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# Authentic Leadership in Higher Education: Influencing the Development of Future Leaders

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# Authentic Leadership in Higher Education: Influencing the Development of Future Leaders

## **Abstract**

Higher education institutions are confronted with, and impacted by critical national and global issues. Economic uncertainties and fiscal failures, increasing demands for tighter checks and balances, and widespread corruption of those in positions of leadership are just a few of these issues. Leadership has a direct impact on how effectively and ethically organizations fulfill their mission, meet their goals, and realize anticipated outcomes. This is particularly true today in the complex and fast-changing context of higher education in the 21st century. This study focused on higher education leadership using quantum and authentic leadership theories as the theoretic foundation. Mixed methods methodology was used for this study. Surveys and interviews examined and explored authentic leadership characteristics and behaviors reported by college faculty, staff, and administrators. The findings revealed that there was no tendency for administrators, and the faculty and staff who report to them, to rate themselves higher on ALQ factors. Communication, self-awareness, openness, and trust were important leadership qualities valued by all members. Critical to the development of future leaders, faculty and staff noted the desire for and access to training and professional development.

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Authentic Leadership in Higher Education:  
Influencing the Development of Future Leaders

By

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Supervised by

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## **Dedication**

To my father who told me when I was a little girl that I could do whatever I put my heart and mind to. Your unconditional love, faith, encouragement, patience, and unwavering belief in me guided me through many challenges over the years and helped me realize a life-long dream. You continue to be my “eagle’s wings” pushing me to soar and grow into the person I am meant to be. Your example of tenacity and light-heartedness, and your smiles keep me going. Your quiet gentle spirit inspires me to be authentic and never stop believing in myself and all that is possible. If not for the wisdom you shared and passed on to me, I would not be the woman I am today.

Without the patience of my husband John I could not have found the time and energy to do what I have done. Thank you dear for believing in me and for your love that has seen me through many sleepless nights, and you through too many solitary evenings and weekends.

To my children, Rachel, Aaron and Jessica and their significant others, Russell, Lacey and Rob, I am overwhelmed by your support and encouragement. Growing up, I strove to instill in you the value of education and I realize I am still doing so. Jessica, on my study room wall I posted the note you wrote to me in July 2012 as I began my doctoral program. A part of that note reads, “You taught us that we are leaders and destined to lead. I love you and we’re all rooting for you to finish your studies, satisfied and joyful!! Tell us how we can support you.” This, and all that each of you did in your

own unique ways during this journey, was a blessing. Your love and support mean so much now and always.

Mom, this was for you too. Your dream for me was a little different than my dream, but over the years they somehow became what neither of us could envision. Your life has given mine a depth and meaning few people are ever able to attain. Thank you for teaching me to love life to the fullest.

My beloved granddaughter Celeste, you brought me the highest of the highs and the lowest of the lows during this journey. You are the angel I hold in my heart and the star shining down on me. You gave us all courage to take the next step, to keep going, and to know that all things are part of a bigger plan. Simply stated, as much as we think we know, we cannot know everything!

### **Biographical Sketch**

Sherry Fraser is currently Vice-President for Academic and Student Affairs at Concordia College. Dr. Fraser attended Valparaiso University from 1973 to 1977 and graduated with a Bachelor of Social Work degree in 1977. She attended the University of Illinois Chicago Circle Campus, Jane Addams School of Social Work from 1978 to 1980 and graduated with a Master of Social Work degree in 1980. She came to St. John Fisher College in the summer of 2012 and began doctoral studies in the Ed.D. Program in Executive Leadership. Dr. Fraser pursued her research in Authentic Leadership under the direction of Dr. Jerry Willis and Dr. Michael Muffs and received the Ed.D. in 2014.

## **Abstract**

Higher education institutions are confronted with, and impacted by critical national and global issues. Economic uncertainties and fiscal failures, increasing demands for tighter checks and balances, and widespread corruption of those in positions of leadership are just a few of these issues. Leadership has a direct impact on how effectively and ethically organizations fulfill their mission, meet their goals, and realize anticipated outcomes. This is particularly true today in the complex and fast-changing context of higher education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

This study focused on higher education leadership using quantum and authentic leadership theories as the theoretic foundation. Mixed methods methodology was used to for this study. Surveys and interviews examined and explored authentic leadership characteristics and behaviors reported by college faculty, staff, and administrators.

The findings revealed that there was no tendency for administrators, and the faculty and staff who report to them, to rate themselves higher on ALQ factors. Communication, self-awareness, openness, and trust were important leadership qualities valued by all members. Critical to the development of future leaders, faculty and staff noted the desire for and access to training and professional development.



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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

Most people accept as a given that leadership has a direct impact on how effectively organizations meet their goals and fulfill their mission. That is particularly true today in the complex and fast-changing context of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In the aftermath of more than a decade of economic, political, and social upheaval, demands for open, honest, and trustworthy leaders has grown (Northouse, 2013; Owusu-Bempah, Addison, & Fairweather, 2011). This study focused on higher education leadership from quantum and authentic leadership theoretical perspectives. The study examined and explored authentic leadership characteristics and behaviors reported by college faculty, staff, and administrators. It also explored the development of future leaders in the college where this study was conducted.

As a member of an academic community for 30 years and a senior leader for almost half of those years, the idea of leadership and leaders seemed like an important phenomenon to explore. What motivates a person to lead and how does one become a leader? These were interesting questions for one who preferred to stay in the background and not have attention drawn to her. Curiosity about this personal paradox led to the selection of the topic of this study. The two theoretical perspectives used to examine leadership in higher education were purposefully selected because they encompassed the qualities and characteristics that resonated with this higher education leader.

A breadth of leadership theories exist in the literature, some are well established with an extensive historical context, while others are emerging (Northouse, 2013). These

theories apply to many types of settings and situations. Their approaches to roles, qualities, and expectations of leaders and followers are each unique. Leadership impacts organizational effectiveness and is seen as a highly valued asset (Bennis, 2009; Northouse, 2013). People and organizations continue to ask the question, “What makes a good leader?” Subsequently, institutions of higher education continue to develop and offer programs in leadership studies as well as seminars and workshops for leadership development in response to the demand for increasing knowledge and understanding of best practices for leaders.

To understand and appreciate the uniqueness of authentic leadership it is important to understand other leadership theories and models, and how they compare and contrast with authentic leadership. Following are some leadership theories and models employed in various settings and organizations.

### **Leadership Theories**

Leadership theories view leadership and leaders through a variety of lenses. Bass (1990) suggests leadership may be about:

- group processes where the leader is the center of group change;
- personality or special traits;
- power relationships; or
- influence.

The following leadership theories offered insight into the variations in approaches to leadership.

**Trait theory.** Trait theory evolved from early 20<sup>th</sup> century studies of leaders’ characteristics. These studies explored what made certain people great leaders. Also

referred to as “great man” theories (Northouse, 2013), trait theory focuses on the innate qualities and characteristics of great leaders. This early research focused on understanding the specific traits that differentiated leaders from followers (Bass, 1990; Jago, 1982).

In the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century questions arose (Stoghill, 1974) regarding trait theory. One such concern was that there was no consistent set of traits that differentiate leaders from followers. A person with leadership traits may be a leader in one situation but not in another. From this perspective rather than consisting of specific traits an individual possesses, leadership is viewed as a relationship between people in a social situation (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991; Stoghill, 1948).

Late 20<sup>th</sup> century research however, fueled resurgence in support of trait theory. Kirkpatrick and Locke’s (1991) research determined that leaders differ from non-leaders because of certain characteristics that leaders possess. Six characteristics identified by their research are: drive, motivation, integrity, confidence, cognitive ability, and task knowledge. They contend that these traits can be inherent, learned, or both.

The social background, education, and social status of individuals along with task-related characteristics such as drive, task focus, and desire to excel, were examined (Thomas 2001) as ways to differentiate between individuals with regard to leadership. However, a continuing criticism of trait theory is that it fails to provide a single trait, combination of traits, or distinguishing characteristics associated with effective leadership. Also, trait theory has not been able to distinguish between the traits or characteristics of those who lead and those who do not (Thomas, 2001; Yukl, 1994).

**Behavioral theory.** Behavioral theory looks at leader effectiveness based on what a leader does in a particular situation rather than the leader's individual characteristics. The actions and behaviors of a person define the leader and their leadership (Steers, Porter, & Bigley, 1996). In part, this theory evolved in response to deficiencies in trait theory (Northouse, 2013). Behavioral theory builds upon the assumption that different situations require different behaviors (Steers, Porter, and Bigley, 1996). Therefore, the responses of different leaders to similar situations will produce differing results.

Studies observing the various types of leader behaviors show different effects on outcomes. Two studies, one at Ohio State University and the other at the University of Michigan, focused on identifying leadership behaviors instrumental in achieving organizational group goals. These studies resulted in clustering the group leaders' behaviors into two categories: *consideration* (relationship-oriented) and *initiating structure* (production or task oriented) (Stoghill, 1974).

Blake and Mouton's (1964) managerial grid has four leadership styles along two dimensions: *concern for people* and *concern for production*. This grid illustrates the assertion that a leader who is high in both dimensions is the most effective leader. The potential for leadership effectiveness is still possible if a leader is only high in one dimension (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Bass 1990); however, it may result in a different outcome. A criticism Yukl (1981) and Bryman (1992) offered when they identified some variability in the correlations between behaviors and organizational outcomes was that the results were inconclusive and in some instances contradictory. Another criticism of the grid is the assertion that it is an oversimplification of the behavioral dimensions of



leaders. Some scholars believe that in actuality these behavioral dimensions are quite complex (Nahavandi 2000).

**Contingency theory.** Contingency theory, a *leader-match* theory, attempts to match leaders to appropriate situations. The word contingency suggests that a leader's effectiveness depends on how well the leader's style fits or matches the context of the leadership situation (Feidler & Chemers, 1974; Steers et al., 1996). Contingency theory is supported and grounded in considerable research and has a long-standing history as an approach to leadership (Strube & Garcia, 1981).

A weakness of contingency theory is that it assumes leader stability. It does not address variability in leadership behavior and its effects on follower motivation and satisfaction. It also fails to explain sufficiently what should be done when a mismatch between the leader and the workplace context occurs (Vroom & Jago, 1995).

**Transformational theory.** This type of leadership was originally introduced by Downton (1973) and focuses on charismatic and affective elements of leadership. He was the first to use the term transformational leadership, which involves a leader's influence on followers and incorporates charismatic and visionary leadership to get more from followers than normally expected. Northouse (2013) states, "...transformational leadership is the process whereby a person engages with others and creates connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower." Gandhi is one such example of a transformational leader. Transformational leadership is appealing because it puts the leader in front, providing the vision for the future. The leader is advocating for change and this is intuitively appealing to followers. Bryman (1992) suggested that the needs of followers are central to transformational leadership

and as a result, followers have a more prominent role in the leadership process (Bass & Avolio, 1994).

Counter to these strengths is the notion that transformational leadership lacks clarity. It is difficult to define and covers a wide range of characteristics and activities (Northouse, 2013). Transformational leadership also comes from the perspective that leadership is a personality trait or personal predisposition as opposed to something a person can learn (Bryman, 1992).

**Authentic leadership theory.** Authentic leadership is a relatively new emerging theory and paradigm for leadership. The creation of a theoretical framework to explain authentic leadership draws from the fields of leadership, positive psychology, positive organizational behavior, and ethics (Avolio, 2007; Cooper, Scandura, & Schriesheim, 2005; Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, & Walumbwa, 2005).

Advocates present authentic leadership as an approach that is relevant for positive and desirable organizational outcomes in turbulent and challenging times. Authentic leaders (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans, & May, 2004; Kernis, 2003b) are true to themselves and transparent in all situations. They have the welfare of followers and the organization at heart (Avolio et al., 2004; Gardner et al., 2005; Kernis, 2003b; Luthans & Avolio 2005).

Kernis (2003) describes authenticity as:

Acting in accord with one's values, preferences, and needs as opposed to acting merely to please others or to attain rewards or avoid punishments through acting 'falsely.' ...Authenticity is not reflecting on a compulsion to be one's true self, but rather in the free expression of core feelings, motives and inclinations. (p. 14)

Authentic leaders are keenly aware of their values and beliefs. They are self-confident, genuine, reliable and trustworthy. They also focus on building followers' strengths and broadening their thinking, and creating an organizational environment that is positive and engaging (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Gardner et al., 2005). Authentic leaders have the capacity to be open and make connections with followers in a genuine way (George, 2003; George & Sims, 2007; Walumbwa, Wang, P, Wang, H., Schaubroeck, & Avolio, 2010).

Luthan and Avolio (2003) identified four positive psychological attributes impacting authentic leadership: confidence, hope, optimism, and resilience. These attributes increase leaders' capacity to develop as an authentic leader. Another theorist, (George, 2003) ascribes the following core attributes to authentic leaders:

- they understand their purpose;
- they have strong values about the right thing to do;
- they establish trusting relationships with others;
- they demonstrate self-discipline and act on their values; and,
- they are compassionate about their mission and act from their heart.

**Comparison of leadership theories.** Authentic leadership shares similarities with other leadership models. The connection between authentic and behavioral leadership theory is centered on the leaders' demonstration of consistency in their values and actual behaviors. Authenticity is grounded in leaders' genuine behaviors and not simply in action to be used to influence others' behavior or actions (Kernis, 2003b; Luthans & Avolio, 2003; Shamir & Eilam, 2005).

Blake and Mouton (1964) note, behavioral leaders define the tasks to be performed by followers. Goal achievement is the emphasis and focus of behavioral leadership. Similarly, George and Sims (2007) and Walumbwa et al. (2010) suggest that authentic leaders identify the strengths and limitations of followers and support their goal achievement. However, the emphasis in authentic leadership theory is more on leaders support rather than on the task or goal. Behavioral and authentic leadership models differ in the emphasis they place on genuineness. Behavior theory does not mention genuineness. Owusa-Bempah, Addison, and Fairweather (2011) note, behavioral leaders may feign friendliness and support of followers; whereas authentic leaders are genuinely friendly and supportive of followers (Avolio et al., 2004).

Contingency and authentic leadership models claim to enhance respect of the leader by their followers (Owusa-Bempha et al., 2011). Authentic leaders, however, go further in building a genuine relationship with followers by openly sharing their own strengths and weaknesses and encouraging followers to do the same (Henderson & Hoy, 1983; Kernis, 2003b). Path-goal theory leaders (House & Mitchell, 1974) make sure followers are clear about what is expected of them by setting clear goals. The leader defines the path for followers along with the accompanying outcomes (Bass, 1990; Thomas, 2001). This differs from authentic leaders who, according to Avolio and Gardner (2005), engage followers in the process of determining the “right” course of action. In the case of authentic leadership, the leader is actively involving their followers in goal-setting and outcomes whereas leaders using path-goal theory decide what the goals are and then communicate them to their followers. They are clear about their task but are not involved in discussions relative to determining the goals.

Authentic and transformational leadership theories share a close relationship. However, they are distinctly different in several ways. Unlike transformational leadership, “authentic leaders are anchored by their own deep sense of self; they know where they stand on important issues, values, and beliefs and they are transparent with those they interact with and lead” (Walumbwa, et al., 2008, p. 104). Transformational leaders, according to Brennan (2010), do not automatically require and present such core values.

Another difference is that transformational leaders are characterized as charismatic (Northouse, 2013). “...While charismatic leaders employ rhetoric and persuade, influence, and mobilize followers, an authentic leader energizes followers by creating meaning and positively socially constructing reality for themselves and their followers” (Avolio & Gardner, p. 330).

Mobilizing change is one more difference between authentic and transformational leadership. Luthans and Avolio (2003) note, authentic leadership may include or trigger change, but it is not the primary intent. Brennan (2010) indicates that strategic thinking toward creating change is aligned more closely with transformational leadership. Avolio and Gardner (2005) stress that authentic leadership is a “root construct” providing the basis for other forms of positive leadership such as transformational, visionary, or charismatic.

Increased attention to authentic leadership theory and practice in the last decade is in large part due to the lack of trust in leaders. Increasing economic instability, corporate corruption, acts of terrorism, and growing poverty result in people not trusting those in positions of leadership (Northouse, 2013; Owusu-Bempah, Addison & Fairweather,

2011). Luthans and Avolio (2003) describe authentic leadership using words such as genuine, reliable, trust-worthy, and real. They stress that the most essential quality of an authentic leader is to know and be true to one's self.

### **Problem Statement**

Since 9/11 the United States continues to experience a growing sense of uncertainty and distrust of people in positions of leadership. Organizational corruption, terrorism, and economic uncertainties contribute to distrust of people in positions of leadership (Northouse, 2013; Owusu-Bempah, Addison & Fairweather, 2011). Public reactions such as Occupy Wall Street reflect people's intolerance and unwillingness to silently continue to accept what was unacceptable to them. Kantrowitz (2012) noted that the Occupy Wall Street protest movement's core complaints were concern over corporate greed, corruption, and income inequity. All these are, in part, the result of inauthentic leadership.

Higher education institutions are also dealing with the impact of these current issues. Specifically, the rising cost to attend college is causing serious concern for families and colleges and universities today. Access to college is harder and harder for families to achieve due to increasingly limited financial resources. Then there are those students who do matriculate but never complete their degrees.

