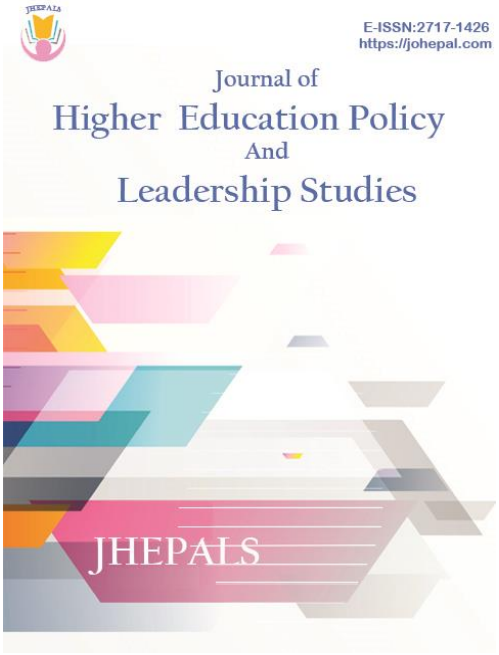
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Transformational Leadership in Higher Education Programs

Joshua L. Howell [1]
Email: jhowell@odu.edu
https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1730-0563

Kim E. Bullington [2]
Email: kbulling@odu.edu
https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4653-3008

Dennis E. Gregory [3]
Email: dgregory@odu.edu

Mitchell R. Williams [4]
Email: mrwillia@odu.edu

William L. Nuckols [5]
Email: wnuckols@odu.edu

** Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia, USA*

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Joshua L. Howell *
Kim E. Bullington
Dennis E. Gregory
Mitchell R. Williams
William L. Nuckols

Abstract

The current mixed-method study investigates transformational leadership qualities through higher education doctoral programs in the Commonwealth of Virginia. This study relies on three data points: interviews with graduate program directors of higher education doctoral programs (whether PhD or EdD), a program evaluation of programs, and Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-5x™) survey results from students within said programs. Data were collected from the five public universities that offer higher education doctoral programs within the Commonwealth of Virginia. Students completed a self-rating using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-5x™) and then were peer-rated by colleagues to strengthen the validity of the study. Additionally, themes surrounding the structures of these doctoral programs were collected. As researchers of higher education and leadership studies cite transformational leadership as a high competency for college and university presidents, coupled with a looming shortage of college and university presidents on the horizon, measuring the programs that train these potential future leaders is warranted.

Keywords: Doctoral Higher Education Programs; College/ University Presidents; Leadership Training; Transformational Leadership; Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-5x™)

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* **Corresponding author's email:** jhowell@odu.edu

Introduction

College and university presidents are responsible for leading postsecondary institutions through a wide variety of issues and problems. Successful leaders must be able to maneuver through different areas such as policy, budgets, human resources, and myriad other topics. When presidents are not successful, they are often removed (Lederman, 2018; Smith 2017) and one of the reasons posited for this removal is lack of leadership qualities and skills.

One of the problems in American higher education today is that there is an impending leadership crisis in higher education. There are currently not enough people who are qualified and prepared to take on the responsibilities of a presidency -- nor do they have the requisite skills needed to move institutions as a whole forward (Cohen & Kisker, 2010; Cooney & Borland, 2018; Eckel & Kezar, 2011).

With varying definitions of leadership (Hemphill & Coons, 1957; Katz & Khan, 1978, Kouses & Pozner, 1995; Northouse, 2016) as well as changing directions in higher education, college and university presidents must understand their leadership styles and be able to call upon them to enact change. One such style is transformational leadership (TL), which "involves an exceptional form of influence that moves followers to accomplish more than what is usually expected of them. It is a process that often incorporates charismatic and visionary leadership" (Northouse, 2016, p. 161). Leaders who have TL qualities can be innovative, empower their employees, and bring positive change to their organizations (Hoch, 2013; Howell, 2020).

The purpose of this study is twofold: to measure transformational leadership skills within students enrolled in doctoral programs in higher education, and to determine whether doctoral programs in higher education are helping to fill future presidential-level positions with those with transformational leadership skills. Presidential candidates can come from all walks of life, including business, military, politicians, but if these candidates do not have knowledge on how higher education works, they are at a disadvantage. It is important to have programs that can prepare future presidents through a lens of higher education research and practice (Howell, 2020). This study can help faculty, administrators, staff, and governing bodies understand how higher education preparation programs and curricula, which instill TL qualities in prospective presidents can assist in this process. Graduates of these programs can develop an in-depth understanding of the varied layers of higher education as well as transformational leadership skills. (Brown et al., 2002; Howell, 2020). Therefore, we are seeking to measure the activities of doctoral programs in higher education and the transformational leadership skills that are provided through there curricular and co-curricular activities. The following research questions guided this study:

1. Is there statistical significance between transformational leadership scores among students in higher education doctoral programs?
2. How are transformational leadership skills fostered through higher education doctoral programs?

