Understanding Transformative Leadership Among High School Students:

Creating Conditions to Lead

by

David Sorkin

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

Approved March 2016 by the
Graduate Supervisory Committee:

Daniel Dinn-You Liou, Chair
Mirka Koro-Ljungberg
James Frabutt

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

May 2016

ABSTRACT

High schools throughout the country posit leadership as one of the characteristics they develop while students are with them. All too often though, this leadership development is limited to those in title positions of leadership or is only accomplished through informal training mechanisms. The challenge for educators is to develop leadership that can critically address community problems, a challenge that is made more difficult in a broader social environment that is becoming politically, economically, and racially more polarized. This action research study investigated how high school students understand transformative leadership as one way to address this problem.

Using a hermeneutic orientation, this qualitative study investigated high school students' ($N = 8$) understanding of transformative leadership. Situated within a leadership class open to any 11th or 12th grader, participants engaged with a community-based, service-learning project as a method to enact their leadership in a meaningful way. The use of Catholic Social Teaching as a way to frame the service-learning project allowed for a direct connection with the school's Catholic identity and mission. Data sources included reflection journals, interviews, focus groups, and a researcher observation journal.

Findings from the study suggest that high school students understand and enact transformative leadership through participation in a service-learning project. Participants understood transformative leadership to different extents, indicating that transformative leadership develops in different stages. These results, along with implications for future research, are discussed.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my family and my students. To my family: I would not be where I am today without your love and support. To my students: I am the educator I am because of you.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Journeys are a funny thing because sometimes they take you exactly where you planned, but sometimes they take you to places you never thought possible or even places you did not want to go. My journey as an educator and researcher began many years ago, but my journey over the past three years would not have been possible without the help and assistance of many people.

To begin, I would like to thank Dr. Daniel Liou, my dissertation chair. Daniel, your constant prodding and directing pushed me to dig deeper in spite of wanting to be satisfied with "good enough". Your mentorship was helpful in pushing me to search in places I never thought of looking. I would also like to thank my committee members, Dr. Mirka Koro-Ljunberg and Dr. Jim Frabutt. Mirka, it was your mentorship that kindled my love of theory. You opened up the world of theory from so many angles, from the more traditional theorists to the post-post-post-post modernists. You welcomed my questions and encouraged me to push my thinking and embrace new ideas. Jim, it was your mentorship and introduction to action research when I was at Notre Dame that started me on my academic journey. Your insights and support at Notre Dame and throughout the dissertation have been invaluable. Thank you all.

The next individual I want to thank is my mentor and principal, Pat Collins. Pat, there is no way I could have completed this program without your love, encouragement, and unconditional support. Whether picking up the slack from being focused on my studies, letting me leave early to attend class, or asking how things were going, you helped make this possible. Thank you.

Last, the loves of my life for whom I do everything: my wife Kelly and my sons Aaron and Eli. Kelly, I know you sacrificed a lot to let me do this program. I can't thank you enough for what you did to help me realize my dream and to take care of everything during the times I was away. Your love and encouragement are what kept me going each and every day. Aaron and Eli, you guys are everything to me. Enough reading and research…it's time to play. I love you.

P.S. Kelly, this is the last degree. I promise.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In response to a query concerning the outcome of the debates of the Constitutional

Convention in 1787, Benjamin Franklin famously answered the fledgling United States

was "a republic, if you can keep it" (Bartleby.com, 2003). In order to keep it, the United

States needs an educated citizenry capable of critical personal, economic, and political

leadership. The lack of such a citizenry risks a collapse to the democratic principles upon

which the United States was founded. However, there is a component beyond an

educated citizenry that is necessary for success, and that component is a moral or virtuous

outlook towards others. Theodore Roosevelt captured this idea best when he said "to

educate a man in mind and not in morals is to educate a menace to society"

(Theodorerooseveltcenter.org, n.d.). Menaces to society are time and again featured in

news reports describing tales of swindle and tomfoolery.

Since 2001, the United States has seen a rash of high-profile scandals indicative

of failed leadership. Beginning with the Enron accounting scandal in 2001, continuing

with WorldCom's accounting scandal in 2002 and through Bernard Madoff's Ponzi

scheme, Lehman Brothers Holdings' bankruptcy, and the collapse of the mortgage

industry in 2008, examples abound of leadership that disregards the needs of those they

are supposed to help. This type of leadership has carried over into the political world

where headlines frequently appear telling of politicians' greed and personal gain. There is

reason to wonder if and how this type of behavior can be changed. What would it take to

develop leadership competencies and skills focused on the good of all? What would

1

leadership look like that places social justice and the care of the people they serve at the forefront?

Two examples highlight the lack of care for those in society. Recently, the United States has seen the re-emergence of race issues in stark ways. In two separate cases, grand juries in St. Louis, MO, and New York, NY, did not charge white police officers with murder of black males. The result of these decisions has been demonstrations across the country calling for justice for the killed and attention to race relations (CNN, 2014). While protesters are calling for improvement in race relations, religious leaders have weighed in on the conversation surrounding leadership for the end of human trafficking. On March 17, 2014, high-level leaders from major world religions including Roman Catholicism, the Church of England, and Islam signed an accord agreeing to coordinate efforts to end human slavery and trafficking by 2020 (Anglican Journal Staff, 2014). These headlines demonstrate a failure of individuals in society to appreciate the basic dignity of each individual. Further, these stories highlight the deeply rooted problems faced by society and the coordinated effort demonstrative of the kind of leadership that transforms society.