President Obama declared in his February 12, 2013 *State of the Union Address*, ...sky rocketing costs price way too many young people out of a higher education, or saddle them with unsustainable debt. Taxpayers can't keep on subsidizing higher and higher and higher cost for higher education. Colleges must do their part to keep costs down, and it's our job to make sure they do. Tonight, I ask

Congress to change the Higher Education Act, so that affordability and value are included in determining which colleges receive certain types of federal aid. (para. 44)

President Obama also raised the concern of relevance of higher education today and the need for attention to student retention and employability of graduates.

Colleges and university leadership must address these changes. Given federal mandates, the need for colleges and universities to take action will require immediate attention and commitment from all those engaged in higher education. Effective leadership will be critical as institutions address these changes. Revising policies, programs, and systems in student services to support students, and revisiting curriculum relevance and delivery for today's college students will require a focused, team approach between administrators, faculty, and staff.

**Leadership in higher education.** Leadership studies offer a multitude of theoretical approaches to explain and understand leadership and the complexities of carrying it out (Bass, 1990; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Gardner, 1990; Nahavandi, 2000). Terry (1993) contends that to identify what is really taking place in leadership, authenticity is necessary. He explains authenticity as genuineness and a refusal to engage in self-deception. Most authentic leadership theory research was the result of studies during the last 20 years. Decreasing confidence and trust in leaders might very well correlate to the rapid increase in attention to authentic leadership studies and the intentional development of authentic leaders in all types of organizations including higher education.

There is a need for humane, constructive leadership that serves the common good (Luthans & Avolio, 2003). George (2003) notes, that society needs leaders who possess a deep sense of purpose and are true to their core values; leaders who consider the needs of their followers and the desires of their constituents. Two important aspects of authentic leaders are *compassion* and *heart*. Leaders develop compassion and heart by getting to know people's life stories. Authentic leaders learn about followers' life stories, and also gain an understanding of their own. These stories inform their leadership (George, 2003; Shamir & Eilam, 2005).

Authentic leaders are also keenly aware of their values and beliefs. They are self-confident, genuine, reliable, and trustworthy. They focus on building followers' strengths, broadening their thinking and creating an organizational environment that is positive and engaging (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, & Walumbwa, 2005). George (2003) argues that people want access to their leaders; they want their leaders to be open and transparent and demonstrate trust and mutual respect. Authentic leaders are open and make connections with followers in a genuine way (George, 2003; George & Sims, 2007; Walumbwa, Wang, P., Wang, H., Schaubroeck, & Avolio, 2010).

Mistrust of people in positions of power may cause people to disconnect (Owusu-Bempah, Addison & Fairweather, 2011). This disconnection (Terry, 1993) results in all kinds of distortions. People distort what is really going on in a situation rather than disclose the truth about what is actually happening. Life or work is not as it appears and it is not clear what is really going on. Leadership, according to Terry (1993), is a response to this doubt, confusion and subsequent disconnection. The purpose of leadership is to



remove doubt, offer clarity, and make connections. Authentic leaders commit to these actions naturally (Luthans & Avolio, 2003).

This study focused on authentic leadership (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Gardner et al., 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2008) as an effective model in higher education and as a lens for understanding the interrelationship between leaders (higher education administrators) and followers (faculty and staff). The principles of authentic leadership can be useful in higher education to address increasing internal and external demands and pressures, especially as they relate to access to college, affordable education, and external evaluation by regional higher education accrediting organizations. This leadership model also attends to tensions and concerns faculty and staff confront as they respond to and manage the growing demands for transparency and accountability. Open and transparent college administrators who make genuine connections (Avolio, 2007) with faculty and staff will be successful in enabling them to meet the demands of their jobs, and service the mission of the college.

Trust and relational transparency (Avolio, 2007; George, 2003; Kernis, 2003) are key factors in successful leadership and followership. Faculty and staff will respond to higher education administrators who are authentic in their leadership. In turn they will convey to constituents this commitment to and trust in the college and its mission. The willingness and desire of students and their families to pay rising costs to attend college or university is, in some respects, influenced and driven by college leaders.

Avolio and Gardner (2005) suggest that authentic leadership is the kind of leadership relevant for positive and desirable organizational outcomes at any time but especially in turbulent and challenging times. Authentic leaders are true to themselves

and transparent in all situations. This transparency opens doors for exchange of ideas, beliefs, and concerns between all members of an organization. The concern for the welfare of followers and the organization, by leaders, is expressed and experienced by everyone (Avolio et al., 2004; Gardner et al., 2005; Kernis, 2003b; Luthans & Avolio 2003).

### **Theoretical Rationale**

There was a breadth of relevant theories that offered varying perspectives on leadership and their applicability to this topic and study. Theories, such as behavioral, contingency and path-goal, trait, and transformational, have some potential alignment with authentic leadership theory. Authentic leadership theory was the model selected for this study. The over-arching macro theory, quantum leadership theory, offers the context to understand the realities of today's world. Quantum and authentic leadership theories framed the rationale for the theoretical perspectives identified for this study.

**Macro theory.** Classical physics that comes out of the 17<sup>th</sup> century Newtonian laws has been the basis for all leadership theories (Blank, 1995). The quantum leadership paradigm understands leadership in the form of parts that come together to make up the whole. Blank (1995) suggests that leadership is an event rather than a list of strengths and weaknesses, a title, or a position.

Blank's own approach goes beyond a Newtonian foundation. The basis of Blank's quantum leadership principle is the Heisenberg uncertainty principle. In the 1930s Heisenberg, the pioneer of quantum physics, replaced Newtonian laws of matter. The quantum theory of matter proposes that to measure a quantum particle one must suspend its motion. However, it is in the motion that the particle exists. Once the particle is

suspended, it no longer exists; what remains is the impression it leaves (Blank, 1995). Blank contends that this quantum theory also applies to leadership. In the attempt to measure leadership it disappears and what is left to measure is a description of the impression left behind.

Quantum theory is about change. Change is not a thing or event rather it is a dynamic of the universe. In essence, change cannot be avoided because it is everywhere and it is inevitable (Ercetin & Kamaci, 2008; Porter-O’Grady & Malloch, 2011). However, it can be influenced and given direction. Authentic leadership is viewed by Avolio & Gardner (2005) and Gardner et al. (2005) as a developmental process that evolves and grows over time. It is seen as an ongoing process of change and is not a fixed trait.

Quantum leadership is an evolving paradigm for understanding and managing change based on the assumptions of quantum physics. Ercetin and Kamaci (2008) suggest that quantum physics assumptions and the quantum leadership paradigm align. These assumptions are noted in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1

*Assumptions of Quantum Physics and Quantum Leadership*

Assumptions of Quantum Physics	Quantum Leadership Assumptions
Particle-wave dilemma	Leadership is an interaction field involving leader-follower dilemma
Uncertainty and possibilities	Leadership cannot be structured and estimated
Discontinuity of energy	Discontinuity of leadership
Limitations in applying the force	Impact of leadership depends on interaction

One of the quantum leadership assumptions is that leaders and followers contribute to and participate in leadership. “Leaders do not perceive themselves as different from followers” (Ercetin & Kamaci, 2008, p. 866), and in many respects that was how this researcher viewed herself. Quantum leaders are interested in followers’ needs and interests. Consequently, followers feel unity and connection to their leader. As a clinical social worker, this was also very relevant to this researcher. Quantum leaders and followers have a shared vision (Ercetin & Kamaci, 2008), the direct result of open discussions and interactions between leaders and followers. This was in direct agreement with George’s (2003) findings that followers want access to their leaders. They want leaders to be open, transparent, and demonstrate trust and mutual respect.

Quantum theory (Porter-O’Grady & Malloch, 2011) posits that all things are tied together; they are interdependent. It follows then that leaders and followers are interdependent. Leaders must use this awareness of the relatedness of processes, actions, behaviors, and functions as they carry out their tasks. Leaders need to communicate the organization’s future actions in understandable and inspiring language and include followers in contributing to these actions.

Leadership practices emerging from the concepts of quantum theory also regard leadership as an uncertain, non-determinate reality. This assumption, based on the uncertainty principle of quantum physics, means leaders need to take risks in unknown areas. Leaders’ success depends on connections and interactions with followers. Leaders embracing the uncertainty assumption do not experience a hopeless chaos and they do not create rules but rather action alternatives (Ercetin & Kamaci, 2008). Alternatives offered to followers allow them to take the initiative and engage in change and creative problem

solving. Avolio and Gardner (2005) noted that authentic leaders engage followers to determine the right course of action.

This idea of leading through relationships rather than standing apart from people resonated with this leader's own experience. It was through relationships and communication with faculty, staff, students, and other administrators that issues were examined, solutions discovered, and interventions initiated. In some cases the potential in other's to lead opened up naturally as a result of these interactions. Using the organizational structure of the college was helpful in guiding these interactions but did not limit them.

The more structure an organization has, the more structure it serves, and the more structure it serves, the more energy and resources are drawn away from the organization's leaders. Blank (1995) and Porter-O'Grady and Malloch (2011) contend that structure is actually an enemy of work and effectiveness, and a fragmented approach to leadership cannot compete in today's competitive environment. A goal of an organization's leadership should be to reduce structure as much as possible. Ercetin and Kamaci (2008) argued that this action prepares leaders and followers for the changes and uncertainties today and in the future. Organizational structure should support and enhance relationship building and dynamic communication and problem-solving.

The idea that different people at different times can be leaders and that leaders can emerge spontaneously as a result of leader-follower interactions relates to the discontinuity phenomenon of quantum physics (Porter-O'Grady & Malloch, 2011). Blank (1995) notes, quantum physics explains that at the deepest levels, reality is a field, an interaction that cannot be understood in terms of separate parts. Rather than an orderly

process in which people with certain “traits” inevitably become leaders, the development of leaders is less defined, less universal, and more contextual. For example, Ercetin and Kamaci (2008) argued that given the right circumstances or needs, anyone can be a leader.

This multifaceted view of leadership represents a significant change in the 21<sup>st</sup> century conceptualization of leadership. It has a number of implications for how leadership is practiced and how it developed. For example, the practice of quantum and authentic leadership result in a different distribution of power. In addition, leadership development is broadly encouraged and supported in others rather than sought in a few people who have the unique potential for leadership (Ercetrin & Kamaci, 2008; Luthans & Avolio, 2003; Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wersing & Peterson, 2008). This last idea, that leadership was something that everyone can do, was built into some contemporary theories of leadership. For example, Luthans and Avolio (2003) posited that authentic leaders are needed today in part because that form of leadership included support and development of colleagues, colleagues who may become leaders in the future.

This general concept, that an important responsibility of leaders is to consciously and thoughtfully help develop tomorrow’s leaders, is especially relevant to higher education. In that field, many of tomorrow’s leaders do not graduate from higher education leadership programs and then take junior leadership posts in higher education institutions. Instead, they began life as professors and student support staff. They began their careers as professional practitioners rather than “professional leaders.”

The final quantum leadership assumption posited by Ercetin and Kamaci (2008) looks at the impact leader-follower interaction has on leadership. Leaders have the potential to influence followers by embracing interactions that extend beyond the formal authority role of the leader. Exhibiting trust, respect and connections by leaders with their followers opens up opportunity for interactions that break the traditional leadership paradigm.

Leaders need to create balance between means and meaning. They need to know how to balance relationships between personal and professional levels. This balance between functional and relational is necessary for developing and maintaining the vitality of people and organizations (Porter-O'Grady & Malloch, 2011). Gardner et al. (2005) described balanced processing as one of the four elements of authentic leadership. Balanced processing is displayed by leaders who seek input from a variety of perspectives and people, considering and objectively analyzing relevant data and points of view when making decisions. It is a quality in leaders identified as authentic because authentic leaders are open about their own perspectives and are also objective in considering others' perspectives.

Historically, and even for some today, leadership focused on the leader as an individual. However, Milewiski (2006) noted no individual leader exists in a vacuum. Rather, they are one part of a larger whole. The organization is in motion and through the lens of quantum leadership theory leadership arises from this motion; specifically the dynamic interrelationships and connections among the members of the organization.

Quantum theory was the grand theory used to provide a broad context to this study. It added a level of breadth to the understanding of authentic leadership. Conceptual

foundations of quantum theory include: envisioning the whole, integration, synthesis, relatedness, and team action (Porter-O'Grady and Malloch, 2011). These paralleled the components of authentic leadership theory: relationships, connectedness, existence, self-discipline, balanced processing, and self-awareness (George, 2003; Luthans & Avolio, 2003; Terry, 1993). Quantum physics and related leadership concepts contributed to the breadth and depth of understanding the relationship and connectedness of quantum leadership theory to authentic leadership theory.

**Mid-level theory.** Authentic leadership theory was the focus of this study.

Luthans and Avolio (2003) described authentic leadership using words such as genuine, reliable, trust-worthy, and real. To respond to the leadership realities confronting higher education and more widely this society, the need to be authentic as a leader today was critical. Trust-worthiness, genuineness, and reliability are essential qualities for leader-follower success.

There was a natural fit between quantum leadership theory as the macro theory for this study and authentic leadership as the mid-level theory. There are several distinct authentic leadership definitions and frameworks emerging that represent varying perspectives flowing from the research. The challenge confronting researchers in the development of the theory was defining the construct and identifying its characteristics (Northouse, 2013).

Authentic leadership was not easy to define. Leadership scholars have no single accepted definition of authentic leadership. There were multiple definitions, each one written from a different perspective with a different emphasis (Chan, 2005). The leading



authentic leadership scholars are Bruce Avolio, William Gardner, Bill George, Fred Luthans, Robert Terry, and Fred Walumbwa.

Focus on the dimensions and qualities of authentic leadership are the approach developed by Bill George (George, 2003; George & Sims, 2007). His research revealed that authentic leaders encompass five dimensions:

- Understand their *purpose*;
- Practice solid *values*;
- Lead with *heart*;
- Establish connected *relationships*; and
- Demonstrate *self-discipline*.

The development of these dimensions takes place over a person's life. They do not evolve sequentially, rather, they grow and evolve through experiences and opportunities.

Additionally, George (2003) noted that each of the five dimensions has a corresponding developmental quality needed for a leader to be authentic:

- *Purpose*: Passion
- *Values*: Behavior
- *Heart*: Compassion
- *Relationships*: Connectedness
- *Self-Discipline*: Consistency

George (2003) also noted, "leadership begins and ends with authenticity. It's being yourself; being the person you were created to be" (p.11). Being one's self is about

recognizing strengths but it is also about recognizing and accepting your faults and weaknesses.

Another way of considering authentic leadership comes from the work of Terry (1993). Terry emphasized the development of a somewhat structured way to practice authentic leadership. His approach to authentic leadership was to focus on problem areas. He developed the *Authentic Action Wheel* as a tool to aid in diagnosing and addressing underlying problems in organizations. There are six components to the action wheel. *Meaning, Mission, and Power* are located around the top of the wheel; around the bottom are *Structure, Resources, and Existence*. In the center of the wheel is *Fulfillment* which represents completion of the process. The basic premise (Terry, 1993) was to locate the problem by asking employees to identify their concerns regarding the organization. Using the action wheel helped leaders identify the real organizational concern or concerns and select the appropriate responses to address the issue.

The model developed by Gardner et al. (2005) looked at authentic leadership from a developmental process of leader and follower self-awareness and self-regulation. Another perspective was that of Luthans and Avolio (2003). They conceptualized authentic leadership as a developmental process drawing from positive psychology and the positive organizational literature. In this model there are four key *positive psychological attributes* Luthans and Avolio (2003) identify in their conceptualization of authentic leadership: confidence, hope, optimism, and resilience.

The last model of authentic leadership comes from the work of Walumawa et al, (2008). This group completed a comprehensive review of the literature on authentic leadership and interviewed experts in the field. The outcome of their research was the

identification of four authentic leadership components or qualities and the development of a valid measure of those components. Their components of authentic leadership are:

- Self-awareness
- Internalized Moral Perspective
- Balanced Processing
- Relational Transparency

These attributes of authentic leadership develop throughout life and are often influenced by critical life events.

The various models of authentic leadership presented here have evolved over the last three decades. These models share common leadership characteristics and qualities such as: compassion, connectedness, self-awareness, transparency, and values (Gardner et al., 2005; George, 2003; Luthan & Avolio, 2003; Terry, 1993; Walumbwa, 2008). They represented an approach to leadership that builds on the conceptual foundation of quantum theory; envisioning the whole, integration, synthesis, relatedness, and team action.

Authentic leadership as presented here was conceptualized in several forms. It was viewed as a lifelong learning process that can be developed over time. Various characteristics, components, qualities, and dimensions provide the context for understanding authentic leadership theory and practice.

This study incorporated authentic leadership theory from several noted scholars. Authentic leadership theory was relevant to understanding and responding to the demands for accountability placed on colleges and universities both externally and internally. Constituents within the academy (administrators, faculty, staff, and students)

needed to trust that the leadership was concerned about their well-being and were truthful in presenting the state of the institution. Simultaneously, college administrators needed engagement and commitment from constituents to insure expectations were met. Clarity regarding what constituents' valued in their leaders emerged through this research.

