *The Power Within: Institution-Based Leadership Development Programs in Rural Community Colleges in Illinois.* The purpose this study is to examine institution-based leadership development programs and the impact these programs have in supporting and preparing future community college leaders.

I understand that my participation will consist of audio-taped interviews lasting approximately 1 hour with the possibility of a follow-up by telephone. I understand that I will receive a copy of my transcribed interview at which time I may clarify information.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and can be discontinued at any time without prejudice.

I understand that only the researcher, Jaleh Sherbini, will have access to all transcripts, audio-tapes and field notes from the interview(s) which will remain locked in a secured cabinet.

I understand that in the event that the results of this study may be published or otherwise reported to scientific bodies, my identity as well as that of my institution will remain anonymous. Furthermore, I understand that there are no anticipated risks or benefits for my participation, and that information gathered for this study could be helpful in providing strategies and insight on institution-based leadership development programs specifically for rural community colleges.

I understand that in the event I have questions or require additional information I may contact the researcher:

Researcher: Jaleh Sherbini

Address: 123 Main St. Happy Town, IL.00000

Phone: (847) 123-4567

E-mail address: xyz@abcd.efg

I understand that if I have any concerns or questions before or during participation that have not been addressed by the researcher, I may contact the researcher's primary advisor and dissertation chair:

Chair: Dr. Martin Parks

Address: National Louis University, 122 S. Michigan Ave.

Chicago, IL.60630

Phone: (312) 261-3019

E-mail address: martin.parks@nl.edu

Participant's signature _____ Date _____

Participant's signature _____ Date _____

Appendix F: Confidentiality Agreement, Data Transcriptionist

This confidentiality conveys the agreement made between Jaleh Sherbini, the researcher, and [NAME OF INDIVIDUAL AND COMPANY OF A PROFESSIONAL TRANSCRIPTIONIST]

I understand and acknowledge that by transcribing the audiotapes provide to me by Jaleh Sherbini, that I will be exposed to confidential information about the research study and the research participants. In providing transcription services, at no time will I reveal or discuss any of the information to which I have been exposed.

In addition, at no time will I maintain copies of the electronic or paper documents generated. Further, upon completing each transcription, I agree to provide all electronic and paper documents to the researcher.

Jaleh Sherbini

123 Main St.

Happytown, IL. 00000

(847) 123-4567

xyz@abcd.efg

I understand that breach of this agreement as described above could result in personal and professional harm to the researcher and/or participants for which I will be held legally responsible.

Transcriptionist's signature _____ Date _____

Researcher's signature _____ Date _____