The 21st Century is an environment typified by a globally interconnected, technologically infused citizenry. In addition to the interconnected and technologically infused nature of society, the modern world is complex and ever changing. To be successful in this environment, a new skill is needed beyond academic competencies. That skill is leadership. The Center for Creative Leadership proposed an antidote for the lack of leadership: develop people's creativity so they can be innovative and develop leadership competencies so they can create change (Petrie, 2011).

Definition of leadership and challenges

Before continuing, it is important to define what leadership is. For the purposes of this study, leadership is understood using the definition provided by Northouse (2013). Northouse defines leadership as a "process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (p. 5). This definition succinctly captures the complexity of leadership. Further, when the common goal is the common good, leadership operating from this definition provides a way to respond to the types of corruption and injustice seen in society. For Northouse, the key components are process, influence, group, and common goal. Taken together, these elements understand leadership as non-linear, occurring with people, and intending a group goal. Influence is particularly important since influence is directional from the leader to the follower and from the follower to the leader. For Northouse, leadership is accessible by anyone, not just titled leaders.

The challenge to develop leadership is exacerbated and confused by various approaches vying for dominance. Numerous theories of leadership exist including situational, contingency, leader-member exchange, servant, transactional, transformational, and authentic, to name a few (P. G. Northouse, 2013). Each one posits the basis of effective leadership, yet none of these theories adequately directs the focus to transform the environment. It is safe to say that the only agreement regarding leadership is that there is no agreement.

Incorporating a funnel approach that distills a topic from the broadest context to the narrowest, the imperative and relevance of leadership development becomes clear. If the top of the funnel is a productive citizen capable of leadership, rational thought, and

care for others, then the bottom of the funnel is the individual experience. To be most effective, the individual experience needs to be real and meaningful, yet this is no simple task. High schools across the country struggle to find the time and resources to define, develop, and implement leadership programs. Often, high schools look to extra-curricular activities to develop leadership (Dobosz & Beaty, 1999; Hancock, Dyk, & Jones, 2012; Holt, Tink, Mandigo, & Fox, 2008). Inconsistent in their construction and focus, these programs fail to achieve leadership outcomes necessary for deep-rooted transformation.

However, the problem does not end there. Colleges and universities look favorably upon the leadership experiences of high school applicants. In order to build their resumes, high school students seek opportunities to participate in school-sponsored leadership opportunities. Two places typically associated with high school leadership include extra-curricular activities and student council. However, not all students have equal access to these types of experiential opportunities. The ability to participate in an extra-curricular activity is limited to those students who have an interest and talent in the activity. Students talented enough to participate in an extra-curricular activity but who do not succeed academically may be restricted from participating because of academic eligibility issues. A perennial challenge to student council elections is the elections become referendums on popularity, not ability. Because of these realities, students whose talents do not align with the extra-curricular offerings, are less talented academically, or lack popularity do not have access to the opportunities necessary for leadership development. All of this exists in spite of the fact that those very students may desire to increase their leadership abilities.

Given the need for students to be equipped as leaders, high schools have a greater responsibility to begin developing leadership skills among their students. Implicit for a number of high schools is the fact their mission statement includes a component concerning leadership development. These institutions in particular have a unique responsibility to focus on leadership development. Central Catholic High School is one such school whose mission statement explicitly identifies leadership as a foundational component. However, Central Catholic's call to leadership development takes on an additional layer when considering the fact that the school is a Catholic school. Because of this, any leadership development must be focused on how to care for those in society. In common parlance, social justice.

Catholic Demand for Leadership

In addition to the broader societal needs already identified, the Catholic Church has made a clear call for leadership emanating from the earthly ministry of Jesus of Nazareth to confirmation and extending to a particular demand among youth. Though never discussed as leadership per se within Church documents, the implications of leadership are present nonetheless. This contextual background supports the need for leadership development of high school students given the Catholic context of the research study.

The Catholic Church looks to the teachings of Jesus revealed through sacred Scripture as a basis for how the faithful are to interact with one another. Numerous stories and parables found in scripture intimate ways of being a leader. Though a complete analysis of the stories and parables demonstrating leadership is beyond the scope of this work, I will briefly highlight one example of Jesus' teaching that depicts guidance on

leadership – the sermon on the mount. Found in chapters 5 and 6 of the Gospel of

Matthew, the sermon on the mount begins with the beatitudes and continues with

numerous instructions including teachings on anger, retaliation, almsgiving, and love of

enemies (Catholic Church, 1990, p. 12 - 17). These teachings, when extended to

leadership, present guidelines on how to interact with society that fulfills God's call to

participation in the community.