### **Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of this study was to explore what authentic leadership qualities administrators, faculty, and staff identify in higher education leaders. Additionally, interest and motivation toward leadership opportunities were explored. The intent was to build upon what is already known regarding leadership, with the desire to provide insight into leadership in the context of higher education.

### **Research Questions**

The study addressed the following research questions:

1. Is there a relationship between administrators' self-report of authentic leadership and the authentic leadership attributed to the administrator by their faculty and staff?
2. Is there a relationship between the leadership qualities desired by faculty, staff and administrators?
3. Do faculty and staff express interest in leadership opportunities? If so, what type of leadership opportunities do they desire?

### **Potential Significance of the Study**

There is a real demand for strong leaders in higher education. The need for leaders to serve as college presidents, provosts, deans, and directors has increased (DeFavero, 2003). Organizations such as the Council for Independent Colleges (CIC),

regional commissions on accreditation, and the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) offer seminars, trainings, and workshops specifically for the purpose of developing more leaders in higher education. Growing and nurturing future leaders from within colleges and universities is an important objective that institutions of higher education need to address (DeFavero, 2003).

Additionally, higher education historically modeled a top-down approach to leadership (Keller, 2004). This traditional model has been countered in recent decades by an approach that insisted on broad participation in the leadership process. The *Statement on Shared Government of Colleges and Universities* spoke to the importance of a legitimated faculty role in academic governance and leadership (American Association of University Professors, 1966, 2001). The *Statement* described essential relationships among the board, president, academic administrators, and faculty. Keller (2004) noted two novel things in the *Statement*. One was the broader scope of faculty powers and the second was their influence in nearly every area of institutional leadership and management.

In essence, the AAUP strongly advocated that the faculty become co-leaders of their institutions and that “shared governance” become the model for governance and leadership in higher education. That concept has now been incorporated into the standards for accreditation used by many of the regional agencies that serve as the validators of higher education in the United States. For example, governance and leadership is one of the criteria assessed for accreditation by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (Middle States Commission on Higher Education, 2011) that accredits colleges and universities in New York and adjacent states.

Quantum and authentic leadership models of leadership, if applied widely in higher education, could help develop a strong next generation of leaders for this field. The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between administrators, faculty, and staff perceptions of higher education leadership based on authentic leadership attributes and examined if there was a relationship between this perception and potential interest in leadership development opportunities from faculty and staff.

Increasing the number and quality of future college and university leaders needs to be a priority for higher education today. Fewer faculty are interested in executive leadership roles such as presidential and provost positions. As a result, higher education is experiencing a shortage of leaders due to the disparate orientations of faculty and administrators to their institutional work (Del Favero, 2003). Understanding the leadership dynamic between faculty, staff, and administrators may offer insight into what needs to change to foster the development of quality leaders in colleges and universities.

To understand decision-making and the weight of each voice it was important to recognize that there were many variables influencing faculty voices in colleges and universities, but the most important one was the relationships between faculty and college/university administrators (Morphew, 1999). The results of the work by the AAUP changed the faculty leadership paradigm in higher education and the faculty relationship with higher education administration.

Staff positions in higher education settings represent a different challenge to leaders. As noted, the faculty have systems in place for their voices to be heard. Unless a college or university is unionized, staff are often left without a voice in decision making (Morphew, 1999). The tension that exists on college campuses between faculty and staff

was evident and often the topic of staff conversations when semester and summer breaks arrive. Staff perceived faculty as “having it easy,” being able to work the hours they wanted, and having flexible schedules with little accountability. For colleges to achieve their goals, these tensions needed to be addressed. Authentic leaders do in fact respond to tensions that exist due to distrust, feelings of unfair and unequal treatment, and general dissatisfaction (Luthans and Avolio, 2003; Terry, 1993).

The leaders in higher education have to be ready to respond to these challenges. Kouzes and Posner (2007) noted that the quality of the relationships between leaders and followers is directly linked to the success or challenges leaders face. They contend that leaders who engage in exemplary leadership by modeling the way, inspiring a shared vision, challenging the process, enabling others to act, and encouraging the heart are able to get extraordinary things done. The hope was this study would contribute to the knowledge of valued leadership qualities in higher education.

Spillane (2005) argued that much of what is known about leadership theories focuses on the “what” of leadership instead of the “how.” Focusing only on the “what” of leadership by itself did not lead to an understanding or solutions to leadership challenges.

In today’s world and in times of rapid change, people need direction and meaning in their work (Gardner et al., 2005). American society is still reeling from the impact of significant leadership failures over the last decade. There was and is a desperate need for leaders who can genuinely and transparently, with integrity and high moral standards, engage and lead followers (Avolio & Gardner, 2005).

This study provided a better understanding of the interrelationship between leaders and followers (Bolden & Kirk, 2009). It explored authentic leadership in the

context of higher education and what leadership qualities were desired in this environment. Additionally, it looked at the interests' and aspirations of faculty and staff to move into leadership roles.

### **Definition of Terms**

The following operational definitions for key terms are used for this study:

*Authentic*: qualities such as genuine, true, and real.

*Administrator*: refers to the president, vice-presidents, deans, and directors who serve in positions of leadership and oversight within the college setting.

*Authentic leadership*: identifies a leader-follower model of guiding or directing others through transparent, open, trusting, and connected interactions.

*Authentic leadership qualities*: characteristics identified in the literature associated with those in positions of authority or serving in a supervisory capacity. Characteristics such as: compassion, connectedness, balance, self-discipline, heart, values, self-awareness, genuineness, openness, passion, and purpose are some qualities identified in the literature.

*Authentic Leadership Questionnaire, ALQ* (Walumbwa et al., 2008): 16 item, 4 subscales: self-awareness (4 items), relational transparency (5 items), internalized moral perspective (4 items), and balanced processing (3 items). 16 items summed to form composite authentic leadership score.

*Self-awareness*: a process of reaching deeper to understand one's strengths and limitations.

*Relational transparency*: presenting one's authentic self rather than a false or distorted self; sharing appropriate information and feelings in interpersonal interactions.



*Internalized moral perspective:* leader is guided by internal values and acts according to these, even under pressure.

*Balanced processing:* leader objectively analyzes all relevant data when making decisions; even information contrary to the leader's perspective.

*College:* used interchangeably with higher education, university, campus or institution.

*Full-time:* individuals contracted to work 30 or more hours a week.

*Follower:* anyone directly responsible to and impacted by a leader; faculty and staff.

*Leaders:* those who have people reporting to them; those in supervisory roles; administrators.

*Trust:* belief that a person will behave in a genuine, honest, and reliable manner based on experience with that person.

## **Chapter Summary**

Higher education institutions are confronted with and impacted by critical national and global issues. Economic uncertainties and fiscal failures, increasing demands for tighter checks and balances, and widespread corruption of those in positions of leadership were some of these issues.

Authentic leadership is an emerging leadership theory. Research and studies of authentic leadership in public and for-profit industries is well represented. There was less known about this leadership model and its relevance in colleges and universities. The study of authentic leadership in higher education may provide insight and opportunities for strategic development in colleges and universities as their leadership confronts

present day realities facing higher education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Review of the literature, the research study, analysis, and discussion of findings presented in the chapters that follow offer some initial understanding of the interface between authentic leadership and higher education.

## **Chapter 2: Review of the Literature**

### **Introduction and Purpose**

The research and studies on authentic leadership were informative guides to understanding this emerging leadership theory. Authentic and transformational leadership were closely related to other leadership theories in content and defining elements.

Authentic leadership theory responded to what Bennis and Thomas (2002) described as a world that is becoming more dangerous and where problems are more complex and dire.

A review of empirical literature and studies examining authentic leadership theory and practice follow. Understanding the desired qualities of leaders and the interrelationship between leaders and followers (Bolden & Kirk, 2009) in higher education and the qualities valued by followers of leaders in higher education was the focus of this study. Review of literature on faculty shared governance included here offers insight into leadership dynamics and realities in higher education. Administration, faculty, and staff governance and leadership vary from institution to institution depending on size, academic offerings, affiliations, and location to name a few. This study explored authentic leadership in a small, private, co-educational, religiously affiliated, liberal arts college.

### **Review of the Literature**

**Quantum leadership.** Assumptions of quantum and classical physics were compared to and became the basis for explaining the basic assumptions for the foundation of quantum leadership (Ercetin & Kamaci, 2008). In quantum leadership,

leadership is viewed as an *interactional field*. The relationship between the leader and follower is primary. Four assumptions of quantum physics were looked at by Ercetin and Kamaci (2008) in their study based on the connection and relationship they have to leadership. Those quantum physics assumptions are: the wave-particle relationship; uncertainty and possibility; energy instability; and the limited application of power (Beiser 2003).

Quantum leadership theory considers the unstructured and unpredictable reality of leadership (Blank, 1995; Ercetin & Kamaci, 2008). With that understanding, leaders have to be able to handle unique realities in institutions, and manage organizational chaos. Ercetin and Kamaci (2008) asserted that preparing for, and managing change, are critical abilities leaders of the future will need. They note,

In this age of change (because change is inevitable) nothing seems to be in order and foreseen. And our most humanlike response to this state of confusion is trying to brace as strong as possible against it, regardless of the truth that the more rigid we stand against, the harsher state of devastation we will suffer. (p. 866)

The quantum leadership paradigm speaks to the fact that uncertainty and discontinuity are part of life and, therefore by default, a part of leadership. Alternatives offered to followers allowed them to take the initiative and engage in change and creative problem solving and shared decision making. Ercetin and Kamaci (2008) posited that today's leaders must foster the development of new leaders who will help respond to and shape organizations for the future.

**Institutional culture.** Institutional culture often refers to the manner in which meaning is generated, conveyed, and interpreted within the college or university and

hence defines appropriate behaviors within the college or university (Gayle, Tewarie, and White, 2003; Tierney, 2006). The culture of an institution is influenced and shaped by a variety of indicators. Key indicators for colleges and universities' culture are mission, affiliation, student composition, and faculty's role and research expectations (Gayle et al., 2003).

College and university culture is continually evolving. Change in the mission statement or student composition will likely impact institutional culture. Expectation of faculty roles may dramatically change the culture of the college or university. This evolution provides a lens to examine and understand faculty participation in the organization and faculty role in governance (Gayle et al., 2003).

Currie (2005) conducted a longitudinal study of shared governance at Murdoch University. In the early years of the university, academic policies were discussed openly. As administrative management began to dominate, opaqueness replaced transparency; trust between administration and faculty broke down. A new vice chancellor restored an atmosphere of trust as he demonstrated willingness to listen to faculty. Currie (2005) revealed that despite social and economic challenges, collegiality can persist if leadership believes in shared governance and gains the trust of the university community. Faculty needs trust in administrators and the governance process to be motivated participants in governance (Birnbaum, 2004; Currie, 2005; Lewis, 2011).

Effective systems of shared governance are difficult to maintain when relationships between faculty and administrators as partners in governance are evolving and accountability, economics, and technology are rapidly changing (Currie, 2005; Del Favero, 2003; Pope, 2004). When trust between administration and elected faculty

council members at Murdoch University broke down, there was a need for change. The change helped restore a relationship of trust between the two groups. This ability to change was critical to establishing the legitimacy of the council. The legitimacy of a decision making body depends on respect of the membership, its power, and the trust of the institution (Currie, 2004; Pope, 2004).

Proper training was a contributing factor to change. A pilot study conducted by Genrich, Banks, Bufton, Savage, and Owens (2001) revealed that educating leaders to appropriately delegate decisions to groups may help both experienced and inexperienced leaders effectively engage in shared governance. Providing training to develop effective decision makers enhances the culture of the institution and motivation for faculty participation.

Lewis (2011), Birnbaum, (2004), and Tierney (2006) agreed that the decision making role of faculty in institutional governance was extremely valuable to faculty participation in governance. Institutional willingness to provide ongoing support to faculty is critical. Training programs in principles of shared governance and leadership are instrumental in supporting faculty and growing their knowledge and skills.

Knowledge and understanding of styles of leadership enable faculty to participate in shared governance in meaningful ways. Effective leaders, ones who respect and value those who work under them, enhance the institutional culture. They help create a nurturing environment and a culture for success (Birnbaum, 2004; Simplicio, 2011). Leadership style touches on all areas of campus operations and governance. This impact can be positive or negative and set the benchmark for day-to-day interactions of the institution (Simplicio, 2011).

Reduced funding and increased external scrutiny in higher education in recent years have changed decision making and institutional culture in colleges and universities (Hearney, 2010). In times of upheaval and change, administration diverts their attention to how decisions are made and by whom. This potential cultural shift compromises the values that help foster and promote shared governance (Hearney, 2010; Lapworth, 2004).

The effectiveness of the university, Birnbaum (2004) pointed out, was based on reliability and trust not on efficiency and speed. Kerr (1963) argued faculty involvement in shared governance may slow down the decision making process. However, it also assumes more thorough discussion and provides the institution with a sense of order and stability.

Faculty participation in shared governance was linked to institutional culture. Faculty participation influences and shapes the culture of the college or university. Understanding the college or university culture was a starting point for determining faculty investment and involvement in the institution.

**Social capital and leadership.** Tierney (2006) credits James Coleman and Pierre Bourdieu with the concept of social capital. Its origins are in sociology and theory associated with groups. Affiliation, membership, and involvement with a group have positive benefits. Social capital is a framework that enables individuals and groups to accomplish specific goals. Goal achievement results in positive benefits to group members and social networks. It also reinforces norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness (Birnbaum, 2004; Tierney, 2006). The concept of relationships impacting trust and performance relate directly to authenticity.

These interpersonal networks provide people with benefits they would not have in isolation. In a college or university it provides faculty interpersonal relationships, collegial support, and communication networks which include feedback and reflection. It strengthens the legitimacy of leaders and creates mutually reinforcing bonds of identity, confidence, and support between leaders and followers (Birnbaum, 2004).

Tierney (2006) emphasized that trust within a college is an important aspect of social capital. In academic organizations, Tierney (2006) suggested, the primary use of social capital is that it provides the conditions for trust and trustworthiness. Birnbaum (2004), Crellin (2010), and Kezar (2004) agreed, noting that trust leads to cooperation. Leaders who understand their purpose, practice solid values, lead with the heart, possess social capital, and establish connected relationships (George, 2003; George & Sims, 2007).

Conversely, a reduction of social capital not only weakens the influence of constituents within an organization, it also reduces the effectiveness of their leaders. Putnam (2000) states, that an organization or group of virtuous but isolated individuals is not likely to be rich in social capital.

Findings of a national study conducted by Tierney and Minor (2003) of over 3,800 individuals from 750 colleges and universities found that 80% percent of faculty believes participation in governance and leadership was an important aspect of their institution's values and identity. Shah (2009) affirms the need for trust in governance reporting that nothing is possible without trust between people in community. It is the common thread that binds leaders and followers. "Trust can't be imposed from top on



people working at lower levels; it is a kind of reward which, true leaders earn by speaking the truth” (p. 403).

A qualitative study, conducted by Lewis (2011), of two Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), affirmed research findings by Birnbaum (2004) and Tierney (2006) regarding social capital in colleges and universities. This study was conducted at two HBCUs – one public and one private – using a 12-item interview protocol. It consisted of open-ended questions presented to six tenured faculty at each institution and six upper level administrators from the private HBCU and five from the public HBCU.

The findings highlighted the importance of awareness of college and university culture; norms, values, and communication patterns, versus hierarchical structures with top-down decision making. The faculty role in institutional leadership is extremely valuable. It provides the opportunity to improve quality and integrity of the institution (Lewis, 2011). Additionally, Lewis (2011) reported, respondents believed the decision-making roles provides them encouragement, commitment, and satisfaction. They noted that when faculty’s decision-making role was limited to decisions on solely academic matters faculty commitment and satisfaction were lacking.

**Authentic leader identity.** Klenke (2007), in her study, *Authentic Leadership: A Self, Leader, and Spiritual Identity Perspective*, introduced a model of authentic leadership focused on a single explanatory concept of identity. This concept of identity specified three interrelated systems: self-identity, leader-identity, and spiritual identity.

One of the key distinguishing characteristics of authentic leaders is that they are anchored by their own deep sense of self (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Self-identification is

the process of “fixing and expressing one’s own identity, privately through reflection about oneself and publicly through self-disclosure, self-presentation, and other activities that serve to project one’s identity to audiences” (Schlenker, 1985, p. 66).

From the research Klenke (2007) postulated three propositions regarding the self-identity system in authentic leadership: (1a) authentic leaders have a greater sense of self-awareness than inauthentic leaders, (1b) a leader’s healthy and authentic self-identity is one in which the component sub-identities are integrated, and (1c) authentic leaders have a more differentiated self-identity than less authentic leaders.

Leader-identity (Klenke, 2007) is derived from leaders’ self-identity and the human capital they bring to their leadership role. Authentic leaders have a highly developed sense of their own roles as leaders and carry a responsibility to act morally and in the best interest of others (May, Hodges, Chan, & Avolio, 2003).

Klenke (2007) posited three propositions regarding leader-identity: (2a) authentic leaders have a stronger sense of leadership self-efficacy than inauthentic leaders, (2b) authentic leaders have stronger and more favorable reputations than inauthentic leaders, and (2c) authentic leaders are more likely to assume the role of prototypical member than inauthentic leaders.