Literature Review

The concept of transformational leadership has evolved over the decades and TL is considered a mark of a person who has strong leadership and motivational skills. Burns

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(1978) defined transformational leadership as a "relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and may convert leaders into moral agents (Burns, 1978, p. 4). Transformational leaders instill feelings of motivation and trust (Bass, 1985) and work to build followers who are poised to move an organization forward (Harrison, 2000) while supporting creativity (Hallinger, 2003) in local and global environments (Owie, 2019).

Does a Leadership Crisis Exist?

There are concerns that there are not enough qualified leaders to fill current and future vacant presidencies. Cohen and Kisker (2010) found that in 2006, most current presidents were over 60 and that that number over 60 had grown by 14% since 1996. It was assumed that this cadre of presidents was looking at the horizon toward retirement. Eckel and Kezar (2011) suggested that the past traditional pipeline of ascending to a college or university presidency, through faculty ranks, is not a large enough pipeline to meet the leadership requirements for the position. Cook (2012) argued that this is an opportunity to diversify higher education at the level of the president. Hackmann et al. (2017) found that educational leadership programs created to prepare higher education leaders are increasing. "Effective presidential leadership in the future may depend on an individual's ability to leverage an integrated, shared leadership approach that encourages coordinated and synergistic leadership among many actors" (Eckel & Kezar, 2011, p. 304). These educational leadership programs (e.g., higher education and related programs) can provide future college and university presidential candidates who are prepared to take the leadership mantle.

What is Transformational Leadership?

Transformational leadership has evolved since the term was first coined in 1978 by James M. Burns. "[T]he transforming leader looks for potential motives in followers, seeks to satisfy higher needs, and engages the full person of the follower. The result of transforming leadership is a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and may convert leaders into moral agents" (p. 4). It is important for transformational leaders to develop those around them for the good of the organization or cause. Bass (1985) extended Burns' definition by expanding the relationship between leaders and followers. Transformational leaders are concerned with trust, respect, and allegiance because when followers exhibit these traits, they are more likely to want to accomplish tasks to help reach the mission and vision set forth by the transformational leader.

Transformational leadership has worked well in educational institutions because the leader "seeks to build the organization's capacity to select its purposes and to support the development of changes to practices of teaching and learning" (Hallinger, 2003, p. 330). However, because of the many disciplines that exist on academic and administrative sides, the president, as a transformational leader, must work across and beyond their disciplinary expertise to help the institution as well as create shared goals such as a vision (Basham, 2012).

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Transformational Doctoral HIED Programs

The Transformational Leadership Model

Northouse's transformational leadership model consists of 4Is (Figure 1): idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Northouse, 2016). Idealized influence (II) is the ability to examine and/or emulate trajectories of other successful leaders; this can be done through mentorship or following a leader's career path as well as building relationships and strengthening leadership skills. Inspiration motivation (IM) helps leaders influence followers and to move beyond conceived barriers to achieve goals. Intellectual stimulation (IS) centers on creativity, innovation, and strategic thinking. Individualized consideration (IC) is the circumstance during which a leader listens to and understands a follower's needs and desires to give them the tools to perform at higher levels (Northouse, 2016).