Two additional points of understanding are worth noting. First is the

understanding of leadership associated with the sacrament of confirmation. Confirmation

is the last of the sacraments of initiation. In his seminal work, the *Summa Theologica*,

Thomas Aquinas interprets and affirms the reception of the graces of this sacrament as a

final charge in which the confirmand is to take action within the world. Noting in Article

5 of Question 72 in the Third Part (Aquinas, 1948), Aquinas argued that

> it is evident, from a comparison with the life of the body, that the action which is
> proper to man immediately after birth, is different from the action which is proper
> to him when he has come to perfect age. And therefore by the sacrament of
> Confirmation man is given… power to do those things which pertain to the
> spiritual combat with the enemies of the Faith. This is evident from the example
> of the apostles, who, before they received the fullness of the Holy Ghost, were in
> the "upper room…persevering…in prayer" (Acts 1:13-14); whereas afterwards
> they went out and feared not to confess their faith in public.

The implication from this is clear. Simply put, those who are confirmed are called to

action and working within the world. Aquinas articulates this with respect to the faith life,

but it can be extended beyond the faith life to the life in the world.

The Catechism of the Council of Trent (Catholic Church, 1829) also lends its gaze

towards the interpretation of the sacrament of confirmation as a call for leadership. In the

Catechism of the Council of Trent, a description and explanation of the sacrament of

confirmation is used which intimates the power of this sacrament to give the faithful

charge to engage with the world. To begin, the Catechism notes that "before, and even at the very time of the passion, so weak and listless were they [the apostles], that no sooner was our Lord apprehended, than they all fled" (p. 144). However, after receiving the gifts of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the apostles "fearlessly, and in defiance of all danger, proclaim the Gospel, not only through Judea, but throughout the world" (p. 144). Again, though it is understood in terms of the reception of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the implication is clear. When an individual receives confirmation, he or she is imbued with a charge to go into the world to lead.

The second point of understanding worth noting is the numerous demands for action throughout the Church's history. Congar (1967) provided a look at the writings of John Chrysostom in his understanding of the role of the laity in the church. Congar noted that John Chrysostom, who lived in the 4th Century, stated that

> the most perfect rule of Christianity, its exact definition, its peak, is this: seek that which is for the benefit of the community…. Don't say that you can't make any impression on others: if you are a Christian it is impossible not to have some effect…. It is part of the very essence of a Christian…and it is as contradictory to say that a Christian can do nothing for others as to say that the sun cannot give light. (p. 357-358)

For Chrysostom, a Christian is infused with the need for action to help the common good. This action is not framed in the conversation of leadership, but action nonetheless. The writings of several popes throughout history also indicated this need.

Pope Paul VI's *Apostolicam Actuositatem - Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity* (1965) begins with such an identification. Paul IV posits that "our own times require of the laity no less zeal….With a constantly increasing population, continual progress in science and technology, and closer interpersonal relationships, the areas for the lay apostolate have been immensely widened" (Introduction). Paul VI identified the zeal that

7

the laity needs in working with the modern world. Further, he clarified that the realms where a layperson can work has widened. The fact that society's progression has led to greater inequalities and other problems for which the laity is responsible is the reason for the widening of areas of service.

Pope John Paul II echoed the demand for zeal when he wrote in the apostolic exhortation *Christifideles Laici - On the Vocation and the Mission of the Lay Faithful in the Church and in the World* (1988) that

> a new state of affairs today both in the Church and in social, economic, political, and cultural life, calls with a particular urgency for the action of the lay faithful. If lack of commitment is always unacceptable, the present time renders it even more so. It is not permissible for anyone to remain idle. (Section 3)

Pope John Paul II (1988) qualified his demand for action when he said that "the good of all becomes the good of each one and the good of each one becomes the good of all" (Section 28). Further, each person is "entrusted with a unique task which cannot be done by another and which is to be fulfilled for the good of all" (Section 28). Pope John Paul II specifically identified young people as the ones to carry out this call.

> The Council, then, makes an earnest plea in the Lord's name that all lay people give a glad, generous, and prompt response to the impulse of the Holy Spirit and to the voice of Christ, who is giving them an especially urgent invitation at this moment. Young people should feel that this call is directed to them in particular, and they should respond to it eagerly and magnanimously. (Section 2)

Given these recent writings, it is clear that a specific appeal is made to the young people of the Church who are called in a specific way to take action in the world.

Taken together, the Catholic Church has said much about the demand of those confirmed to take action. Beginning with the graces bestowed at confirmation, confirmands are called to leadership within society. The call is extended with the need to work for the good of all. The question then becomes which leadership framework meets

these needs. Transformative leadership is one framework that aligns with this call to action and the care of those in society.

Transformative Leadership Defined

This action research study investigated leadership through the lens of transformative leadership operationalizing a definition of transformative leadership gleaned from the literature. Transformative leadership is defined as leadership rooted in humility, faith, hope, love, critical thinking, and solidarity focused on a praxis of reflection and action. Transformative leadership is about more than a simple set of traits or characteristics; it is about fostering life-giving relationships between the leader and the follower. The very idea of life-giving intimates the potential transformative power of this definition. Closer examination of the definition's components reveals how this framework holds a power for deep transformation.