The development of an individual’s spiritual identity or spiritual self (Klenke, 2007) were poorly understood with few models to guide researchers. There was a lack of consensus associated with the definition of spirituality. This was part of the reason why theories of spiritual development are also lacking (Klenke, 2007). Spiritual identity Klenke (2007) noted was built on three sub-identities: self-disclosure, self-transcendence, and self-sacrifice.

Klenke (2007) noted an “avenue for future research involves the use of critical incidents of authentic and inauthentic leader behaviors to produce typologies of authentic leader behaviors that may be instrumental in defining the nomological network of the construct domain more precisely” (p. 89). Another area of research was looking into the role of trigger events in the lives of authentic leaders (Klenke, 2007). Bennis and Thomas (2002) defined these events as transformational; experiences which bring a person a new or altered sense of identity. The authentic leadership construct, Klenke (2007) pointed out, was important and promising; it focuses scholars’ attention on the inner dynamic of leadership as *being* as opposed to leadership as *doing*.

**Multidimensional construct of authentic leadership.** Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wersing, and Peterson (2008) proposed a multidimensional construct of authentic leadership. To carry this out they identified three objectives. The first objective was to “build a case for a higher order, multidimensional theory-based questionnaire of authentic leadership, Authentic Leadership Questionnaire [ALQ]” (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 91), and offer evidence for its construct validity. The second objective was “to demonstrate the utility of a four-factor authentic leadership construct by showing its ability to uniquely predict relevant organizational outcomes beyond closely aligned measures of other recognized forms of leadership...ethical and transformational...” (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 91). The final objective was “to empirically examine the extent to which authentic leadership contributes to individual follower job satisfaction and performance” (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 91).

To accomplish these objectives data was obtained from Kenya, The People's Republic of China, and the United States. Three separate studies were conducted for each of the objectives identified.

For these studies Walumbwa et al. (2008) defined authentic leadership as:  
...a pattern of leader behavior that draws upon and promotes both positive psychological capacities and positive ethical climate, to foster greater self-awareness, an internalized moral perspective, balanced processing of information, and relational transparency on the part of leaders working with followers, fostering positive self-development. (p. 94)

The results of the first study, *Dimensional Structure of a Higher Order Authentic Leadership Construct*, demonstrated that the four factors of authentic leadership; self-awareness, relational transparency, internalized moral perspective, and balanced processing were not independent. It was likely that a single second-order factor accounted for this dependence. The study's results "suggest that it might not be reasonable to conceptualize the measures as assessing entirely separate and distinct constructs" (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 101).

The sample for this study consisted of full-time employees; 224 from the United States and 212 from China. "Our confidence in the plausibility of the higher order factor model of authentic leadership is further strengthened by the observation that no significant differences were found between two diverse samples" (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 101).

The second study, *Authentic, Ethical, and Transformational Leadership and Follower Work Outcomes*, reflected data collected over a span of two semesters from a large southwestern U.S. university. The average age of participants was 26 years. The

Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ), the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), the Organizational Citizenship Behavior scale (OCB), an organizational commitment measure, and the Job Description Index were used to collect data (Walumbwa et al., 2008).

Walumbwa et al. (2008) pointed out positive relationships between the four underlying dimensions of authentic leadership and measures of ethical leadership. Additionally, “the four dimensions of authentic leadership correlate positively with ethical leadership and the dimensions of transformational leadership, but not so highly as to indicate construct redundancy” (p. 111).

The third study, *Authentic Leadership, Follower Job Satisfaction, and Individual Job Performance*, included participants who were working adults in 11 U.S. multinational companies in Kenya. Of the 610 participants, 478 responses were included. The ALQ and the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and surveys were used to collect data (Walumbwa et al., 2008).

Follower perceptions of leader authenticity positively related to follower job satisfaction and job performance. Walumbwa et al. (2008) indicated that the findings offer some insights regarding potential relationships between authentic leadership and follower job satisfaction and related job performance.

The results of these studies provide evidence supporting the reliability and validity of the ALQ. The ALQ therefore was one method available to future researchers (Walumbwa et al., 2008). These studies also suggested that future research might use

methods such as observations and coding of speeches, e-mail, and other correspondences to assess authentic leadership.

Puls' (2012) doctoral dissertation study looked at authentic leadership's relationship to effectiveness of pastors. He combined the use of the ALQ with a second quantitative instrument, the Ministry Effectiveness Inventory (MEI) developed by Majovski (1982). This quantitative study explored whether there was a relationship between authentic leadership and ministerial effectiveness of pastors.

Ordained clergy in the Indiana District of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS) participated in the research. They were full-time pastors who served at least three years in this district and had two to three lay leaders. The ALQ and MEI surveys were sent electronically to them. Final data analysis included 58 clergy, representing 37% of all eligible clergy, and 164 lay leaders (Puls, 2012).

What Puls (2012) discovered in his analysis was, overall, pastors rated themselves slightly higher than lay leaders on ministerial effectiveness. Pastors however, rated themselves slightly lower on authentic leadership skill than their lay leaders rated them. Puls (2012), believed that authentic leadership skills were not considered as essential as skills in ministerial effectiveness. Traditional seminary education does not address leadership behaviors and skills, rather study is focused more on oral communication and presentation, pastoral care, and Scripture.

This dissertation study highlighted a key point. People serving in leadership capacities often focus more on the knowledge and skill of their particular role with little to no attention given to the behavioral and interpersonal qualities and skills also needed for success. Puls' (2012) research supported the idea that authentic leadership awareness

and development is critical to success in work and vocation. The study also affirmed the usefulness of the ALQ in gathering valid data for research and analysis.

**Development of authentic leaders.** George and Sims (2007) conducted a research study to answer the question, “*How does one become and remain an authentic leader?*” Their working definition of authentic leadership included five dimensions: pursuing purpose with passion, practicing solid values, leading with heart, establishing connected relationships, and demonstrating self-discipline.

To find their purpose, George and Sims (2007) contended that authentic leaders needed to first understand themselves and their passions. “In turn, their passions show the way to the purpose of their leadership. Without a real sense of purpose, leaders were at the mercy of their egos and narcissistic vulnerabilities” (George & Sims, 2007, p. xxxii). Leaders are also defined by their values. Integrity was the one value every authentic leader was required to possess. Without integrity, there was no trust (George & Sims, 2007).

George and Sims (2007) also noted that authentic leaders lead with the heart as well as the head. Authentic leaders can make difficult choices in spite of the perception that if you lead with the heart you are soft. In truth, authentic leaders have passion for their work, compassion and empathy for the people served, and courage to make difficult decisions. “Courage is an especially important quality for leaders as they navigate through unpredictable terrain” (George & Sims, 2007, p. xxxiii).

George and Sims (2007) pointed to another important element of authentic leaders, the ability to develop meaningful relationships with followers. Followers of authentic

leaders demonstrated high levels of commitment to their work and loyalty to their organization.

The final dimension of authentic leadership George and Sims (2007) identified is self-discipline both in professional as well as one's personal life. This meant accepting full responsibility for outcomes as well as holding others accountable. Self-discipline also reflects the ability to admit mistakes and initiate corrective action.

Based on these five dimensions of authentic leadership field interviews were conducted with 125 leaders ranging in age from 23 to 93. These leaders were identified based on their reputation for being authentic and successful (George & Sims, 2007). The interviews averaged 75 minutes in length and leaders responded to a common set of questions.

George and Sims (2007) reported this study did not produce a profile of an ideal leader. Rather they discovered that, "leaders are defined by their unique life stories and the way they frame their stories to discover their passion and the purpose of their leadership" (George & Sims, 2007, p. xxvii).

Research conducted by Preus, Wesche, Streicher, Braun and Frey (2012) using the definition of authentic leadership from Walumbwa et al. (2008) posited that in order to become an authentic leader, possession and development of skills in self-awareness and relational transparency are necessary. Emphasis on the possession and development of skills (Preus et al., 2012) is important in the development of authentic leaders. They see skills such as analyzing information, listening more than speaking and being a moderator of discussions as central to authentic leadership development.



Diddams and Chang's (2012) study of authentic leadership development examined authenticity as a developmental process; one that evolves over time as introspective and self-critical learning takes place. Authentic leaders grow in their capacity as leaders as cognitive development, understanding and appreciation of self in relation to others increases. They advocated a conception of self-esteem that was capable of avoiding defensiveness in the face of negative feedback. Most important to Diddmas and Chang's (2012) work was the importance of acknowledging the presence of weakness as a natural part of the self, thus potentially impacting self-esteem and authentic leader development.

**Exemplary leadership practices.** After 25 years of conducting research on leadership, Kouzes and Posner (2007) uncovered five practices common to personal-best leadership. This research occurred through case analyses and survey questionnaires. They discovered that when getting extraordinary things done, leaders engaged in *Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership* (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). These common practices, available to everyone, are:

- model the way,
- inspire a shared vision,
- challenge the process,
- enable others to act, and
- encourage the heart.

Kouzes and Posner (2007) reported that these five common leadership practices have stood the test of time. Their recent research confirmed that they are as relevant today as they were at the beginning of their research. These practices align with those of Avolio et al. (2004); Luthans and Avolio (2003); and Walumbwa et al. (2008).

Kouzes and Posner's (2007) findings and analysis of the findings challenged the myth that leadership and leaders are found only at the highest levels of organizations. Also challenged in their findings is the belief that leadership is only for a few charismatic people. Leadership is available to all people and Kouzes and Posner (2007) affirm that leadership is possible for anyone with the desire to be a leader.

Kouzes and Posner (2007) made another point based on their analysis of research findings; leadership is a relationship. It is a relationship between people who aspire to lead and those who choose to follow. The quality of the relationship between leaders and followers is directly linked to the success or challenges leaders face.

### **Chapter Summary**

Authentic leadership theory is an emerging theory. The potential significance of authentic leadership as a leadership model in higher education seems promising but needs further study. The research indicates that this leadership model is well suited for the higher education environment and challenges confronting academic leadership. Institutional culture, social capital, and authentic leadership identity all keenly contribute to higher education goal attainment.

Quantum theory as the grand theory informing this study proves a useful lens to view authentic leadership. Porter-O'Grady and Malloch (2011) contend that:

Effective leaders possess a deep comfort with themselves, and...have a depth of commitment and a reservoir of spirit and energy that is inspiring. Leaders who are more than just effective...have an understanding or acceptance that some deep force runs through all existence and gives it form and life and direction as yet mysterious. (p. 464)

This study intended to build upon what was known regarding authentic leadership. It provided a better understanding of the interrelationship between leaders and followers (Bolden & Kirk, 2009). It also explored the context of higher education and whether there was consistency in the authentic leadership qualities identified by higher education leaders with those identified by followers; administrators, faculty, and staff.

The authentic leadership model developed by Luthans and Avolio (2003) conceptualizes authentic leadership as a life-long learning process; a process that can be developed over time. A college setting, where learning was at the heart of the mission, seemed a likely place to study authentic leaders and their effect on their followers and their environment.

The success or failure of companies and organizations around the world can be attributed to leadership and leaders (Yukl, 1981). Colleges and universities cannot be excluded from this reality. This fact alone made the study of leadership relevant and necessary for the success of colleges and universities today and into the future.

## **Chapter 3: Methodology**

### **Introduction**

Most of us accepted as a given that leadership has a direct impact on how effectively organizations meet their goals and realize anticipated outcomes. That is particularly true today in the complex and fast-changing context of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In the aftermath of more than a decade of economic, political, and social upheaval, demands for open, honest, and trustworthy leaders has grown (Owusu-Bempah, Addison, & Fairweather, 2011; Northouse, 2013). This has extended into higher education. Concerns regarding the escalating cost to attend college, the soaring post-graduation debt, and the limited employment opportunities for graduates, has contributed to these demands for honesty and transparency.

In this context colleges and universities are being drawn into the growing distrust of leaders. This, in part, motivated this study and its focus on higher education leadership using quantum and authentic leadership theories as the theoretical foundation. The study examined and explored authentic leadership characteristics and behaviors reported by college faculty, staff, and administrators. It also explored the development of leaders in the college where this study was conducted.

The idea that anyone can be a leader (Ercetin & Kamaci, 2008) is one of the most significant changes in 21<sup>st</sup> century leadership. Quantum leadership models result in the distribution of power and the development of followers. Luthan and Avolio (2003) posited that leaders today need to develop followers and leaders for the future. This is at

the heart of authentic leadership theory. Leaders who adopt the discontinuity of leadership assumption share leadership. In the process of shared leadership everyone's potential is enriched (Ercetin & Kamaci, 2008).

To date, most research on authentic leadership has come from studies conducted in corporations. For example, George and Sims (2007) conducted interviews with 125 leaders in corporate, political, and entrepreneurial arenas as they developed their understanding and perspective of authentic leadership.

Bill George (2003), former Chairman and CEO of Medtronic, proposed that more authentic leaders were needed in a wide range of fields. They would be leaders who had courage to build organizations to meet the needs of all their employees and grew leaders for the future. In their book *True North*, George and Sims (2007) contended that leaders were not born, nor do they see themselves as leaders. Rather, "they viewed themselves as people who wanted to make a difference and inspire others to join with them in pursuing common goals" (George & Sims, 2007, p. 8). The experiences they wrote about reinforced the need to engage in the study of authentic leadership in higher education and to find ways to develop authentic leaders for the future.

### **Research Design**

This mixed-methods study explored authentic leadership in higher education. The characteristics of an authentic leader identified specifically by Avolio, Gardner, and Walumbwa (2007) are:

- Self-awareness - the degree to which a leader is aware of their strengths, limitations, and their impact on others;

- Transparency - relates to the level of openness and ability of a leader to communicate their true intentions and desires;
- High standard for moral and ethical conduct - looks at evidence that shows that decision making and behavior are consistent with internalized values; and
- Balance processing - represents the ability to take input from diverse points of view and consider them when making decisions.

These four characteristics were surveyed using the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ) (Walumbwa et al., 2008) administered by Mind Garden. The multi-rater version of the ALQ survey provided two types of data. One is a leader's self-report which identified the authentic leadership characteristics the leader believes she or he possesses and practices. The other, reports what the follower, in this study the faculty and staff, believed the leader possessed and practiced with regard to the ALQ factors. One goal was to discover if there was a relationship between what higher education administrators self-report and what their faculty and staff report about authentic leadership characteristics.

In addition to the quantitative data obtained from the ALQ, a set of qualitative data was collected from a series of interviews. An interviewer asked questions as a means of obtaining self-reflective information. An interviewer is typically seen as receptive and open to information shared by individuals (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). In this study nine interviews were conducted with administrators, faculty, and staff. Each had an opportunity to engage in interactive face to face dialogue regarding authentic leadership and leadership development in higher education. The interviews took place after the ALQ survey was completed.

This was a cross-sectional survey design (Creswell, 2009) with the intended purpose of describing attitudes, opinions, values, and behaviors of higher education administrators, faculty, and staff regarding authentic leadership and the development of leaders in higher education. Participants were afforded the opportunity to respond to interview questions and share confidentially their thoughts and experiences relative to the questions presented.

### **Research Questions**

The research questions were:

1. Is there a relationship between administrators' self-report of authentic leadership and the authentic leadership attributed to the administration by their faculty and staff?
2. Is there a relationship between the leadership qualities identified by faculty, staff, and administrators?
3. Do faculty and staff express interest in leadership opportunities? If so, what type of leadership opportunities do they desire?

### **Research Context**

The college where this study was conducted was a small, private, religiously affiliated, co-educational liberal arts college with a full-time enrollment (FTE) under 1,000. It is located in downstate New York. This institution employs 118 full-time employees. There are also part-time (below 20 hours) employees who were not included in the study.

## **Research Participants**

The organizational structure of the college begins with the college president. There were seven senior level administrators on his council who reported to him. These senior administrators were each responsible for oversight of specific areas across the institution: Those seven senior positions were: Dean of College/Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs; Chief Financial Officer; Vice President for Advancement; Vice President for Enrollment Management; Vice President for Administration; Vice President for Special Projects; and Dean for Program Development and International Education.

Five of the seven senior administrators were full-time and had deans, directors, chairs, and/or senior managers reporting to them. In the case of the Dean of the College, there was a Dean's Cabinet. This Cabinet represented deans who oversaw the academic and student affairs of the college. The deans and directors had academic chairs, program directors, and senior managers reporting to them. These mid-level leaders had faculty and staff reporting to them.

The individuals asked to participate in the ALQ component of the research constituted a purposive sample (Huck, 2012) of the college employees. It included all full-time employees (defined as those contracted to work 30 or more hours per week by the college) who were employed by the college for more than six months. One exception was the college President. The President was not included because there was only one person at that level of leadership. Part-time employees were excluded from the study since they did not have the benefit of the same campus experiences or opportunities as



full-time employees. Due to their part-time status their presence on campus was limited, as was their access to the interactions of full-time employees.

This was a purposive sample and all participants were full-time employees of the college, grouped together based on their respective roles within the college's reporting structure. Eleven college senior administrators (President's Council members, deans, and directors) were invited to complete the ALQ self-rater survey. Seventy-two faculty and staff, reporting to the 11 identified senior level administrators, were also asked to complete the ALQ survey as a rater for the leader to whom they reported.