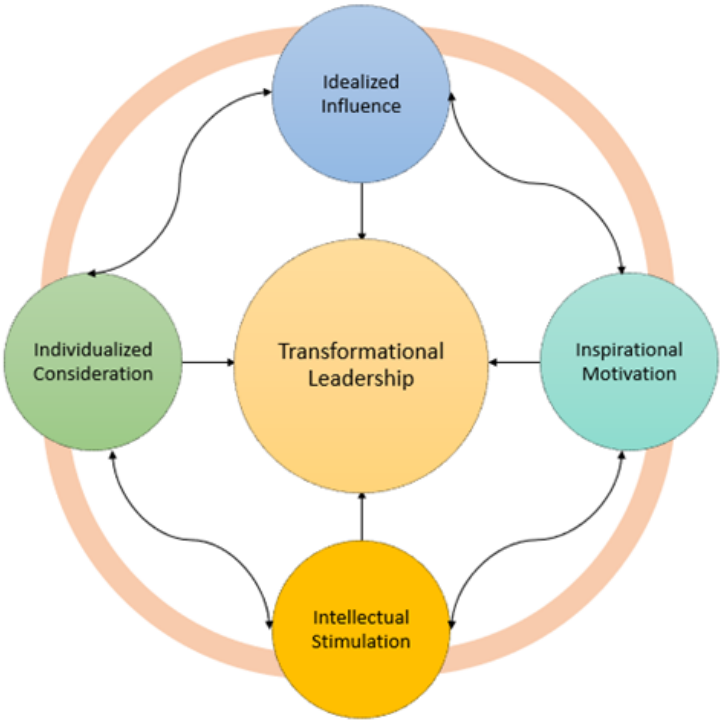


Figure 1. Transformational Leadership Model (Northouse, 2016)

College and University Presidents and Transformational Qualities

The college and university presidency has evolved into a position that requires complex decision-making abilities. Presidents should be able to understand trends in enrollment, finances, student needs, etc., and be able to effectively communicate data-driven strategies to campus constituents (Gearin, 2017). New presidents should work with governing boards to familiarize themselves with campus problems (Gearin, 2017), "listening and learning" (Wakefield et al., 2020, p. 4), and create a first-year plan to learn about the institution and its constituents (The Aspen Institute Task Force on the Future of the College Presidency, 2017).

An effective college or university president is one who can "make sense out of circumstances that confront them, particularly during changing and uncertain times"

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(Bourgeois, 2016, p. 18). They work to create a climate focused on relationship building (Hagan, 2021), elimination of silos (Friedman & Kass-Shraibman, 2017), and learning and collaboration (Friedman & Kass-Shraibman, 2017). This idea of collaborative partnership can help institutions achieve their mission and vision (Howell, 2020). Because of the varied skills required of college and university presidents, it is important to have programs that train and instill transformational leadership skills (Martin & Samels, 2004) in higher education-specific contexts (Howell, 2020).

Transformational Qualities of an Effective College/University President

Student satisfaction plays a large role in the health of an institution. To instill a love of education and lifelong learning, it is important that faculty engage with their students and institutions to create an institutional climate conducive to attracting new and more students (Friedman & Kass-Shraibman, 2017). College and university presidents can also affect student satisfaction. For example, when a president has strong charisma, institutions receive more applications and more financial donations from alumni (Bastedo et al., 2014), and transformational leadership skills can be used to better engage faculty, especially those who are more obstinate (Basham, 2012). "A university president's competency in knowledge, leadership skills, and technical expertise is necessary to ensure the successful completion of a transformational effort" (p. 346). Having transformational leadership skills can be effective for institutional leaders, but it's important to provide programs so these aspiring leaders can be equipped to take on the presidential leadership mantle and bring about transformational change (Martin & Samels, 2004).

Higher Education Doctoral Programs

Higher education doctoral programs should prepare future college and university presidents' sense of purpose and vision. Vision provides a "conceptual map" for the future of the organization (Northhouse, 2016, p. 176). Leadership requires the ability to enact change on an organizational level (Basham, 2012) and the transformational leader should learn how to focus on the "motivations and morality in both the leader and the follower" to create necessary changes. As bastions of tradition, colleges and universities prefer presidents who hold doctoral degrees (Brown et al., 2002; McNair, 2015). Having candidates with higher education degrees and backgrounds could help solve the gap in leaders who are prepared and ready to take on a college or university presidency.

Higher Education Leadership Preparation Programs

There is a lack of doctoral-trained college and university presidents to fill the needs of the current institutions, and this shortage, when combined with the impending shortage of qualified candidates to fill future presidential positions, should be addressed. Presidential turnover can occur for many reasons; some of these include institutional financial problems (Finney & Kelly, 2010; Tekniepe, 2014), lack of fundraising knowledge (Helm, 2009; Thomas, 2013), experience with data-driven decision making (Bowers, 2017; Ewell & Ikenberry, 2015), the inability to clearly articulate vision (Brown et al., 2002; Goleman et al, 2002; Fisher et al., 1998), and lack of media training (Nugent, 2009). Transformational leaders are "still a long way from being the leader for every situation and, as a result, few empirically documented case examples of capturing the transformational leaders' acumen exist"

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(Basham, 2012, p. 344). Higher education doctoral programs can prepare individuals who are ready to take on the presidential leadership mantle, so it is important to measure the abilities gained in these programs to ensure program strength and proper preparation for these aspiring leaders. Because transformational leadership focuses on influence, charisma, and visionary leadership and the ability to a follower's motivation (Northouse, 2016), a higher education doctoral program may help foster the 4 I's of transformational leadership by helping them cultivate their purpose and vision (Howell, 2020). "The vision is a focal point for transformational leadership. It gives the leader and the organization a conceptual map for where the organization is headed; it gives meaning and clarifies the organization's identity" (Northouse, 2016, p. 176).