This definition carries with it several aspects requiring further clarification. Humility, faith, hope, critical thinking, and solidarity are features emanating from the work of Paulo Freire (2005b) and clarified by Miller, Brown, and Hopson (2011). Miller et al. positioned transformative urban leadership in relationship with the work of Freire. Leaning on Freire's *Pedagogy of Freedom: Ethics, Democracy, and Civic Courage*, Miller et al. understand humility as an openness to the possibility that one is not the "sole possessor of the truth" (p. 1082). An individual will not be "overly convinced of one's own certitudes" when approaching situations with this attitude (p. 1083). Thus, humility results in the ability to learn from another. As an example, this is evident when an individual changes a position when presented with factual information that contradicts a

previous stance. Humility concerns itself with the leader's ability to say he or she was wrong.

The second element is faith. Faith revolves around "the inherent capabilit[y] of all people to name their realities and to transform them" (p. 1083). Thus, faith concerns the ability to trust another person's knowledge based on his or her experience. Faith is apparent in the disposition and attitude towards others. As an example, a leader demonstrates faith when he or she operates from the position that the followers know and understand their experience better than the leader. To have faith includes the ability to listen to the stories and experiences of others in order to understand a situation more thoroughly.

The third element drawn from Miller et al. is hope. Hope asserts that "the work of the people can remain (or become) purpose filled and meaningful" (Miller et al., 2011, p. 1085, parentheses in original). Hope concerns itself with a belief not in a deterministic attitude, but rather an attitude of possibility. Hope is present in transformative leadership when the leader maintains a positive attitude throughout a situation. Hope helps a leader say 'we will change this' or 'we can help this person' or 'stay the course'. Those who do not have hope say 'this is pointless' or 'we will never succeed'.

For an understanding of the construct of love, it is important to turn directly to Freire. Freire defined love as an act of creation, courage, commitment, bravery, and freedom (Freire, 2005b, p. 89-90). In its truest form, love is "the foundation of dialogue and dialogue itself" (p. 89). In this sense, love is a connector bringing people together. Love is when a transformative leader demonstrates connection, care, and empathy with the follower. Love is shown when the transformative leader stops what he or she is doing

because another person is hurting; verbally, physically, or emotionally. Love causes the transformative leader to engage in all of the other behaviors of transformative leadership because of the dialogic nature of two becoming one.

The fifth construct is critical thinking. Critical thinking is an awareness of the "systems and structures that have affected their lives" (p. 1084). This includes an awareness of the systems and structures of both the leader and the follower. Of particular importance in critical thinking is the ability to honestly understand and evaluate dynamics at play in society. These dynamics may include laws, traditions, and other social norms that continue to prevent an individual from growing and becoming authentically free. As an example, critically thinking transformative leaders ask what they can do to address hunger beyond simply donating food to a food pantry. They ask the question of what structures are in place that prevent someone who is hungry from accessing education or work so they can provide for themselves.

The sixth element gleaned from Miller et al. is solidarity. Solidarity is the union between leader and follower in which both finds themselves in the other. Solidarity allows leaders to "avoid paternalistic efforts to tell the oppressed what they need and instead work toward cultural synthesis" (p. 1085). Solidarity's attitude of connection between two individuals is so deep that both understand that what hurts one hurts the other, and what helps one helps the other. An example of solidarity can be found historically when people of all colors march together side-by-side protesting discrimination of a single group or when people of different faiths create a protective ring around other faith members so they can pray.

The final construct in the definition is praxis. Again, turning directly to Freire provides a thorough understanding of praxis. Praxis is reflection and action, and through praxis, one engages the world. Freire cautions that an undue focus on either reflection or action leads to verbalism or activism respectively (Freire, 2005b, p. 87-88). Freire goes on to say that "liberation is a praxis: the action and reflection of men and women upon their world in order to transform it" (p. 79). Praxis is shown through a transformative leader's ability to take the constructs of faith, hope, love, critical thinking, and solidarity and turn it into action. Praxis is demonstrated when an individual can intelligibly articulate problems and actions that will address the root of the problem. Those who cannot intelligibly articulate the problem behind an action do not show praxis. Conversely, those who are engaged in action but cannot articulate what the problem is do not demonstrate praxis. Table 1 provides a brief summary of the principle areas of transformative leadership.

Table 1

Concepts of transformative leadership

Concept	Understanding
Humility	Openness to one's own fallibility in order to learn from another.
Faith	Confidence in the other's ability to know and name his or her experience.
Hope	An attitude of possibility; not a deterministic attitude.
Love	A connector between people that brings freedom.
Critical thinking	Awareness of the systems and structures that surround us.
Solidarity	The union between leaders and followers in which each is found in the other.
Praxis	Engagement through reflection and action.