### **Data Collection Instruments**

The Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ) developed by Avolio et al., (2007) was the survey tool selected for quantitative data collection. The primary focus was the portion of the ALQ that gathers ordinal data on four different aspects of authentic leadership. It is based on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from zero, - "not at all" to four, "frequently, if not always." There are six distinct questions. The four ALQ factors measured were: leader self-awareness, relational transparency, internalized moral perspective, and balanced processing (Walumbwa et al, 2007).

The ALQ was administered online by Mind Garden. The names and work email addresses of those who consented to participate in the study were provided to Mind Garden by the researcher. An email accompanied the survey providing instructions and timeline for completing the survey. The survey completion period was three weeks. Two follow-up reminder emails were sent as scheduled at the start of the survey period. Participants were coded by number to maintain survey confidentiality.

Once Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was obtained, this process began with the researcher sending a letter of invitation and an Informed Consent Form to each potential participant. A sample letter is in Appendix A. The Informed Consent Form was based on a model from the St. John Fisher College Institutional Review Board and is in Appendix B. Once the Informed Consent Form was signed and returned, those consenting to participate in the study were included in the list of emails the researcher submitted to Mind Garden, the official digital scoring provider for the instrument. The survey tool was administered electronically by Mind Garden. Participants received a \$5.00 gift card for completing the survey.

The ALQ has established content and predictive validity. It has been tested with populations in the United States, China, and Kenya (Walumbwa et al., 2008). Reliability of this instrument is also reported by the survey authors, and research by the developers indicates it is valid for the purpose for which it was developed. In this study the survey was not altered or modified from its original form.

Nine individuals, three from the group of administrators (VPs, deans, and directors), three from the faculty, and three from the group designated as staff, were randomly selected to participate in face – to – face interviews. The selection process involved separating the participant names into administrators, faculty, and staff categories and then, using an online tool to randomly select names from each group. No one declined to participate so selection of alternates was not necessary.

An experienced interviewer who was not part of the study sample conducted all interviews. The interviewer's primary task (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009) was to create an atmosphere for the open expression of personal views on a topic, to have respect for

participants, and have primary responsibility for directing the discussion and recording the interview. The interviews took place in a neutral location, free from distractions, and convenient for participants to access. The space provided enough room for comfortable seating to foster easy discuss and observation. Additionally, the interviews were scheduled at a time that was mutually agreed upon by the participants and the interviewer. The duration of the interviews varied but typically lasted one hour.

During the session the interviewer asked nine basic or core questions as well as unplanned, generally clarification and follow up, questions. Opening, introductory, and transition questions began the session and then key questions, those that drove the study, followed. To close the interview, final questions were asked to allow the participants an opportunity to reflect back on previous comments. The core questions were consistent across the interviews with all nine participants. These questions are in Appendix C.

### **Data Analysis**

The three research questions were addressed through multiple analyses. The procedure for each of the three research questions is described below.

**Research question 1.** Is there a relationship between administrators' self-report of authentic leadership and the authentic leadership attributed to the administrator by their faculty and staff?

Two statistical analyses addressed this research question. The first analysis calculated the Self score of the ratings of senior administrators on each of the four authentic leadership factors and the median ratings by the faculty and staff who reported to them to determine the difference of Self and Other scores. The sign test was used for this statistical analysis. Then the percent difference  $>$  or  $<$  .5% between the Self and

Other ratings were calculated. The second analysis compared the calculated the difference between the mean higher education sample and the mean normative sample for each of the four ALQ factors.

**Research question 2.** Is there a relationship between the leadership qualities identified by faculty, staff, and administrators?

The median ratings for the associated authentic leadership factors of self-awareness, relational transparency, ethical and moral conduct, and balanced processing (Walumbwa et al., 2007) on the ALQ from the higher education sample and a normative sample were compared. The results were presented using charts and bar chart to report the data and the findings.

Data analysis from interviews was based on the interview transcripts. Themes, patterns, and non-verbal responses (Creswell & Clarke, 2007; Litosseliti, 2003; and Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998), were summarized as well as a composite presentation of interview content. Qualitative data from the interviews were rich in providing information and insights not available from the survey. Blending the data from both the ALQ survey and the interviews gave deeper understanding to the responses to the research questions.

**Research question 3.** Do faculty and staff express interest in leadership opportunities? If so, what type of leadership opportunities do they desire?

Interview narratives addressed this research question. The list of interview questions is in Appendix C. They provided opportunities for those interviewed to share their thoughts and experiences on leadership, their interest in leadership as well as further exploration of this topic. Body language and other non-verbal cues (Creswell & Clarke,

2007; Litosseliti, 2003; and Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998) were also sources of information to note. A wealth of unintended data can be gleaned from this sub-conscious form of communication as well as the themes and patterns in verbal responses.

The final step in the data analysis was an effort to synthesize the findings from the various types of data. In this phase, the focus was on reporting what was supported by more than one type of data, findings that emerge from only one type of data, and conflicts where different sources of data produced conflicting results.

### **Chapter Summary**

This study of authentic leadership in higher education investigated authentic leadership in college administration as reported by administrators and their respective faculty and staff. It also explored the impact on the development of future leaders in higher education. Growing the pool of potential leaders to serve in college and university administration was seen as a critical need that higher education is currently facing. The study was based on the assumption that the way higher education leaders responded to this need for future quality leaders, directly impacted how they handled other challenges. In many cases the future of colleges and universities are contingent upon their leadership and how they addressed these needs.

## Chapter 4: Results

### Introduction

Leadership in higher education institutions is important as colleges and universities face external demands and pressures from Federal and State Departments of Education, accrediting organization, and the families and the students selecting and attending college. This chapter represents the results of a mixed methods study exploring authentic leadership in higher education.

The study is organized around three questions:

1. Is there a relationship between administrators' self-report of authentic leadership and the authentic leadership attributed to the administrator by their faculty and staff?
2. Is there a relationship between the leadership qualities identified by faculty, staff, and administrators?
3. Do faculty and staff express interest in leadership opportunities? If so, what type of leadership opportunities do they desire?

Quantitative and qualitative data were used to answer the three research questions.

The study, conducted within a small private, religiously affiliated liberal arts college, began with an overview of the descriptive statistical data collected using the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ) distributed and scored by Mind Garden. Administrators, and the faculty and staff who report to them, were asked to complete the ALQ survey. The ALQ scores reflected the administrator self-ratings and the ratings of

the administrator by the faculty and staff who report to them. The ALQ consists of four factors (self-awareness, transparency, ethical and moral conduct, and balance processing) which are considered to be the major components of authentic leadership. Interview data represented the results of separate interviews with each of nine individual: three administrators, three faculty, and three staff. These were face to face interviews using the same set of questions for each interviewee.

Due to the small sample, that can lead to ease in identifying people participating in the study, participants needed assurance that their anonymity would be protected to the greatest extent possible. Therefore, the only demographic information linked to survey participants for this study was gender. This helped to make responses more valid and true. Of those who completed the ALQ survey and those who participated in the interviews the breakdown by gender was 50% female and 50% male.

### **Data Analysis**

Quantitative data were analyzed using the sign test, a nonparametric statistical test (Triolo, 2010). Due to the small sample size, the paired sample t-test was not useful in providing statistical results. The binomial distribution test was used in the data analysis.

Qualitative data were provided from face to face interviews with each of the nine individuals randomly selected to participate. The interview data were analyzed using a holistic perspective.

Table 4.1 shows the number of ratings obtained in each category of participants. The return rate reported in the third column represented the number of individuals who completed the ALQ versus the number who were invited to complete the ALQ. In most of the analyses the results were organized into Self ratings (administrator) and Other

ratings (faculty and staff combined). One reason for combining ratings of faculty and staff was the relatively small number of ratings available for analysis.

Table 4.1

*Number of completed ALQ surveys for each type of rating*

Type of Rating	Number of Ratings	Return Rate
Self (Administrator)	10	91%
Faculty	22	48%
Staff	24	52%

The return rates were typical of such surveys and should be taken into consideration when considering the data. This study had a 91% participation rate by senior leaders, a 48% faculty participation rate, and a staff participation rate of 52%. In the next section the data relevant to the first research question was analyzed.

Quantitative data were analyzed using the sign test, a nonparametric statistical test (Triolo, 2010). The sign test was used to analyze the frequencies of responses using plus or minus signs. This was used to test a population median against a hypothesized value for the purpose of determining significant difference. This analysis is presented in Table 4.2. Tables 4.3a, 4.3b, 4.3c, and 4.3d, and, Figures 4.3a, 4.3b, 4.3c, and 4.3d present a comparison of means from a normative sample and the higher education sample for each of the four authentic leadership factors.

Qualitative data were provided from face to face interviews. The interview data were analyzed using a holistic perspective. Interview data were transcribed, read and reread with notation of common themes and ideas. The information was reflected upon



numerous times; notes were reviewed, written and rewritten. Finally, they were summarized and organized by the four authentic leadership factors. This analysis is presented in Tables 4.4, 4.5, and 4.6.

### **Research Questions**

The three research questions for this mixed methods study and the relevant results of the data analysis are presented here.

**Research question 1.** *Is there a relationship between administrators' self-report of authentic leadership and the authentic leadership attributed to the administrator by their faculty and staff?*

In the literature, several approaches have been used to answer questions like this one. One popular option was to calculate correlation between self and other ratings. For example, in their study of emotional intelligence and transformational leadership, Sosik and Megerian (1999) used correlations between self and other ratings as part of their analysis.

In this study, leaders rated themselves on each of the four factors of authentic leadership and individuals (faculty and staff) who were supervised by that leader also rated the leader. Overall, 10 senior leaders/administrators participated in the study (indicated as SA1 through SA10). Their Self-ratings are presented in Table 4.2. Also presented in this Table are the median ratings from those who were supervised by these leaders; the difference between the Self score and the Other score median rating; and percent of differences that were outside the + or - .5 range around the administrative score. The percent differences  $>$  or  $<$  .5 between the administrator Self score and the faculty and staff scores were noted in last column of Table 4.2.

Table 4.2

*ALQ self-rating by senior leaders and the median rating of others*

Senior Leader	Self-Score Rating	Median Rating Other Score	Difference of Median Minus Self-Score	Percent Difference > or < .5
<b>SL1</b>				
Self-Awareness	4	3.8 (16) <sup>a</sup>	-0.2	47%
Transparency	3.8	3.5 (16)	-0.3	63%
Ethical and Moral Conduct	4	3.7 (16)	-0.3	63%
Balanced Processing	4	3.5 (16)	-0.5	50%
<b>SL 2</b>				
Self-Awareness	1.8	2.3 (3)	+0.5	67%
Transparency	2.4	2.4 (3)	0	67%
Ethical and Moral Conduct	3.5	3.5 (3)	0	67%
Balanced Processing	3.3	3.3 (3)	0	67%
<b>SL3</b>				
Self-Awareness	3.3	3.8 (2)	+0.5	0%
Transparency	2.2	3.5 (2)	+1.3	100%
Ethical and Moral Conduct	3.3	3.8 (2)	+0.5	100%
Balanced Processing	2.7	3.8 (2)	+1.1	0%
<b>SL4</b>				
Self-Awareness	4	2.6 (4)	-1.4	50%
Transparency	3.8	3 (4)	-0.8	25%
Ethical and Moral Conduct	4	3.5 (4)	-0.5	50%
Balanced Processing	4	2.6 (4)	-1.4	25%
<b>SL5</b>				
Self-Awareness	3	3.6 (2)	+0.6	50%
Transparency	3.4	3.8 (2)	+0.4	50%
Ethical and Moral Conduct	4	3.9 (2)	-0.1	100%
Balanced Processing	4	3.6 (2)	-0.4	50%
<b>SL6</b>				
Self-Awareness	2.3	2.6 (2)	+0.3	0%
Transparency	2.6	3.1 (2)	+0.5	50%
Ethical and Moral Conduct	2.8	2.5 (2)	-0.3	50%
Balanced Processing	2.7	2.8 (2)	+0.1	100%

Senior Leader	Self-Score Rating	Median Rating Other Score	Difference of Median Minus Self- Score	Percent Difference > or < .5
<b>SL7</b>				
Self-Awareness	3.3	2 (3)	-1.3	0%
Transparency	4	2.8 (3)	-1.2	33%
Ethical and Moral Conduct	4	2.8 (3)	-1.2	0%
Balanced Processing	3.3	2 (3)	-1.3	33%
<b>SL8</b>				
Self-Awareness	3	2.7 (3)	-0.3	0%
Transparency	3	2.5 (3)	-0.5	66%
Ethical and Moral Conduct	3	3.2 (3)	+0.2	0%
Balanced Processing	3	2.6 (3)	-0.4	66%
<b>SL9</b>				
Self-Awareness	3.8	4 (7)	+0.2	71%
Transparency	3.6	3.6 (7)	0	86%
Ethical and Moral Conduct	4	4 (7)	0	71%
Balanced Processing	3.7	4 (7)	+0.3	71%
<b>SL10</b>				
Self-Awareness	2	3.6 (4)	+1.6	75%
Transparency	3.8	3.7 (4)	-0.1	25%
Ethical and Moral Conduct	3.8	3.9 (4)	+0.1	100%
Balanced Processing	2.3	3.5 (4)	+1.2	0%

*Note.* Ratings are based on the four authentic leadership qualities measured by the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ) published by Mind Garden, Inc.

<sup>a</sup>Number in parenthesis indicates the number of Other ratings available to calculate the median.

Table 4.2 shows, that of the total 40 groups of Self versus Other ratings, the median Other rating was lower in 22 and higher in 18 groups. Put another way, in 55% of the ratings comparisons in Table 4.2 the median Other ratings were lower than the Self rating of the leader while 45% were higher. A binomial test with 40 trials and 22 “successes” (Other median lower than Self rating) yielded a two-tailed p value of .64 which was well above the critical p value of .05. The data thus suggested that differences between Self and Other ratings were not statistically significant. This was somewhat

surprising because Other ratings were consistently lower in the normative data for the ALQ.

In this study of leaders in higher education, for four of the 10 leaders studied, the median Other ratings were all lower than the Self ratings, but in one case Other ratings were all higher. The remaining leaders had mixed results ranging from 1 Other lower and three Other higher to 2 Other higher and 2 Other lower.

These results thus suggest that in this group of leaders there was no tendency for leaders to always rate themselves higher on ALQ factors. In fact, the pattern of the data suggested there may be individual rather than group patterns as four leaders rated themselves higher than their median Other ratings while three other leaders rated themselves all or mostly lower.

However, the data analyses presented thus far does not directly address the question of whether there was general agreement between Self and Other ratings. A cursory survey of Table 4.2 seems to suggest Self and Other ratings (at least with regard to median Other ratings) were often similar but it was easy to find quite different ratings such as the 4.0 Self and 2.6 Other median ratings on Self-awareness for participant SL4.

One approach to addressing the question of whether there were important differences between Self and Other ratings was offered in the profile generated for those who completed the ALQ survey. When an ALQ survey is analyzed by Mind Garden, the official digital scoring provider for the instrument, a segment of the report generated indicates that a difference of + or - .5 or more between self and other ratings “should be taken seriously.”

The fourth column in Table 4.2 lists the differences between Self ratings and median Other ratings. In this sample of higher education leaders, of the 40 comparisons, nine had differences of greater than 0.5 with the Self-rating lower than the Other median rating and nine had Self-ratings higher than the median Other rating.

These findings should be interpreted with caution because many of the comparisons were based on only 2, 3, or 4 Other ratings. Even with that limitation, however, the results again suggest that in this sample of higher education leaders there was not a clear tendency for Self ratings to be higher. Of the differences that should be “taken seriously” the same number reflected higher Other ratings as reflected lower.

The last column in Table 4.2 lists the percent differences that were outside the + or - .5 range and thus should be “taken seriously”. These results should be interpreted with caution because of the small number of Other raters in many comparisons.

A question closely related to research question 1 was whether the sample collected in this study was similar to the normative sample. That is, do the senior leaders (Self) in this study rate themselves lower, higher, or about the same as the participants used to normative sample of the ALQ? And, were the ratings by Other in this study similar, higher, or lower than Other ratings in the normative sample?

Deciding how to address these questions was complicated by the fact that several “normative” samples have been reported in the development of the ALQ. However, not enough data was provided to allow for a statistical comparison of normative means with the means of self and other ratings from a new set of data. Therefore, Tables 4.3a through 4.3d presented the means for self and other ratings of each of the four factors of the ALQ.

That same data was also represented graphically by the bar charts in Figures 4.3a through 4.3d.

Table 4.3a

*Comparison of Means from a Normative Sample and the Higher Education Sample for Self-Awareness*

Self-Awareness			
Mean Rating	Norm Sample	Higher Education Sample	Difference between Samples
Self	3.4	3.1	0.3
Other	2.7	3.3	-0.6
Difference	0.7	-0.2	0.9

Table 4.3a shows that the mean Self rating for the Self-Awareness ALQ factor was 0.3 higher in the normative sample than the higher education sample but -0.6 lower when Other ratings are compared. In addition the difference between mean Self and Other ratings was 0.7 with Self rating higher. In the higher education sample the difference between Self and Other mean ratings was much smaller (0.2).