College and university presidents at all levels (community, private, public, etc.) face regular challenges, and must find ways to adapt to the constantly changing university climate. They must be ready to lead through economic, political, and social challenges. Because doctoral programs are often assessed qualitatively, there is a need for more quantitative study on the impacts of doctoral-level training (Robey & Bauer, 2013). When higher education doctoral programs provide transformational qualities that are infused within their curricula and co-curricular programming, they can provide graduates who are ready to tackle challenges on all levels.

Methodology

For this study, a non-experimental mixed method research design was used. Data were collected through three measures: graduate program directors of doctoral higher education programs were interviewed about how their programs instill TL qualities, program evaluations were conducted to measure how TL qualities was instilled through course offerings and extracurricular offerings, and finally, students within these programs were assessed for TL qualities using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire Rater Form (MLQ-5x™).

Descriptive statistics were determined for all three data points, with the average scores, standard deviations, and median scores identified to determine a baseline. Scores were also cross compared among the other program sites in the Commonwealth to determine the TL qualities with the highest frequencies. Finally, a bivariate correlation was conducted to identify if doctoral higher education programs have an impact on student MLQ-5x™ scores.

The Commonwealth of Virginia currently has five doctoral higher education programs within four-year public universities. As such, the chairs and program directors of these five sites were contacted about logistics, procedures of collection, and information on the study. They were then asked to solicit the study information from currently enrolled doctoral higher education students. Student participants had to be in said programs for at least one calendar year. A total of six students per participant site were surveyed, totaling 30 student participants for the study. Additionally, the five program chairs agreed to an hour-long semi-structured interview.

Student participants were measured on their TL qualities through the MLQ-5x™. The MLQ-5x™ identifies, "the characteristics of a transformational leader and helps individuals discover how they measure up in their own eyes and in the eyes of those with whom they work" ("Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire", 2018, n.p.). Developed by Bass and Avolio

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(1997), the MLQ-5x™ measures four attributes of transformational leadership: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. The MLQ-5x™ instrument is made up of forty-five descriptive statements (Bass & Avolio, 2000) and the items are both self-rated and peer-rated by five-point Likert-type scales. Student participants completed a self-rating using the MLQ-5x™ instrument, as well as peer-rated two students within their program using the MLQ-5x™ instrument. As such, each student participant has a self-rated and peer-rated score. However, peer-rated scores are more reliable for determining TL qualities and are the basis of determining student scores being below, at or above average. Bass and Riggio (2006) found the MLQ-5x™ has been found to be valid and reliable, and one of the most used measures to identify transformational leadership qualities.

Additionally, program evaluations were conducted to identify the frequency of TL related activities seeking to enhance qualities within course offerings. Semi-structured interviews with program chairs were scheduled to identify TL fostering activities outside of the traditional curriculum. A research team reviewed the data, performing consensus coding to identify prevalent themes. All identified program chairs were also asked to member check their responses. Triangulation occurred using the MLQ-5x™ scores, interview findings, and program evaluation of curriculum. Validity was strengthened by providing the research team with the opportunity to provide feedback of all scoring rubrics, and reliability was strengthened by providing the MLQ-5x™, which has been used in over fifty studies (Avolio & Bass, 2004).

Results

Results of the MLQ-5x™

As research question one is focused on a statistical significance between transformational leadership scores among students in higher education doctoral programs, results of the MLQ-5x™ were calculated. As Bass and Avolio (2000) found peer ratings to be more valid and reliable, only the MLQ-5x™ scores for doctoral higher education students that were measured through peer rating are presented. MLQ-5x™ means and standard deviations are presented by individual program, by gender, by race, and by each of the 4 Is (Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, and Individualized Consideration). Mind Garden provides Idealized Influence scores in two categories: IIA (attributive) and IIB (behavior). According to Bass (1985), Idealized Influence Attributes (IIA) refer to perceptions of characteristics found within a leader, while Idealized Influence Behavior (IIB) refer to follower perceptions of leadership behavior. As the MLQ-5x™ is scored between 0 to 4, a baseline of 3 was used to determine if a score was “above average.” A breakdown of all scores can be found in Table 1.