Situated Context

Central Catholic High School is a co-educational institution serving 590 students in the southwestern part of the United States. Central Catholic was founded in 1954 to serve Catholic and migrant workers' children and has since grown to serve a primarily middle-class population. In addition to the 590 students, there were 45 faculty members and 30 staff members who supported the daily operations of the school. Over the past five years, Central Catholic has witnessed a marked growth in student enrollment that has resulted in the expansion of the campus. As an example, in 2011 a new fine and performing arts building opened providing an additional 59,000 square feet of instructional space. This expansion brought the campus to a total of 118,000 square feet of instructional space on 31 acres of land. In addition to this new building, there is a plan to expand the campus with two new additional buildings in the coming years.

Central Catholic was owned and operated by the local Roman Catholic Diocese. The administrative structure of the school utilized a traditional model whereby the principal was responsible for the day-to-day administration of the school and reported to the superintendent of Catholic schools for the Diocese. The school did not participate in the federal free and reduced lunch program and did not collect eligibility information; however, 46% of students attending Central Catholic received some sort of financial aid. In order to be admitted to Central Catholic, students submitted an application, previous academic records, an entrance test, and a family interview. An admission committee then reviewed each file for final acceptance.

Central Catholic's mission statement was to provide a college preparatory curriculum within a Catholic faith community focusing on academic excellence,

13

leadership and loving service to others. The community focused on its Catholic identity through incorporation of Catholic rituals and traditions into the daily life of the school. Students completed a college preparatory curriculum that included graduation requirements totaling 27.5 credits. Table 2 contains a detailed list of specific course requirements. All students participated in and complete Christian service requirements totaling more than 100 hours of service over four years.

Table 2

Central Catholic High School Graduation Requirements

Course	Credits
Business/Technology elective	.5
English	4
Fine Arts	1.5
Freshman Computing	.5
Health	.5
Interdisciplinary Preparation, Geography, and Speech	1
Lab Science	3
Mathematics	4
Physical Education	.5
Social Studies	3.5
Theology	4
World Language	2
General Electives	2.5

Note. Credits are earned at a rate of .5 credit per course per semester.

Leadership Development at Central Catholic High School

There were various opportunities for students to exercise leadership in formal roles. Central Catholic had 36 clubs and 18 athletic teams that provided structured

14

opportunities for leadership and feedback. Based on the club and athletic leadership opportunities, there were over 50 elected student leaders. Students held leadership positions in student council, national honor society, world language honor societies, and sports teams. Student mentors applied for an assigned leadership position where they provide academic and social mentorship to underclassmen. Likewise, student ambassadors also applied for an assigned leadership position and served as liaisons at numerous Central Catholic-sponsored events.

The Central Catholic administration realized the effective development of leadership skills required attention and careful cultivation of those skills both formally and informally. Formal cultivation occurs when individuals attend programmed trainings. Formal trainings often include a curricular approach in which students learn about leadership and characteristics of leaders through analysis and examples. Informal leadership development materializes when students receive verbal or non-verbal feedback on their actions from those with whom they come in contact.

Curriculum maps, which detail the formal curricula, existed for all courses at Central Catholic. Analyses of Central Catholic's curriculum maps revealed leadership is not incorporated into the formal curriculum. Explicit language surrounding leadership or leadership development is not included in essential questions, skills, activities, or assessments. Anecdotally, faculty members reported that leadership was taught by encouragement and example, where fitting. It is clear from this that leadership development primarily utilized an informal approach when coaches and faculty moderators, along with fellow students, provided feedback to student leaders during teachable moments. This was problematic since the mission statement calls for the

leadership development of all students, not just those who are participating in formal positions of leadership. Further, the lack of an explicit conversation around students who do not have access to formal leadership opportunities was concerning. Thus, Central Catholic had a responsibility to address this concern in a concrete way. This action research study was an attempt to address leadership in this particular area.

Researcher Positionality

The tenets of action research call for the action researcher to identify and navigate the dichotomies of being a participant and researcher (Anderson & Herr, 1999). I performed several roles as Assistant Principal at Central Catholic High School. As an administrator, my primary function was to oversee the academic program. These duties included supervising 45 faculty members, directing curriculum development in consultation with the department chairs and curriculum committee, and ensuring effective student learning environments. In addition, I worked with the administrative team, which consisted of 11 individuals, to advise the principal on matters concerning the operation of the school. As well as my administrative role, I was the teacher for a class called Principles of Leadership. The Principles of Leadership class was a semester in length and was open to any junior or senior. The course met four times per week with topics including theories of leadership, effective communication, and group leadership, among others. The dual identities as administrator and teacher provided a unique perspective allowing for a macro and micro view of the organization. From this vantage point, I was able to observe the overall culture in the Central Catholic environment, including strengths and areas where the school needs to grow.

My personal beliefs about leadership are also important to identify. I believe that leaders are not simply born. I believe that all people have capacity to lead and that providing training and opportunities to develop those leadership skills is critical to realize that capacity. Leadership is about relationships, and as such, leadership is a dynamic process. Ultimately, I believe that leadership is a confluence of leadership and followership. Much focus has been placed on leadership or followership, but leadership is often both at the same time. In order to lead, the leader needs to listen, reflect, and consider the surrounding environment. In other words, following the cues from the environment. From there, the leader creates a vision of what he or she wants and ideally executes that vision becoming the leader. The process continually evolves as the leader fluidly moves between following and leading in the environment.