Table 4.3b

*Comparison of Means from a Normative Sample and the Higher Education Sample for Transparency*

Transparency			
Mean Rating	Norm Sample	Higher Education Sample	Difference between samples
Self	3.1	3.3	-0.2
Other	2.7	3.2	-0.5
Difference	0.4	0.1	0.3

Table 4.3b shows the comparison of the mean ratings for the ALQ factor of transparency resulted in a difference of 0.3 between the norm and higher education samples.

Table 4.3c

*Comparison of Means from a Normative Sample and the Higher Education Sample for Ethical and Moral Conduct*

Ethical and Moral Conduct			
Mean Rating	Norm Sample	Higher Education Sample	Difference between samples
Self	3.6	3.6	0
Other	2.5	3.4	-0.9
Difference	1.1	0.2	0.9

The difference in the mean rating of ethical and moral conduct between the norm sample and the higher education sample was 0.9. This represented the second instance of

this occurrence of a 0.9 difference between the two sample populations. In both instances the higher rating was in the norm sample.

Table 4.3d

*Comparison of Means from a Normative Sample and the Higher Education Sample for Balanced Processing*

Balanced Processing			
Mean Rating	Norm Sample	Higher Education Sample	Difference between samples
Self	3.6	3.3	0.3
Other	2.5	2.8	-0.3
Difference	1.1	0.5	0.6

One final observation to note from the data in Tables 4.3a, 4.3b, 4.3c, and 4.3d was that in each of the four tables, ALQ factor comparisons of the mean ratings by Others raters from the norm sample were lower than the mean ratings by Other raters in the higher education sample. This could be due to many factors including sample errors but an intriguing possibility is that these consistent (although untested statistically) differences were a reflection of the campus climate of the religiously affiliated campus where this research was conducted.

Another interesting finding was that the rater differences between Self, and Other ratings were all higher, sometimes much higher in the norm sample. This was verified in Figures 4.3a, 4.3b, 4.3c, and 4.3d showing that higher education Self and Other ratings were much closer.



Bar charts show the comparison of mean for each ALQ factor from a normative sample and the higher education sample for each of the four authentic leadership factors.



Figure 4.3a. Comparison of mean from a normative and higher education sample for self-awareness.

The comparison of the mean ratings for self-awareness shows a negative difference for the higher education sample and also shows an Other rating higher than the Self rating. This was the only ALQ factor where these results occur.

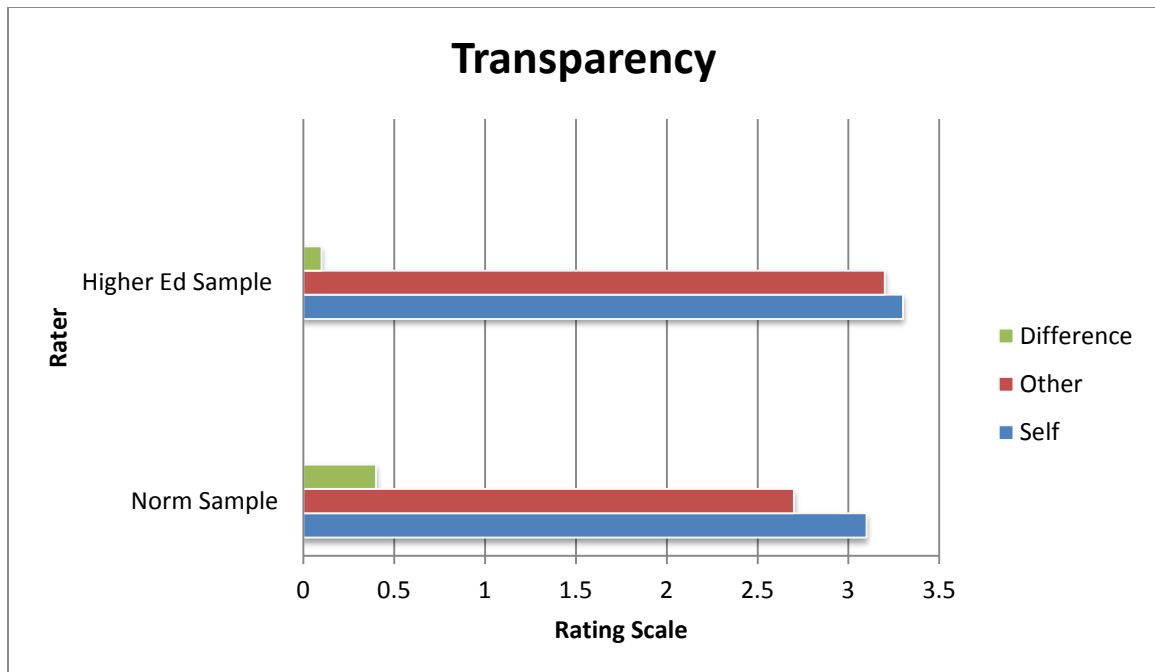


Figure 4.3b. Comparison of the mean from a normative and higher education sample for transparency.

In both the Norm sample ratings and the higher education sample ratings, the ratings for the ALQ factor of transparency were similar. The higher education sample produced a higher rating than the norm sample and the difference between Self and Other was smaller. Note also that the smaller difference in Figure 4.3b was also found in the other figures. Differences between Self and Other ratings were smaller in the higher education sample for each of the four authentic leadership factors.

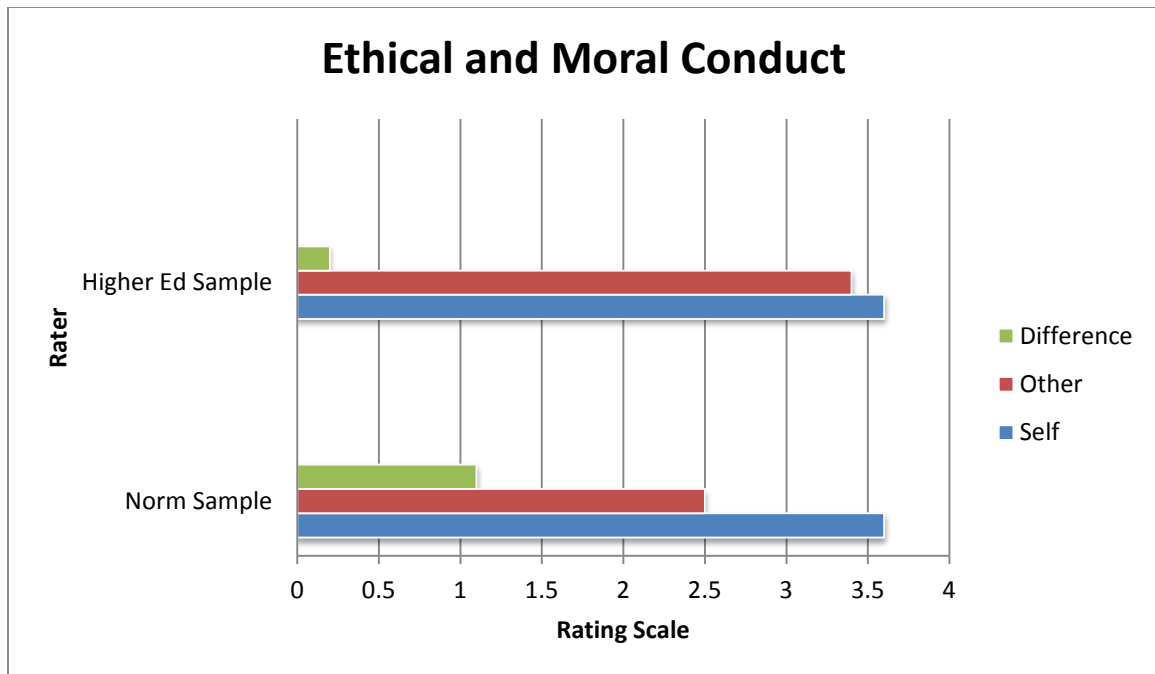


Figure 4.3c. Comparison of the mean from a normative and higher education sample for ethical and moral conduct.

The norm sample Self raters and higher education Self raters produced the same mean scores on moral and ethical conduct. Their Other raters, however, did not. Norm sample raters rated their leaders 0.9 below the higher education Other raters. One explanation for this gap is that the higher education sample raters come from a private, religiously-affiliated college. The expectations and experiences of the leaders in this institution center on college’s mission and faith tradition. The origins of the norm sample are unknown. The differences in Other ratings could be a reflection of the college’s emphasis on ethical and moral conduct.

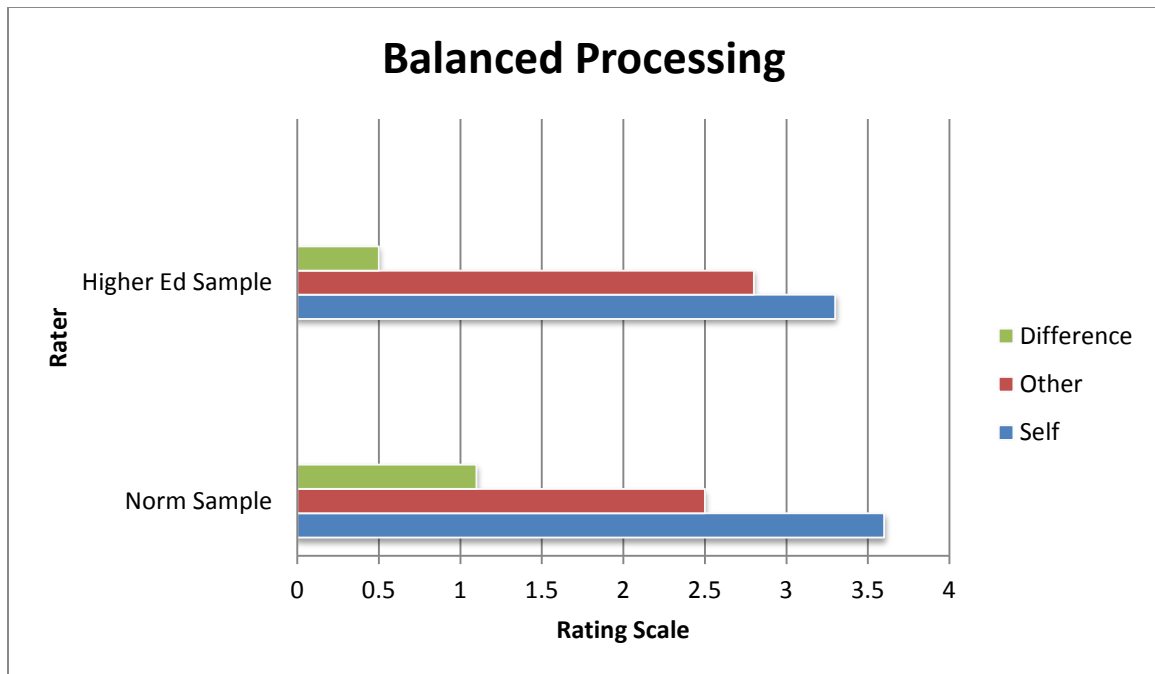


Figure 4.3d. Comparison of the mean from a normative and higher education sample for balanced processing.

Figure 4.3d presents data on the Balanced Processing factor. It was difficult to interpret these findings but they may speak to what occurs specifically in the institution represented in this higher education sample. At the small, religiously-affiliated liberal arts college surveyed for this study, the leaders were intentional about seeking and taking input from diverse points of view across the campus community, considering them as decisions were made. The difference between the norm sample and the higher education sample ratings for balanced processing may reflect this.

**Research Question 2.** *Is there a relationship between the leadership qualities identified by faculty, staff, and administrators?*

This research question was addressed through an analysis of the qualitative interview data. The results of the summary interview data are presented in Table 4.4, 4.5, and 4.6. Those tables summarize major points that emerged from the analysis of the data

from Charts 4.3a, 4.3b, 4.3c, and 4.3d and Figures 4.3a, 4.3b, 4.3c, and 4.3d. Additionally, this question was addressed by analysis of interview data with administrators, faculty, and staff. The results were organized into four sections representing each of the authentic leadership factors. Table 4.4 represented administrators' responses, Table 4.5 the faculty responses, and Table 4.6 the responses from staff.

Table 4.4 provides a summary of the responses shared by administrators interviewed. This summary of responses was based on the set of questions found in Exhibit C in the Appendix. Administrators' reported there was a need to find new leaders to serve in higher education leadership positions. They also noted current challenges facing higher education: legal issues, training and compliance, online learning, and limited resources. Leader integrity was raised, questioning whether leaders can remain true to their institutions when they are challenged and compromised as pressure to grow revenue increases.

Administrators noted that talking about their strengths and weakness made them more human to others, especially those they are leading. Additionally, understanding the impact leaders had on others as leaders and using wisdom in their leadership practices was a comment made by one administrator regarding leader self-awareness.

Table 4.4

*Summary Results of Administrator Interviews*

Authentic Leadership Factors	Administrator Summary Results
Self-Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Humility and understanding ones' self as a leader are important</li> <li>• Complimenting and rewarding successes of others and noticing when they go beyond what is expected</li> <li>• Having a sense of purpose and to know and do what motivates you to do a particular job; not for the amount earned but for deeper satisfaction of being able to contribute</li> <li>• Knowing what you want to accomplish and being aware of the impact it has on others</li> <li>• Leaders' ability to talk about their strengths and weakness makes them more human to others</li> <li>• Leaders need to understand the impact they have on others as leaders and to use wisdom in their leadership practices</li> </ul>
Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure people understand what is going on and, whenever possible, why important decisions are made</li> <li>• Consider all ideas that are shared so others know they are heard</li> <li>• Communicate clearly as a way to grow trust and openness on all levels</li> <li>• Invest in all constituents by modeling and being real</li> <li>• Leading the way with focus on the mission</li> <li>• Clear communication of common goal</li> <li>• Have an "open door" policy reinforcing the approachability of the leaders</li> </ul>
Ethical and Moral Conduct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing pressure for revenue can challenge or compromise leaders' integrity</li> <li>• Collaboration on all organizational levels and being respectful of and valuing the importance of all people</li> <li>• Moral and ethical leaders have a much better chance to succeed at realizing their vision and attaining goals</li> <li>• Leaders need to be good models of ethical behavior demonstrating integrity, honesty, and humility</li> <li>• Important that words and actions match</li> </ul>
Balanced Processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaders are challenged with finding and developing new leaders, engaging students, legal issues, training and compliance, online learning, and limited resources and how they impact the mission</li> <li>• Having the ability to create something new and innovative that is reflective of the of the mission of the college</li> <li>• Openness to hearing new ideas and opinions</li> <li>• Important to take time and be patient when considering ideas or before making a decision</li> </ul>
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This experience has stimulated thinking about leadership, the concept of authentic leadership, and the desire to embody it and pass it on to others leaders or to those who may become leaders in the future</li> <li>• Work demands keep us so busy that time is not given to consider leadership qualities or how one is leading</li> <li>• Other pressing leadership issues include cost and affordability of higher education and demands for guarantees of employment for graduates. This calls to question how leaders in higher education will handle these trends and remain true to their mission.</li> </ul>

Leaders noted that the interview experience caused them to think about leadership in a new way, and to consider how they see themselves as leaders going forward. Appreciating today's challenges and the demands placed on higher education, the leaders lamented that there was less and less time to consider leadership qualities or reflect on how one is leading.

Faculty interview responses (Table 4.5) focused predominately on transparency. The comparison of means from a normative sample and the higher education sample for transparency reflected only a 0.1 difference in ratings between the higher education Self rating (administrator) and Other (faculty and staff) rating of this ALQ factor (Table 4.3b, Figure 4.3b). This was the smallest margin of difference between Self and Other ratings by administrators, and faculty and staff. This was an interesting finding when discussed along with the interview summaries.

Transparency is about openness in interactions, presenting a genuine self, and sharing openly and appropriately with others. Summary faculty interview responses to this ALQ factor are shown in Table 4.5. What was evident was these responses were consistent with the data represented in Table 4.3b and Figure 4.3b.