Peer-reported mean scores were 3.20 overall, 3.28 for Idealized Influence (IIA), 3.21 for Idealized Influence (IIB), 3.13 for Inspirational Motivation (IM), 3.11 for Intellectual Stimulation (IS), and 3.31 for Individualized Consideration (IC). The null hypothesis indicated that transformational leadership qualities were not above average in doctoral higher education students. Since 3 was set as the baseline for an above average student MLQ-5x™ scores, the null hypothesis was rejected (Overall TL mean score of 3.2), as $\mu > 3$, $p = 0.006$.

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Table 1
Transformational Leadership Scores Peer-Reported on the MLQ-5x™

	M (*SD*) N=30	Male N=8	Female N=22	White N=22	Non-White N=8	Site 1	Site 2	Site 3	Site 4	Site 5
Overall	3.20 (.56)	3.21	3.20	3.23	3.13	3.28	3.20	3.19	2.85	3.50
Idealized Influence (IIA)	3.28 (.54)	3.29	3.28	3.29	3.25	3.38	3.21	3.38	3.00	3.43
Idealized Influence (IIB)	3.21 (.68)	3.27	3.19	3.31	2.93	3.33	3.39	2.97	2.84	3.48
Inspirational Motivation (IM)	3.13 (.65)	3.29	3.07	3.13	3.13	3.34	2.95	3.15	2.79	3.39
Intellectual Stimulation (IS)	3.11 (.72)	3.00	3.14	3.12	3.06	3.02	3.08	3.35	2.63	3.48
Individualized Consideration (IC)	3.31 (.68)	3.25	3.34	3.34	3.25	3.27	3.38	3.20	2.93	3.78

Note. Mind Garden Scores Idealized Influence as two categories IIA (Attributive) and IIB (Behavior).

Of the eight male participants surveyed, mean scores indicated 3.21 for Overall, 3.29 for Idealized Influence (IIA), 3.27 for Idealized Influence (IIB), 3.29 for Inspirational Motivation (IM), 3.00 for Intellectual Stimulation (IS), and 3.25 for Individualized Consideration (IC). Of the twenty-two female participants surveyed, mean scores indicated 3.20 for overall, 3.28 for Idealized Influence (IIA), 3.19 for Idealized Influence (IIB), 3.07 for Inspirational Motivation (IM), 3.14 for Intellectual Stimulation (IS), and 3.34 for Individualized Consideration (IC).

Of the twenty-two participants who identified as white, mean scores indicated 3.23 for overall, 3.29 for Idealized Influence (IIA), 3.31 for Idealized Influence (IIB), 3.13 for Inspirational Motivation (IM), 3.12 for Intellectual Stimulation (IS), and 3.34 for Individualized Consideration (IC). Of the eight participants who identified as non-White, mean scores indicated 3.13 for overall, 3.25 for Idealized Influence (IIA), 2.93 for Idealized Influence (IIB), 3.13 for Inspirational Motivation (IM), 3.06 for Intellectual Stimulation (IS), and 3.25 for Individualized Consideration (IC).

For each participant site, six students were peer-rated. Site One participant mean scores indicated 3.28 for overall, 3.38 for Idealized Influence (IIA), 3.33 for Idealized Influence (IIB), 3.34 for Inspirational Motivation (IM), 3.02 for Intellectual Stimulation (IS), and 3.27 for Individualized Consideration (IC). Site Two participant mean scores indicated 3.20 for overall, 3.21 for Idealized Influence (IIA), 3.39 for Idealized Influence (IIB), 2.95 for Inspirational Motivation (IM), 3.08 for Intellectual Stimulation (IS), and 3.38 for Individualized Consideration (IC). Site Three participant mean scores indicated 3.19 for overall, 3.38 for Idealized Influence (IIA), 2.97 for Idealized Influence (IIB), 3.15 for Inspirational Motivation (IM), 3.35 for Intellectual Stimulation (IS), and 3.20 for Individualized Consideration (IC).Site Four participant mean scores indicated 2.85 for overall, 3.00 for Idealized Influence (IIA), 2.84 for Idealized Influence (IIB), 2.79 for Inspirational Motivation (IM), 2.63 for Intellectual Stimulation (IS), and 2.93 for Individualized Consideration (IC). Site Five participant mean scores indicated 3.50 for overall, 3.43 for Idealized Influence (IIA), 3.48 for Idealized Influence (IIB), 3.39 for Inspirational

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Motivation (IM), 3.48 for Intellectual Stimulation (IS), and 3.78 for Individualized Consideration (IC).