Problem Statement

A focused exploration of leadership within the larger community is critical to prepare students for service and leadership not just for themselves, but also for the community (HERI, 1996). If Central Catholic's aim was to prepare students for leadership in society, it is imperative that leadership development be contextualized with the larger society. As it stood, the leadership opportunities for students primarily revolved around internal community opportunities. A required service program existed in which 12th grade students provided service within the larger community, but leadership development was not an explicit focus of the program.

A novel leadership curriculum was initiated in the 2014-2015 academic year to address the limited formal leadership development opportunities at Central Catholic High School. The incorporation of this course into the academic program was the first step in

formalizing the leadership development of students at Central Catholic. However, in order to impart the necessary leadership skills to students, administration at Central Catholic needed to formally develop student leadership capacities beyond theoretical and conversational realms and animate leadership through practical applications such as a community-based service-learning project. The purpose of this action research study was to explore one possible intervention to this problem.

Research Question

One research question and two subquestions guided this action research study.

1. How do students at a Catholic high school understand transformative leadership?

    a. How do students at a Catholic high school develop and demonstrate their leadership skills through a community-based project?

    b. As a result of participation in a community-based project, what is students self-perception of leadership?

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Understanding the literature surrounding an area of inquiry is a critical first step along the investigation journey. This study's investigation into youth understanding of transformative leadership demanded a review of the relevant literature in a number of areas including transformative leadership, service-learning, Catholic Social Teaching, and student leadership.

In order to conduct the literature review, the Eric ProQuest and Academic Search Premiere databases were queried using keywords of leadership development, service-learning, adolescent, high school, and Catholic Social Teaching. Results were limited to those articles published between 2000 and 2015 in scholarly, peer-reviewed journals. Specifically, the literature review includes empirical and conceptual articles focused specifically on high school students. Two exceptions to the specific focus on high school include articles by Komives, Longerbeam, Owen, Mainella, and Osteen (2006) and Sullivan and Post (2011). Both of these articles were so relevant topically that they were included. Although not exhaustive, the review encompasses the discourse surrounding leadership development of high school students.

Transformative Leadership

Transformative leadership was the guiding leadership framework underpinning this study. Demonstrative of the challenge in working with recent leadership theory, Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber (2009) provided a thorough review of then current trends in leadership theory and research, but transformative leadership and other leadership paradigms founded in critical theory and social justice are conspicuously absent. Though

19

recent in its development, transformative leadership offered unique possibilities of leadership that critically looked at social ecosystems in their entirety. This section begins with a discussion of why transformative leadership was selected as the guiding leadership theory. I then outline a discussion of the use of the word 'transformative' leadership, followed by a discussion of the development of this recent framework. Next, a brief look at transformative learning takes place. This section concludes with a review of a study operating from this definition.

   Transformative leadership versus other models. Numerous theories of leadership exist and are promulgated by leadership experts the world over. The natural question becomes why select transformative leadership over these others. The central reason for the selection and importance of transformative leadership came in the focus of where the leadership occurs. When considering leadership theories such as servant leadership, transactional leadership, transformational leadership, leader-member exchange, or path goal, it is evident their focus is on the interaction between leader and follower within an organizational context in order to achieve higher productivity of organizational effectiveness (P. Northouse, 2013). Primarily developed out of the business literature, all of these theories limit their focus to the interaction of individuals within the ecosystem of an organization. However, they fail to take into account the ecosystem outside of the organizational context.

   This specific failure is precisely where transformative leadership filled the void. As will be seen, transformative leadership did not confine itself to the interaction of the leader and follower within an organization. Rather it specifically and intentionally looked at the entire ecosystem including the organizational environment and the environment

beyond the organizational walls. Transformative leadership provided a way of being that an individual can use to effect change in their personal and professional lives at home, at work, and in the community.

   'Transformative' leadership. Before a discussion of transformative leadership, it is important to clarify the use of the word transformative. Throughout the literature, transformative is used in several confounding ways. First, it is used in reference to a particular theory, as is the case with transformative leadership (Shields, 2010) or transformative learning (Johnson, 2008). Secondly, it is used as an adjective absent from a theoretical perspective or framework (Eisler & Carter, 2010). Lastly, it is used as a theoretical perspective that does not align with other understandings of the same theoretical perspectives (Montuori & Fahim, 2010). The variety of uses of the term transformative leads to confusion in the literature and disagreement among scholars about what constitutes a truly transformative approach.

   Development of transformative leadership. The founding of transformative leadership began with Weiner. Weiner (2003) identified the framework as transformative leadership and married transformative leadership with Freire's critical pedagogy. Weiner said that "transformative leadership is an exercise of power and authority that begins with questions of justice, democracy, and the dialectic between individual accountability and social responsibility" (p. 89). Leadership emanating from this lens clearly identified the need for leadership that extends beyond the walls of an organization into an understanding of the larger social context. This was a shift in that many of the prior theories of leadership were contextualized to the organizational environment (P. Northouse, 2013).