Table 4.5

*Summary Results of Faculty Interviews*

AL Factor	Faculty Summary Results
Self-Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Important that higher education leaders have experience in higher education</li> <li>• Self-reflective and open leaders enable others to model and practice this skill; it also fosters leader’s awareness of their impact on others</li> <li>• Ability to identify personal and professional strengths and weaknesses</li> </ul>
Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give positive regard and empower people to grow and move forward</li> <li>• Recognize strengths in others and build on the</li> <li>• Identify talented people and encourage their growth</li> <li>• Able to handle dialogue and discussion; allows for convergent and divergent thinking</li> <li>• Integrity, consistent communication, and actions foster mutual respect</li> <li>• Leaders show courage and can make difficult decisions while considering the impact on others; Respect leaders who can admit mistakes</li> <li>• Need safe people you can go to for feedback</li> <li>• Leaders encourage leadership in others when they are open to share strengths and challenges</li> <li>• Visions for the college and the big picture view are open for conversation and input</li> <li>• People actively listen and leadership is experienced at all levels so people feel a part of decisions</li> </ul>
Ethical and Moral Conduct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moral and ethical standards are important for all in the college and is woven throughout the institution; Consistent communication and actions</li> <li>• Leaders work well with others demonstrating integrity and ethics</li> </ul>
Balanced Processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leader need to be well informed and open to different points of view and diverse ideas; Leaders demonstrate integrity</li> <li>• A good listener who allows for dialogue and is open and cooperative allowing for convergent and divergent thinking</li> <li>• Different points of view, thoughts and opinions are validated</li> </ul>
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaders in higher education need to be more than number crunchers; they need to have experience in higher ed. and the area they are leading</li> <li>• It is important that elements of higher ed. such as mission and faculty development are understood; Hiring leaders is done with quality in mind</li> <li>• Leaders need to look at what they do and how they relate</li> <li>• Authentic Leadership is leadership from the heart; leadership to move people forward</li> <li>• Authentic Leadership comes from a person’s inner core; has a value system and believes in mission of the institution</li> <li>• Leaders needs to be grounded in the mission and values of the institution</li> </ul>



Table 4.6

*Summary Interview Responses from Staff*

AL Factor	Staff Responses
Self-Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Important to have a good work ethic and seek to develop and advance others</li> <li>• Leaders knows their strengths and weaknesses and the strengths and weaknesses of their staff</li> <li>• Leader embodies what the organization represents</li> </ul>
Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change-agent who is immersed in the organization and creates solutions through collaboration</li> <li>• Excellent communication skills and has a good work ethic; is reliable and organized</li> <li>• Genuine interest in others; seeks to develop and advance others</li> <li>• Honest and shares the truth even though it may be uncomfortable to hear</li> <li>• Their table is open to share ideas and opinions</li> </ul>
Ethical and Moral Conduct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God serves as the guiding force for behavior, decision making, and actions</li> <li>• Good communication skills</li> <li>• Very organized</li> <li>• Praises people openly but criticizes privately</li> <li>• Leader is ethical and genuine doing things for others without needing recognition</li> </ul>
Balanced Processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serve on committees, share ideas, and be part of change</li> <li>• Leading a specific task that impacts the entire campus</li> <li>• Encouraged to share ideas and be a part of change by leading a specific task and given the lead on project</li> </ul>
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reliable, straight to the point, and believes in teamwork</li> <li>• In higher education the products being produced are individuals there are numerous stakeholder in this process that leaders have to address</li> <li>• Encourage professional development recognizing that staff need to see growth. At a small college there is not much room for growth.</li> </ul>

Staff responses to interview questions also emphasized the need for leadership to have a vision and “be a change-agent” immersed in the organization. They pointed out that in higher education the product being produced is people, not things, and this required specific qualities of the leaders. This point comes across regarding staff themselves; they saw the need to be developed as well. Professional development seemed to be important to staff as a means of growing within the institution. However, they also noted that the college was small and has little room for upward mobility.

Communication was a recurring theme expressed in all three interview summaries in Table 4.4, 4.5, and 4.6. The importance of communication, evidenced by the comments from interviewees, needed to be highlighted. Some of the comments made by staff and faculty were lifted from the tables and noted here.

The following are staff interview comments emphasizing communication; “excellent communication skills,” “honest and shares the truth even though it may be uncomfortable to hear,” “administrator’s table is open to share ideas and opinions,” “straight to the point,” and I am “encouraged to share ideas.”

Comments related to communication from faculty interviews follow: “Give people positive regard and empower them to move forward,” “able to handle dialogue and discussion,” “clear consistent communication,” “show courage and can make difficult decisions while considering the impact on others,” “can admit mistakes and are open to share strengths and challenges,” “people actively listen and leadership is experienced at all levels so people feel a part of decisions,” and “thoughts and opinions are validated and diverse ideas are welcomed.”

Administrator noted their thoughts on what they value and they look for in leaders. Some of their interview responses were: “complementing and rewarding successes of others and noticing when others’ go beyond what is expected,” “ability to talk about strengths and weakness,” “understand the impact they have on others as leaders and to use wisdom in their leadership practice,” “make sure people understand what is going on and, whenever possible, why important decisions are made,” “consider all ideas that are shared so others know they are heard,” “communicate clearly as a way to grow trust and openness on all levels,” “have an ‘open door’ policy reinforcing the approachability of the leaders,” “being respectful of and valuing the importance of all people,” “important that words and actions match,” and “be open to hearing new ideas and opinions.”

Communication between people is powerful. It has the ability to create meaningful change. It is important to the engagement, encouragement, growth, satisfaction, and success of leaders and followers as noted by these responses. Quantum theory contends that change is not a thing or event rather it is a dynamic of the universe. In essence, change cannot be avoided because it is everywhere and it is inevitable (Ercetin & Kamaci, 2008; Porter-O’Grady & Malloch, 2011). However, it can be influenced and given direction. Studying the impact of authentic leadership in higher education can positively influence changes in leadership that will enable college and university leaders to address the challenges higher education faces today.

Some non-verbal observations and feedback regarding the tone and impressions of the interviews were noted by the interviewer. This feedback identified the interviewees as: interested in the topic, happy, appreciative to be a part of the study, passionate about leadership in higher education, and well prepared for their interviews. This seemed to be

true for all levels, faculty, staff, and administrators. Interviewees were genuinely engaged in the process and were thoughtful in their responses.

**Research Question 3.** *Do faculty and staff express interest in leadership opportunities? If so, what type of leadership opportunities do they desire?*

Interview questions six and eight offered interviewees an opportunity to share their experiences and thoughts on leadership aspirations. A composite of the responses to this question specifically is presented in the following table.

Table 4.7

*Leadership Interests of Faculty and Staff*

Faculty Responses	Staff Responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Love what I do but I don't want my boss' job; however, it is good to be encouraged to do things and learn more</li> <li>• Aspiring to mid-level leadership as a chair or dean but not higher</li> <li>• Like working on a team by chairing groups and meetings</li> <li>• No ambitions to be a leader</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aspire to becoming the director of the department or another area but it is a fine line to advance in leadership because of the fear of taking someone's job in the process</li> <li>• Preference is expansion versus taking someone's position</li> <li>• Perhaps move to a faculty position and teach</li> <li>• Leave it in the Lord's hands</li> <li>• Encourage professional development of staff; employees need to experience growth</li> <li>• College is small; not much room for growth but i does cross-train staff</li> </ul>

The faculty and staff interviewed expressed some interest in leadership opportunities. However, there seemed to be a passiveness about moving into leadership, especially as it related to potential opportunities and the impact it might have on colleagues. Some also noted that potential leadership roles one might aspire to were limited to roles within the institution where they were currently employed. Interest in looking for leadership opportunities outside the college were not expressed by faculty or

staff interviewed. Whether a different question may have yielded different results is unknown. The lack of interest expressed may also be associated with a hesitation to answer this question with greater honesty and transparency out of caution with respect to how it might be interpreted.

No leader exists in a vacuum (Milewiski 2006). Rather, leaders are only one part of what makes up the whole. The organization is in motion and, through the lens of quantum leadership theory; leadership arises from this motion through the dynamic interrelationships and connections among the members of the organization. Perhaps dynamic interrelationships were missing, thus impacting higher education leadership. College and universities are typically organized in schools, divisions, programs, and departments separated by academic disciplines and functions. These structures are often referred to as silos that interrupt connections thus impacting communication.

### **Summary of Results**

The desire and need for leadership that reflected the qualities of authentic leadership were evident in both the quantitative and qualitative data analyses. The purpose of research questions 1 and 2 was to determine if there were relationships between administrators' self-report of authentic leadership and the authentic leadership attributed to the administrator by their faculty and staff. Additionally, the research questions explored whether there were any relationships between the qualities identified by the three groups.

A nonparametric statistical test was used to determine significant difference. The sign test analyzed the frequencies of responses to convert sample data to ranks. A

binomial probability test was used to interpret probability values to determine whether differences between Self and Other ratings were statistically significant.

The findings indicated that difference between Self and Other ratings were not statistically significant and there was no tendency for this group of senior leaders to rate themselves higher on ALQ factors than their faculty and staff. Rather than group patterns, there were individual patterns between senior leaders, and faculty and staff on the reporting of ALQ factors. Overall, faculty and staff indicated that they valued authentic leaders.

Research question 3 explored the interest expressed by faculty and staff in leadership roles or positions. Interviews provided information from interviewees' responses to better understand the worth and value given to leaders in higher education and the value placed on these leadership qualities. Communication was one theme that recurred throughout the interviews. Communication appeared as an important element of leadership across all levels of higher education from administrators, faculty, and staff. Another theme that emerged was affirmation that moral and ethical conduct was the most important authentic leadership quality for leaders to possess and practice.

Some interest in leadership opportunities was expressed by faculty and staff. They were not overt in expressing interest or actively seeking advancement. There was, however, desire on the part of faculty and staff to grow, to be challenged, and to have more access to professional development opportunities. They conveyed that they wanted to be empowered to grow and move forward, and for leaders to identify talented faculty and staff and encourage their growth. Faculty noted that ongoing faculty development is important.

## **Chapter 5: Discussion**

### **Introduction**

Higher education is dealing with a growing sense of distrust of people in positions of leadership. Issues related to violence on campus, interpersonal misconduct, and the rising cost to attend college is causing serious concerns about leadership on college and university campuses. This study explores leadership in higher education. Authentic leadership theory and practice is the leadership paradigm which frames the questions for the study. Authentic leadership qualities were self-reported by higher education leaders' self-ratings and the ratings of leaders by their faculty and staff. The discussion of the study findings are, in part, presented using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). According to the works of phenomenological philosophers Husserl, Heidegger and Sartre (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009), the understanding of experiences or relationships necessitates appreciating life as a process. Life is the unfolding of thoughts and meanings which are unique to each person engaged in their distinct relationships and experiences. To that end, the attempt to understand and give meaning to relationships or experiences requires interpretation on the part of both the individual involved and others who attempt to give meaning to that person's experiences and relationships.

Authentic leadership is viewed by Avolio & Gardner (2005) and Gardner et al. (2005) as a developmental process that evolves and grows over time. It is unique for each individual by virtue of their own sense of self, identity, and history. Each person's story or journey informs how they see and understand their lived experiences. Being an

authentic leader is viewed as an ongoing process of change that evolves over time and is not a fixed trait.

### **Implications of Findings**

Careful analysis of the ALQ survey results, paired with the interview results, affirm that faculty, and staff value authentic leaders. They consistently pointed to a desire for leaders who are honest, moral, ethical, and have integrity. A faculty member stated in their interview that, “Authentic leadership is leadership from the heart; leadership to move people forward.” Another reported, “Authentic leadership comes from a person’s inner core; has a value system and believes in the mission of the institution.” Leaders also noted the value of authentic leadership. One administrator shared in the interview, “This experience has stimulated thinking about leadership, the concept of authentic leadership, and the desire to embody it and pass it on to others leaders or to those who may become leaders in the future.”

These thoughts and impressions from faculty, staff, and administrators reflect a foundation from which these current leaders lead. These behaviors can serve as examples for future leaders to model as they grow into leadership.

The interactions between faculty and administrators are likely to be very different from that of staff and administrators. Shared governance in higher education is highly valued and in many ways sets the tone, frames, and informs the interactions between faculty and administrators. This partnership and collaboration between faculty and administrators is critical to accomplishing the institution’s mission. Decisions regarding program development, institutional initiatives, and resource allocation often result from



administrators' discussion with faculty and faculty discussions with colleagues in their disciplines or programs.

The practice of shared governance is less likely between administrators and staff. There are fewer studies related to this aspect of shared governance in higher education. It may come into play but it is not a foundational principle in accomplishing the tasks for which staff are accountable. Thus, staff's interpretation of the authentic leadership qualities of self-awareness, transparency, moral and ethical conduct, and balanced processing evolves from an experience uniquely different from faculty.

Relationships across the college have an impact on how administrators, faculty, and staff see themselves as part of the whole. Leaders model and set the tone for what these relationships look like and how they evolve over time. In turn, the advancement of the institution's mission and its success is directly connected to its leadership. The development and advancement of future leaders in higher education begins with the relationships and experiences people have with the leaders to whom they report. Ercetin and Kamaci (2008) posit that authentic leadership views leadership as an *interactional field* where relationships between leader and follower is primary. It is through these relationships that future leaders are influenced and inspired.

**Institutional organization.** How an institution is structured is worth considering in an attempt to understand the organizational leadership paradigm. Higher education has a long history of operating from a top down leadership model. It has vertical reporting that is very structured where lines of communication are clearly delineated and organizationally sanctioned. The faculty may report to the chair, who reports to the dean,

who reports to the assistant provost, who reports to the provost, who ultimately reports to the president.

The horizontal structures in college and universities similarly impact the leadership paradigm. Schools, divisions, or departments are often set up as separate distinct units, sometimes even referred to as silos. They may appear as equal on an organizational chart but, in reality they are distinctly separate units. Often, they are in competition with one another for institutional resources and validation. Tensions may arise across disciplines especially in smaller colleges and universities with limited resources and small endowments.

Anyone who has served in higher education can appreciate the clarity and order these vertical and horizontal structures provide. Simultaneously, there are others who loathe these types of structures, seeing them as barriers for open and transparent processing and communication.

Organizational structures are necessary to ensure communication, policies, processes, and procedures are in place to enable the healthy functioning of an institution. Growth of organizations occurs when the systems within it have synergy and dynamic interactions. It is the responsibility of the leaders to make sure this happens. Quantum leadership theory considers the unstructured and unpredictable reality of leadership (Blank, 1995; Ercetin & Kamaci, 2008). Leaders must be able to handle unique realities in institutions, and manage organizational chaos and stress. Ercetin and Kamaci (2008) indicate that anticipating, preparing for, and managing change are critical abilities leaders need to possess. Authentic leaders who are open and connect with their faculty and staff

as partners in leadership provide stability and security by keeping everyone engaged in the process.

Governance and managing are important. George (2003) suggests that it is hard to respect a leader who does not practice good governance and the appropriate balance of power for management. In higher education shared governance and the balance of power between administration and faculty directly impacts communication and trust. Del Favero (2003) examined relationships between faculty and administrators as partners in governance, discovering higher performance as a result of these partnerships. Pope (2004) notes in his work that high levels of faculty trust reflect high levels of involvement in governance.

Higher education is changing. The dramatic increase in the accountability of colleges and universities through assessment from regional accreditation commissions and the U. S. Department of Education is impacting how leaders are relating to their faculty and staff, creating more directive and less collaborative environments. The impact of the economy and specifically, demand for students, in a time when the college bound student population is shrinking, has become dire for many liberal arts institutions that are struggling to survive. These pressures make maintaining effective systems of shared governance difficult. Investments in leadership development that nurture relationships can go a long way towards building effective governance. For years shared governance was understood to be the natural condition of the university. As Nelson (1999) indicates, shared governance is slipping away and it seems this may be true now more than ever.

A pilot study, conducted by Genrich, Banks, Bufton, Savage, and Owens (2001), revealed that appropriate delegation of decision-making is critical at all organizational

levels. However, increased workloads, role stress, and other concerns are related to compromised quality and diminishment of shared governance. Genrich et al. (2001) concludes these circumstances may contribute to decreased job satisfaction, motivation, and organizational commitment.

Currie's (2005) study reveals that despite social and economic challenges, collegiality can persist if leadership believes in shared governance and gains the trust of the university community, and, if academics are active participants in governance. The qualities of authentic leadership, especially balanced processing and transparency, influence the success of governance between administrators and faculty.

A qualitative study conducted by Lewis (2011) at two Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) examined faculty participation in decision making. Tenured faculty and upper-level administrators from a public and a private HBCU participated in this study. Lewis (2011) concluded that the decision making role of faculty was extremely valuable in faculty participation in governance.

Analysis of the data from this study on authentic leadership in higher education shows that faculty consistently gave their administrators higher ratings of authentic leadership qualities than did the staff. It is difficult to determine if there is the direct correlation between this outcome and shared governance between administrators and faculty. However, based on other studies conducted and noted here, it is likely there is a relationship between faculty shared governance and the authentic leadership experienced and reported by faculty.

**Institutional mission and culture.** The culture of an institution is influenced and shaped by a variety of factors such as: institutional history and traditions; mission; size

and composition of the student body; academic offerings; degree levels offered; and method of curriculum delivery. The most critical factor for understanding the college or university culture is its mission statement. The mission statement is vital as it clearly communicates the institutions goals. Often the mission statement is perceived as a sign on the wall or a statement in the catalog. In fact, it is the essence that gives the college or university its character and personality. Understanding the mission provides direction and focus to everyone in the organization. It frames how the leaders view their responsibility to constituents and to themselves. In truth, communicating and modeling their institution's mission is one of the most important task of leaders.

The mission of the college where this study was conducted emphasizes a “Christ-centered, value-oriented, liberal arts education for lives of service to church and community.” This clearly points to the qualities of self-awareness, transparency, and ethical and moral conduct, all of which are factors of authentic leadership. Results of the ALQ survey and interviews affirm that members of this academic community positively regard leaders who are authentic.

The missions of religiously affiliated institutions call for beliefs and values that public institutions do not. They directly affect the campus culture. The presence or absence of beliefs and values play an important role in shaping the leadership, the academic experience, and the environment of a college.

The moral strength of an institution, regardless of religious affiliation, needs clear expression for all members of the college and surrounding community. Over the years, much has been made of the lack of moral strength within higher education institutions (Sykes, 1990; Smith, 1990). As a result, college and universities need to clearly state

beliefs they feel are noteworthy or especially important to their educational culture and mission. A clearly-developed mission statement that is a lived experience in the campus culture and leadership will positively impact and influence institutional outcomes.