Of the Peer-Reported Transformational Leadership Scores, most scores were above 3.00; however, scores that fell under the 3.00 baseline were non-White participant IIB scores (2.93), Site Two IM scores (2.95), Site Three IIB scores (2.97) IIA, Site Four overall scores (2.85) IIB scores (2.84) IM scores (2.79) IS scores (2.63) and IC scores (2.93).

A single sample *t*-test was conducted to determine if a statistically significant difference existed between Peer-Reported Transformational Leadership Scores. Overall participants received statistically significant Peer-Reported Transformational Scores ($M = 3.21$, $SD = 0.55$), $t(30) = 2.85$, $p = 0.006$.

As Research Question One is focused on a statistical significance between transformational leadership scores among students in higher education doctoral programs, the following results assist in answering the question. Overall, Peer-Reported Transformational Scores did indicate significance, Site Five participant Peer-Reported Transformational Scores did indicate significance, female participant Peer-Reported Transformational Scores did indicate significance, and White participant Peer-Reported Transformational Scores did indicate significance.

Results of the Program Evaluation and Interviews with Department Chairs

Research Question Two asks how transformational leadership are skills fostered through higher education doctoral programs. Results from both the program evaluation and semi-structured interviews with program chairs/directors were acquired to answer this question. Results were categorized by participant site (Table 2) to provide a thematic breakdown of both the most common and unique fostering activities offered within the doctoral program. Thematic analysis was conducted through triangulation with the research team, and themes were verified through member checking.

Table 2
Results of Transformational Leadership Fostering Activities by Participant Site

Attribute	Site One	Site Two	Site Three	Site Four	Site Five
Idealized Influence	Internships Progress Reports	Guest Lectures Summer Institute	Weekly Ten Hours of Mentored Research Guest Lectures	Guest Lectures Partnership with Engineering Education and Student Affairs	Self-Defined as Supportive and Inclusive Guest Lectures at department, college, and university level
Inspirational Motivation	Goal Seeking Ethical Considerations	Goal Seeking Ethical Considerations	Goal Seeking Mock Career Interviews	Career Goals Ethical Considerations	Group Dynamics Personal Barriers
Intellectual Stimulation	Critical Discourse Models Practicum	Major Learning Theories Research Colloquium	Organizational Models Research Colloquium	Critical Race Theory Field Trips to Partnering Organizations	Social Justice Class Organizational Operations and Theories
Individualized Consideration	Super Advising Session Writing Center	Cohort Driven Peer Mentorship	Semi-Cohort Model Peer Mentorship	Cohort Driven Peer Mentorship	Cohort for Research Seminar Back Channel of Peer Mentorship

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Overview of Common and Unique Fostering Activities

Common transformational leadership fostering activities were found among the five participant sites. These results have been organized and are displayed in Table 3.

Table 3
Most Common Transformational Leadership Fostering Activities

Attribute	Most Common Practices
Idealized Influence	Guest Speakers
Inspirational Motivation	Identification of Career Goals in Application Process
Intellectual Stimulation	Organizational Coursework and Discussions of Ethical Considerations
Individualized Consideration	Cohort Models

Of the five participant sites, the Idealized Influence Attribute occurred most frequently through the offering of guest speakers, as guest speakers provide insight into the complex tasks that institutional leaders face.

Site One provided progress reports through letters that were issued every semester. They found that students appreciated the feedback, and that it helped with their student success rates. Site Five indicated that "*So topically what we're able to do is tap into our alumni base where we have individuals that are high-level leaders across the country."* For Idealized Influence Behavior, Site Two had a Summer Institute program that created organic relationship building which allowed for participants to come together. "*Students get really close to each other in those residence halls living together for two weeks as full grown adults that are used to living in their own houses with their own lawns and their own mailboxes. Students build relationships*." Site Four said "*We have a really strong partnership with our Student Affairs Division*," where their doctoral-level graduate assistants assist the institution and learn skills related to higher education leadership. Inspirational Motivation was most frequently found in the discussion of career goals, as setting goals provides the scaffolding needed for program and career benchmarks. For example, Site Three responded, "*We're helping them think through next career steps and encouraging them to do informational interviews and talk with other people*." Site Two added "*We will invite our graduate students* [to assist the department's journal, oftentimes reviewing manuscripts and reviewing the process with faculty*]it helps students understand what the peer review process looks like".* Intellectual Stimulation was most frequently found in coursework related to organizational models and ethical considerations, thus allowing students to identify constituent diversity, and plan for inclusive practice. Site Four provided field trips to other types of institutions, e.g., an Historically Black College or University and a women's college. "*Our faculty members had strong relationships in* [the state capitol] *Richmond*. Individualized Consideration was found most frequently through cohort models, which provide a sense of collegiality, assist in retention efforts for the student, and build a network of trust. Site Five responded