Following in the critical view of leadership and merging with elements of social justice, Shields (2010) provided the next evolution of transformative leadership. Specifying the leadership framework as transformative, Shields understands transformative leadership as a function of true freedom. Shields argued that transformative leadership

> recognizes the need to begin with critical reflection and analysis and to move through enlightened understanding to action - action to redress wrongs and to ensure that all members of the organization are provided with as level a playing field as possible - not only with respect to access but also with regard to academic, social, and civic outcomes. (p. 572)

Shields understood transformative leadership as a theory of leadership distinct from transformational leadership but extending from the social justice foundation of Weiner.

The evolution of transformative leadership evolved from Shields when Miller, Brown, and Hopson (2011) introduced the concept of Freirean leadership. Although titled Freirean leadership, this model still had relevance for the discussion of transformative leadership. Strictly limited to an understanding of leadership through Freire, Miller et al. modified and expanded Shields's understanding. Where Shields' transformative leadership surrounded issues of power, social change, equity, and justice, Miller et al. argued for radical social change rooted in humility, faith, hope, critical thinking, and solidarity. This focus on the leader demands a particular level of self-awareness by the leader.

There is even evidence of western and non-western leadership influences merging with transformative leadership. Ncube (2010) offered the addition of the African concept of Ubuntu to the discussion of transformative leadership. According to Ncube, Ubuntu

> embraces a spirit of caring and community, harmony and hospitality, respect and responsiveness (Mangaliso, 2001). [Ubuntu] is further described as the capacity

22

for compassion, reciprocity, and dignity (Bekker, 2008). The hallmarks of Ubuntu are harmony and continuity. It is about understanding what it means to be connected to one another. (p. 78)

Ncube argued that the "heart of Ubuntu is the relationship with others" (p. 78). From this understanding of Ubuntu, Ncube proposed a model of leadership that included six domains of (1) modeling the way, (2) communal enterprise and a shared vision, (3) change and transformation, (4) interconnectedness, interdependency, and empowerment, (5) collectivism and solidarity, (6) continuous integrated development. This model did not explicitly discuss a Freirean critique, but it is coming from a non-western tradition. The elements of humanness and solidarity certainly are elements of Freirean critiques shared by Weiner, Shields, and Miller et al.

Transformative learning. In addition to these iterations of transformative leadership, it is important to consider transformative learning in the discussion of transformative leadership. Johnson (2008) provided relevant information in the discussion of mental models. Mental models are "our naturally occurring cognitive representations of reality, or ways in which reality is codified in our understanding of it" (p. 86). Transformative learning then is "directed at changing the meaning structure or the mental model itself, rather than adding resources to the models currently in use. The outcome of transformative learning is a new and different way of looking at the environment" (p. 86). When understood in the context of leadership, transformative leadership fundamentally shifts the mental model, or social landscape, instead of simply adding new information to it.

Transformative learning and transformative leadership relate to one another in several ways. First, the goal of transformative learning is to shift the fundamental mental

model. Transformative leaders seek to transform the environment and this can only be done through transformative learning. Thus a transformative leader needs to be capable of transformative learning. Second, the transformative leader is not only changing the environment, but he or she transforms the people in the environment. Similar to the transformed mental models of the transformative leader, followers' mental models need to be transformed. In these ways, transformative learning is important to the discussion of transformative leadership.

   Empirical study of transformative leadership. Shields (2010) engaged a qualitative design to understand how two educational leaders demonstrated transformative leadership. Situated in schools with increasingly minority populations, Shields used backward mapping to identify leaders at schools that had "demonstrated considerable improvement" based on measures of adequate yearly progress (p. 561). Shields found that the two leaders demonstrated transformative leadership through seven themes. These included "balancing critique and promise; effecting deep and equitable change; creating new knowledge frameworks; acknowledging power and privilege; emphasizing both private and public good; focusing on liberation, democracy, equity, and justice; and demonstrating moral courage and activism" (p. 573). The result is that Shields argued for the use of transformative leadership as a means to effect change in the students' lives. Through transformative leadership, the two principals were able to move beyond the structural constraints preventing student achievement. They created environments that resulted in student achievement beyond standardized test scores resulting in not just organizational transformation but social transformation.

Two limits of Shields' work should be noted. First, the study looked at educational leaders. In the context of this research, a greater interest lies in the application of transformative leadership for high school students. Secondly, Shields' definition of transformative leadership varies from the operational definition in this study. Thus the seven themes identified, while not unrelated, are not the constructs this study investigated. To recall, this study utilized a definition of transformative leadership based on humility, faith, hope, love, critical thinking, and solidarity.

Conclusion. Two critiques of transformative leadership limit the ability to effectively understand the power of this framework. The first critique is transformative leadership had a limited history as a niche leadership framework. The present period of infancy for transformative leadership is a necessary growing pain. The second critique concerns the fact that multiple variations of transformative leadership existed, including some variations that are not described as transformative. The lack of commonality among scholars prevents the development and validation of instruments as effective measures of transformative leadership skills and abilities.