**Institution size.** Unique characteristics of colleges and universities such as size, structure, demands for research and scholarship, and emphasis on service may impact the form and style of leadership at a given institution. How this is understood by stakeholders will also influence what the institution needs and desires from its leadership and will inform the leadership vision.

The size of the college or university impacts how experiences and opportunities are understood by faculty and staff. For example, at a smaller institution it is easier to interact with and get to know most, if not all, of the people who serve the college. Opportunities to gather informally to meet and discuss classes and to engage with colleagues in settings on or off campus occur more organically.

Smaller colleges, particularly liberal arts institutions like the one in this study, place greater emphasis on teaching and learning, advising, and service, and less on research. These interactions and relationships among all constituents drive decision making, institutional vision, and resource allocation. Faculty interview responses noted that, “leaders need to look at what they do and how they relate.”

Larger universities may be more limiting due to physical size. Departments and programs may be housed in separate buildings, away from the main campus, or on a separate campus altogether. This increases isolation and results in a narrower focus of institutional leadership. Larger universities also have a greater demand for grant writing and for research and scholarship, thus minimizing broader interpersonal interactions and

limiting relationship building among faculty and between faculty and administrators. The size of the institution can impact the governance structure, policies, and procedures. How ideas are shared and decisions are made will vary as well.

It becomes the responsibility of leaders to address these potential barriers to authentic leadership and leadership development. Remarks from interviews with faculty indicated they need and desire leaders who are authentic and recognize strengths in others and build on them, and identify talented people and encourage their growth.

**Communication.** Decades of research on effective leadership has not resulted in the identification of universal leadership qualities or practices. However, what does come up most frequently is the desire for leaders who are effective is their ability to: articulate and communicate a vision, set performance standards, and provide directions and focus (Bolman & Deal, 2008). Participants in this study offered the following when asked what they valued in their leaders: willingness to share their own strengths and weakness; ability to communicate clearly as a way to grow trust and openness on all levels; capacity to welcome new ideas and validate diverse thoughts and opinions; and, honesty in sharing truths even those uncomfortable or difficult to hear. These responses reinforce the importance and value placed on communication.

Faculty and staff repeatedly pointed to the importance of communication with academic leaders in their interview responses. Qualities identified in leaders point to a genuine interest and willingness to listen, to allow for dialogue, and to be open to sharing ideas and opinions. College and university leaders report they want to sit with faculty and staff to share ideas and allow for conversations; but they find these desires and intentions

often take a back seat to pressing issues and demands that consume the bulk of their time and energy.

House and Mitchell (1974) contend that the task of leaders is to communicate and make sure followers understand what is expected by setting clear goals. This is a very linear form of communication that does not allow for transparency, relationship building, or balanced processing. Their approach differs from authentic leaders who, according to Avolio and Gardner (2005), engage followers in the process of determining the best course of action. To maintain a desired level of open communication, administrators must look for ways to balance and manage external demands with internal communication. Leaders are pulled in many directions and listening to others, really listening, is a challenge. Baldoni (2003) suggests that listening to others and understanding the power of words may be the most important leadership action of all.

Communication is a discipline. Trust increases and results are achieved the more a leader engages in communication. High levels of trust develop when ideas and opinions are shared and communication is open and straightforward (Ekvall, 1996).

**Development of future leaders.** Quantum leadership theory contends that leader-follower interaction impacts developing leaders. Responses to research question three offered by faculty and staff revealed that there is interest in pursuing leadership in mid-level positions such as a chair, dean, or a department director. They also expressed interest in team building and professional development. Building teams and supporting collaboration can impact satisfaction and, as George (2007) notes, mutual respect which is the foundation for bringing out the best in others. Professional development can play an important role in strengthening current colleagues' leadership skills and knowledge.



Consequently, the increase in knowledge and skills they possess will directly impact how they carry out their respective roles.

Two important qualities of authentic leaders noted by George (2003) are compassion and heart. Compassion and heart develop as a result of getting to know people's stories. Authentic leaders are interested in learning about others' life stories. This experience of hearing others' stories precipitate leaders gaining an understanding of their own. These stories naturally inform and impact their leadership (George, 2003; Shamir & Eilam, 2005). The ability and desire of administrators to engage in these kinds of conversations with faculty and staff can result in a deepening relationship that motivates a desire to lead. This has the potential to open up opportunities for interactions that break the traditional leadership paradigm, encouraging faculty and staff to aspire to leadership roles. This requires time and intention on the part of higher education leaders.

By engaging faculty and staff in the decision making process, leaders are influencing the development of future leaders. This can happen in any size institution. Blank (1995) notes, that the development of leaders is less defined, less universal, and more contextual, rather than an orderly process in which people possessing certain traits become leaders. What leaders shared in their interviews notes that they need to be aware and understand the impact they as leaders have on others. The increase in demands placed on colleges and universities can easily divert higher education leaders' time and energy, subsequently leaving little opportunity or desire for engaging faculty and staff in decision making.

Given federal mandates, the need for colleges and universities to take action will require immediate attention and commitment from all those engaged in higher education.

Effective leadership will be critical as institutions address these changes. This researcher contends that to be successful, leaders need to be open and forthcoming. They need to inspire others and help build authentic leaders and followers who are confident, resilient, and optimistic. The most important component to accomplishing this is making it a priority and focusing time and energy on relationship building. As noted by one administrator interviewed, work demands interfere so that time is not given to consider leadership qualities or how one is leading.

Milewiski (2006) argues that no individual leader exists in a vacuum. Rather, they are one part of a larger whole. The organization is in motion and, through the lens of quantum leadership theory leadership arises from this motion; specifically the dynamic interrelationships and connections among the members of the organization.

Communicating clearly as a way to grow trust and openness on all levels; investing in all constituents by modeling and being real; and leading the way with focus on the mission are behaviors reported by administrators that will impact relationships and influence future leaders.

### **Limitations**

One limitation of this study is the relationship of this researcher to the institution studied. Because the study was conducted by a member of the college administration it is possible that both participation rates and results were impacted. Replicating this study in another college or university with a similar profile where the researcher is not known could yield different outcomes.

The size of the sample population is another limitation of this study. The number of faculty and staff rating some of the administrators was too small to run standard

statistical analyses, therefore impacting the ability to determine statistical significance. A larger sample size of faculty and staff rating administrators might allow for statistical analysis that would present different results.

A final study limitation noted is the religious affiliation of the institution used in this study. The sample population was in a religiously affiliated higher education institution. This is an important institutional characteristic that needs serious consideration. The authentic leadership qualities of self-awareness, transparency, ethical and moral conduct, and balanced processing may be experienced differently due to this affiliation and, therefore, reported differently on the ALQ survey compared to an institution that is not religiously affiliated.

### **Recommendations**

This section includes discussions of recommendations for future research and recommendations for practice.

**Recommendations for further research.** The power of language as a means of shaping others' thoughts and actions is well documented in research studies (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). It only takes a few words or non-verbal cues for leaders to impact others positively or negatively. The language a leader uses influences the reactions and responses people have to what is happening around them. The development of future leaders, particularly in higher education, is highly influenced by the communication, connection, and interactions that take place between leaders and their faculty and staff. The need, to be connected to others in a meaningful way, is a basic need we all have.

Without the fulfillment of these needs we, according to Maslow (Huitt, 2007), never achieve self-actualization. To be self-actualized means a person has found self-

fulfillment and is able to realize their potential. Self-actualization in turn results in self-transcendence which means helping others discover self-fulfillment and realize their potential. Leaders are a key part of this developmental process.

A future study of language and styles of communication of college and university administrator could offer insights about how language impacts leadership in this environment. What is discovered may inform and enhance the development of the next generation of college and university leaders.

Another recommendation is to conduct a similar study that includes multiple institutions. A study of more than one college will provide a larger sample of faculty, staff, and administrators. The study could be conducted with several colleges with profiles similar to the one in this study (small, private, religiously affiliated, liberal arts college in the northeast). A second study could be conducted that includes higher education institutions of similar size but non-religiously affiliated. A further option is to use the Carnegie classifications to identify institutions based on size and degree type.

Additionally, faculty and staff reveal a lack of interest or hesitance to advance as leaders. The extent to which these responses are reflective of the pressures, fear, and uncertainty surrounding higher education is also worth considering for further study.

**Recommendations for practice.** This study revealed the importance and value faculty, staff, and administrators place on communication. Leaders in higher education may want to consider and examine how communication happens and what is communicated within their institutions.

Faculty and staff in this study noted that it is important for leaders to be honest and share the truth even though it may be uncomfortable to hear. They want administrators to be

open and willing to listen and consider their ideas and opinions; they want leaders who are transparent and demonstrate the capacity and willingness to solicit opinions and viewpoints prior to making important decisions.

Administrators participating in the study pointed to these key communication practices: complementing and rewarding successes of others and noticing when they exceed expectation; understanding the impact they as leaders have on others; and keeping people informed and, whenever possible, explaining why important decisions are made. Perhaps the most powerful communication practice leaders pointed to is the importance of their actions and consistency between what is said and what is done.

The emphasis on ethical and moral conduct was highly rated by all study participants. This ALQ factor is directly aligned with the mission of the institution in this study. It is important to recognize when there is consistency between mission and leadership practice. Where there are disconnects or inconsistencies, leaders need to examine why this may be occurring.

Over the past few years, colleges and universities have been coming under greater scrutiny with regard to how they handle sexual misconduct. The U. S. Education Department tightened enforcement of Title IX Act of the Education Amendments of 1972. This act protects people from discrimination based on sex or any of the protected groups or categories in education programs or activities which receive federal financial assistance (Wilson, 2014). College and universities are under fire for inadequate responses to reports of sexual harassment and sexual misconduct on college campuses, especially following the scandal at Penn State.

Higher education leaders' responses to campus situations impact their campus communities and set the standard for how ethical and moral conduct is modeled and practiced. It is important for leaders to recognize how far-reaching their ethical and moral decisions affect the institution, the surrounding community, and higher education broadly. Leaders need to be conscious that their choices and decisions have widespread impact.

Another recommendation is focused on professional development of faculty and staff on all levels. Providing the time and budgetary resources to support the ongoing development and training of faculty and staff is a key resource for keeping faculty and staff engaged and willing to step up and accept challenges and opportunities that may be presented.

A final recommendation for practice addresses shared governance, specifically examining the practice of shared governance on college and university campuses. The review and revision of the institutional policies and procedures will enable greater communication and engagement between faculty and administrators. Such an effort, as noted in this study, can build connections that are important aspects of authentic leadership desired by all members of the campus community.

## **Conclusion**

Authentic leaders are keenly aware of their values and beliefs. They have the ability to transform individuals and organizations, create meaningful change, and inspire others. They are self-confident, genuine, trustworthy, focused on building others' strengths and broadening their thinking, and creating an organizational environment that is positive and engaging (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Gardner et al., 2005).

Knowing the current realities facing colleges and universities, even the most confident and trustworthy leaders struggle to convey optimism from time to time. Returning to relationships as the foundation for leading will enable leaders to achieve their desired results. People express a variety of expectations of leaders. What this study discovered is: the recurring expectations of consistent, open communications; focus on mission; acknowledgement and support; and encouragement for growth and professional development.

This researcher's leadership journey from assistant professor to provost was, and is, grounded in the principles of authentic leadership; a leadership paradigm that was evolving over the same years as my journey. Authentic leadership, as I discovered, is not a set of traits or skills that are taught and learned, rather, it calls upon inherent qualities and abilities all people possess. Self-awareness and transparency are two necessary leadership qualities, both of which I know I possess. Learning to value and embrace these was something else altogether. It takes time and intention for other leaders and followers who are not transparent or self-aware to understand and value leaders who are. Often these leadership qualities are misinterpreted. Being open and honest can be seen as a strategic move on the part of the leader to manipulate a situation, in which case it can cause distrust and caution by others. Instead of bringing people together it causes them to pull away and take a "wait and see attitude" before learning that this is a genuine quality of this leader and that trust is possible.

The future of higher education needs strong, caring, and authentic leaders. Leaders who are committed to engaging faculty and staff in meaningful relationships while respecting the various roles and responsibilities for which they are accountable. Leaders

come in all colors, shapes, and sizes; they are multidimensional and, when empowered, they stretch and challenge themselves to engage in certainty as well as uncertainty.



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## Appendix A: Letter to Survey Participants

Sherry J. Fraser



DATE 2013

Dear Colleague,

This is a very challenging time for colleges and universities. Intense scrutiny by the federal and state governments, as well as by national and regional accrediting bodies, is a mixed blessing. The new Federal Scorecard announced by President Obama at his February *State of the Union Address* is the latest measure of college and university quality and success.

I am currently a doctoral candidate at St. John Fisher College in Rochester, NY studying for my Ed.D. in Executive Leadership. I am requesting your participation in my dissertation research on authentic leadership practice and development in higher education. I am in need of participants to complete an online survey on authentic leadership and to participate in focus group discussions. This research seeks to gain information on authentic leadership in higher education.

Attached to this letter is an informed consent form. If you wish to participate, please read and sign the form indicating that you are giving consent. The information you share will be kept confidential. You will be assigned an identification code for the study and data analysis will be kept anonymous in this work. The survey will be sent to your college email from Mind Garden, the outside group responsible for administering the survey. For your willingness to participate, you will receive a five dollar gift card after the on-line survey is submitted.

Three focus groups will be convened after the survey is administered. One focus group will be for college administrators, one for faculty, and one for staff. Participants will be randomly selected. If you are selected as a participant for a focus group, you will be notified by email and receive a follow-up phone call.

This study has been reviewed and approved by the St. John Fisher College IRB. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me by phone or e-mail. Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Sherry Fraser



## Appendix B: Informed Consent Form

### St. John Fisher College Institutional Review Board

## Informed Consent Form

Title of study: Authentic Leadership in Higher Education

Name(s) of researcher(s): Sherry J. Fraser

Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Jerry Willis Phone for further information: 914-737-1627

#### Purpose of study:

The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between leader's self-perception of authentic leadership and their subordinates' perception of the administrator's authentic leadership, and to determine if a relationship exists between those who possess authentic leadership qualities and the development of new leaders.

#### Study Procedures:

- The ALQ will be administered to administrator, faculty, and staff electronically.
- The data will be compiled by Mind Garden and a composite report generated and sent electronically to the researcher.
- Analysis of ALQ data will compare self-ratings to the mean of the follower ratings. The statistic used for this analysis will be a paired t-test, or the equivalent nonparametric analysis.
- There will be nine interviews conducted with three randomly selected participants each from administrators, faculty, and staff.
- An outside interviewer will conduct the interviews, and record and document in writing the content of responses to prepared questions without identifying individual respondents.
- The interview information will be prepared in a summary transcript and coded so confidentiality is assured. No name, positions, age, gender, or other identifiers will be used.
- The researcher will analyze the data to look for themes and patterns.

- The final step in data analysis will be an effort to synthesize the findings from the different types of data. The focus will be on finding what is supported by more than one type of data, findings that emerge from only one type of data, and conflicts where different sources of data produced conflicting results.

Approval of study: This study has been reviewed and approved by the St. John Fisher College Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Place of study: St. John Fischer College Length of participation: Two Months

Risks and benefits: The expected risks and benefits of participation in this study are explained below:

- There are no risks involved in participation in this study.
- The benefits include contributing to authentic leadership knowledge in higher education and the subsequent impact it has on the development of future leaders.

Method for protecting confidentiality/privacy:

- The Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ) survey will be administered by Mind Garden, an outside group that manages the ALQ. The survey tool is administered electronically and coded so the individual names are not associated with the surveys.
- The interview participants will be randomly selected. The researcher will not participate in the interview process, rather, an outside interviewer will be secured to conduct the face to face interviews and collect the information from interview participants
- The interviews will not take place on the campus.

### **Your rights:**

As a research participant, you have the right to:

1. Have the purpose of the study, and the expected risks and benefits fully explained to you before you choose to participate.
2. Withdraw from participation at any time without penalty.
3. Refuse to answer a particular question without penalty.

4. Be informed of appropriate alternative procedures or courses of treatment, if any, that might be advantageous to you.

5. Be informed of the results of the study.

I have read the above, received a copy of this form, and I agree to participate in the above-named study.

\_\_\_\_\_

Print name (Participant)

Signature

Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sherry J. Fraser

Print name (Investigator)

Signature

Date

If you have any further questions regarding this study, please contact the researcher listed above for appropriate referrals.

## **Appendix C: Interview Questions**

The following are proposed interview questions to be used by the interviewer for the face to face interviews. Question number six will be reworded depending on the individual be interviewed.

1. Do you have any questions about the interview process as outlined to you?
2. What are your thoughts regarding leaders in higher education?
3. What are the characteristics you desire or look for in a leader?
4. Of the qualities mentioned, which ones do you believe you possess?
5. How do you see these qualities demonstrated by leaders around you?
6. As a member of the (faculty) (staff) (administration), what are some examples of how you have been encouraged to engage in leadership opportunities on campus?
7. What aspects of your role in higher education do you like?
8. What possible new roles or opportunities in higher education do you aspire to?
9. Of all the ideas that were discussed, which one is the most important to you?
10. Are there any other thoughts someone might care to share at this time?