> "*we have a cohort model in our executive EDD option. I'd say we have a de facto cohort in the on-campus, but the executive program is much more of a lockstep program. So students would come in and they would have courses that are required for each of the semester, including their first summer where they come*

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in and take three course that they're working together, and I would say a little bit of, I wouldn't call it team building per se, but getting them to think."

While these participant sites shared common practice, TL fostering activities that were unique should be mentioned. The most unique of the fostering activities explored was Site One's facilitation of semester progress reports. Providing feedback in this manner was seen as the most structured of the programs investigated, as it provided feedback on coursework, research, and career goals. Site Three's ten required hours of mentor-led research per week was notable, but as many of the students investigated were undertaking graduate assistantships, this may be a difficult task for other programs with working professionals. Finally, Site Four's partnership with the Engineering Education doctoral program was unique, as it provided an opportunity for students from both programs to interact, collaborate, and network.

Discussion

Regarding delimitations, this study was conducted within five doctoral higher education programs in Virginia public research universities. There are approximately 57 doctoral-level higher education programs in the United States ("Graduate Program Directory", 2018). Students within these five programs were both part-time and full-time, as many part-time doctoral students are also working professionals. This study also only focused on students accepted into their programs and with a year or more of doctoral level experience, thus non-degree seeking students and first year students were not included. The focus of this study was on higher education doctoral programs, as the literature review identified a lack of doctoral degrees for college and university presidents, despite the degree being preferable. Additionally, this study did not measure alternative higher education programs (leadership retreats, seminars, workshops).

This study also has limitations. Because only 30 current higher education doctoral students in Virginia were measured using the MLQ-5x™, this does not represent all currently enrolled higher education doctoral students in Virginia. The researchers also did not examine students enrolled in private university higher education doctoral students within Virginia, or students from other states. We also found that most of the sampled students were White and/or female, which indicates that this study may not be an accurate portrayal of TL qualities for male participants and students of color. Another limitation is that only two currently enrolled higher education doctoral students conducted peer reviews on each student participant, and a larger sample size could influence these peer-reported scores. Another limitation is that we did not utilize a pre-test/post-test model, which could indicate growth throughout the program. Other limitations were the enrollment status of participants, sample size, and the survey only being available for a one-month period. Finally, because the MLQ-5x™ survey relies on subjective data collected from participants, this may influence self-reporting and peer-reporting. that the survey relies on

Implications for Theory and Practice

While Bass (1985) theorized that transformational leadership instills trust, appreciation, and allegiance, the higher education doctoral student participants from this study can theoretically inspire future followers through a leadership model that has been indicated

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through research as reliably effective. It was found that the Commonwealth of Virginia does offer higher education doctoral programs that are designed with TL in mind. This was evident through the provision of guest speakers, identifying career goals, the setting of goals, discussions of ethical considerations, and arranging students into cohorts which were elements of these studied programs. Additionally, unique offerings such as student progress reports, mentor-led research, and partnerships with other doctoral departments may provide these students with models that are both creative and critical in their approach.

This study indicated that higher education doctoral students in these programs for the most part possess above average TL qualities, and as Bastedo et al. (2014) found, a correlation between charisma (Idealized Influence) within college presidents and admissions applications received, this positions these doctoral higher education students as able to tackle problems with reductions in enrollment at future institutions. Additionally, if these higher education doctoral students enter mid-level or entry-level positions, they may benefit from TL qualities, as these qualities can instill trust in their colleagues. Basham (2012) found that transformational leaders are better equipped to assist tenured faculty and staff, these doctoral higher education students will perhaps be able to find commonplace leveraging methods that avoid turnover. As Harrison (2000) found that transformational presidents provide shared vision, trust and empowerment, these doctoral higher education students may be able to lead followers into becoming agents of change.

Based on the results of this study, it is the recommendation of the researchers that doctoral higher education doctoral programs offer student progress reports on a semester basis and create partnerships with organizations outside of the program itself. Progress reports can provide guidance for the student regarding their research, professional goals, networking, and job seeking. Not only do these progress reports provide more data to the higher education doctoral program about the growth of a student throughout the program, but they could also provide the student with a more personalized manner of feedback than just final course grades. Higher education doctoral programs should also create partnerships with organizations outside of their programs but within the university, as this can influence the acquisition of more funding opportunities, more knowledge of contemporary trends and practices, and potentially more impact for the program. Partnerships with organizations outside of the university are also recommended. These can provide opportunities for internships, and other experiential opportunities that will provide opportunities for students to gain additional transformational leadership skills but will also provide connections for students for employment upon graduation. Professional Associations, NGOs, and others can provide many excellent leadership positions that may prepare the students for later presidencies. In summation, the higher education doctoral students that possess above average TL qualities will be well equipped for the complexities that surround the American college of university campus, and these recommendations may provide a blueprint for their future tasks.

Recommendations for Future Research

Because of an impending leadership shortage across higher education institutions, it would be wise to measure higher education doctoral students across other states, or even other countries. Examining these doctoral students across more demographics, such as socioeconomic status, career aspirations, enrollment status, or regionally could also provide

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more data for program directors, department chairs and deans of these programs and the schools or colleges within which they operate at the university. While higher education doctoral programs offer numerous TL activities, these activities should be further examined to identify intended versus actualized outcomes. In addition, the TL activities were self-reported by program chairs and program websites, so creating an ethnographic study or observational data could provide different information on the performance of these doctoral higher education programs. Further research could also investigate leaderships styles that are trait-based, behavior-based, skill-based approaches, situational-based, path-goal, leader-member-exchange, servant, authentic, and/or adaptive approaches, and these investigations could provide information on how other leadership styles are being instilled into these doctoral higher education curricula. While this study also focused on doctoral higher education programs, further research within masters' programs could assist with pre-test/post-test of students that are matriculated through both programs.

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Dr. Josh Howell received a BA degree in English and Theatre from Longwood University, a M.A. degree in English Literature from Old Dominion University, and a Ph.D. in Higher Education from Old Dominion University. He works at College of the Albemarle as an Assistant Professor of English and is an adjunct faculty member in the department of Education for Brenau University. His research centers on student success, faculty development, and leadership.

Dr. Kim Bullington received a BA degree in French, a M.A. degree in Applied Linguistics, an Education Specialist in Higher Education degree, and a Ph.D. in Higher Education from Old Dominion University. She works at Old Dominion University as the Chief Departmental Advisor and Programs Manager in the Department of Engineering Management and Systems Engineering and is an adjunct faculty member in the Department of Educational Foundations and Leadership. Her research centers on at-risk student populations with a special focus on military-connected students.

Dr. Dennis Gregory who serves as an Associate Professor of Higher Education and Community College Leadership at Old Dominion University where he has taught for 22 years. Gregory's research interests center around higher education legal issues, beginning with his dissertation which was a study of higher education legal counsel. He has done extensive research around the Clery Campus Safety Act and has published over 100 articles, book chapters, monographs, and media publications. He has presented or co-presented over 200 scholarly and professional presentations. He is a Fulbright Scholar and served from 2018-2020 as a Provost's Fellow for the First Amendment at ODU focusing on faculty rights and responsibilities. Gregory holds an AA from Ferrum College, a BS in History and Political Science from James Madison University, an MSEd in Educational Leadership from the University of Virginia and an EdD from the University of Virginia in Higher Education.

Dr. Mitchell R. Williams is an Associate Professor in the Department of Educational Foundations and Leadership at Old Dominion University. He teaches primarily in the PhD Program in Community College Leadership and the Ph.D. Program in Higher Education. Dr. Williams is the author of numerous peer-reviewed articles on various topics related to the community college, the role of community colleges in addressing poverty, interinstitutional collaboration between two and four-year institutions of higher education, and adult education Williams earned a doctoral degree in Adult and Community College Education from North Carolina State University, and he has master's degrees from both Western Carolina University (M.A.Ed. in Community College Administration) and Georgetown University (M.A. in American Government). His undergraduate degree was earned at Hamilton College in New York.

Dr. Bill Nuckols received his B.A. from Old Dominion University, his J.D. from Southern Illinois University, and his Ph.D. from Old Dominion University. He is an experienced and collaborative leader in higher education policy compliance, academic and military partnerships, and community engagement in both traditional and distance learning academic models. In addition to his 15 years in public and private education, he has 12 years of senior business management experience. He is currently the director of Community Outreach and Engagement at Old Dominion University, and an adjunct faculty member of Education Foundations and Leadership in the Darden College of Education and Professional Development. His research has focused on topics of student debt, higher education law and regulation, and decision-making processes.

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