In spite of this weakness, the power of transformative leadership lay in the possibilities it presented for the betterment of society as a whole. Leaders who are truly transformative look to not only transform the group or organization they lead; they look to transform themselves and the very structures that inhibit relationships that foster the dignity and respect of all. The socioeconomic and sociopolitical structures that could be transformed through this framework were reason enough to continue pursuing this leadership framework.

One gap this study filled is an examination of transformative leadership for high school students. The available literature proposed transformative leadership as a theoretical model evolving from studies of adults. It was my position that leadership competencies could be developed and should be fostered at an earlier age. Thus, this study proposed transformative leadership as a viable theoretical framework for high school students.

Service-Learning

Service-learning is a pedagogical approach to learning that intentionally connects service with learning. Reed-Bouley (2008) defined service-learning as a "pedagogy that integrates community service into academic courses to meet specific learning goals for students" (p. 52). Further, service-learning is distinguished from mere service because service-learning includes the "work of justice" (p. 52). Service-learning must include elements of social justice that seek long-term solutions in collaboration with various stakeholders. The goal of service-learning is to "expose structural causes of inequities" in order to transform the participants and the community (p. 52). When achieved, the transformative power on the community is profound since the participant moves from an approach of doing for to doing with.

The National Youth Leadership Council (NYLC) identified eight standards associated with effective service-learning programs. These standards include meaningful service, a link to curriculum, reflection, diversity, youth voice, partnerships, progress monitoring, and duration and intensity (National Youth Leadership Council, 2008). Associated with each of the standards are indicators demonstrating how successfully the standards are met. A meta-analysis of 62 studies by Celio, Durlak, and Dymnicki (2011)

affirmed empirical support for four elements from the NYLC standards including link to curriculum, youth voice, partnerships, and reflection. Celio et al. found significant positive mean effects in the studies where those four standards of the NYLC were included in the service-learning program.

In addition to the standards identified by the NYLC and affirmed by Celio et al., other components of effective service-learning programs have been identified. Meinhard and Brown's (2010) qualitative study of administrators at successful service-learning programs in Canada found four themes of successful service-learning programs. The themes include the quality of student experience, reflection and relevance of experiences, structure of the program, and support for teachers. When included, the impact of service-learning on students was not only more profound, but lasted longer.

Several studies also acknowledge the importance of recognizing community assets in the evaluation and understanding of community problems. Garoutte and McCarthy-Gilmore (2014) and Reed-Bouley (2008) both incorporated Kretzman and McKnight's *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets* as a way to help participants recognize the talent and skill that is inherent to a local community. Using an asset-based approach, participants took the opportunity to identify and consult with the community partners to effect change from within, not simply as an external group coming in on a proverbial 'white horse' to save the day. In doing so, participants were able to recognize the institutional, cultural, and economic assets a community possesses that could be harnessed to lead to lasting change. Asset-based approaches require partnership with the local community to be successful, one of the programmatic features identified earlier by the NYLC standards.

The positive effects on participants as a result of service-learning are well-documented and wide-reaching. Lee, Olszewski-Kubilius, Donahue, and Weimholt (2007) showed service-learning to positively affect the academic, personal, and interpersonal growth of adolescents. Kahne, Crow, and Lee (2013) demonstrated increased civic and community engagement as a result of participation in service-learning. Celio et al. (2011) showed increased attitudes toward self, school and learning, civic engagement, social skills, and academic performance. Billig, Jesse, and Grimley (2008) also showed increases in citizenship and civic engagement, along with caring and altruism, attachment to school, and seeing the value of schooling. Scales, Roehlkepartain, Neal, Kielsmeier, and Benson (2006) found reduced academic achievement gaps and increased academic performance among participants in service-learning. Together, the power of service-learning to help both the participant and the community became clear.

Two studies reviewed concentrated specifically on service-learning in Catholic schools. Focused on college-age students, Sullivan and Post's (2011) case study on college students concerned the connection between Catholic Social Teaching and service-learning. Sullivan and Post argued that three outcomes are possible when projects are structured with clear objectives. The three outcomes include "(1) a substantive knowledge base about social issues, politics and political processes, and social change; (2) a deeper understanding of complex systems and institutions; and (3) new skills for civic engagement, such as collaboration, leadership development, and negotiation" (p. 119). Although applied at the collegiate level, the implications for the transformative power of service-learning were clear when contextualized to high school.

A second study by Stewart (2008) investigated the role of the teacher in a Catholic high school's service-learning program. Using a grounded theory case study, Stewart found two central aspects worth noting. First, it is important to include "pre-service, in-service, and post-service" reflection, not just summative reflection experiences at the end (Stewart, 2008, p. 63). The reason for this is students desired to process their experience while they were going through it. Stewart found that students were disappointed when they did not have the opportunity to discuss their service-learning experience with classmates and teachers. Second, students preferred to see the teachers perform service-learning as well. Described as "hands-off hypocrites", the perception among students was that teachers are disingenuous when they require students to perform service but do not do so themselves (Stewart, 2008, p. 69). In order to maximize the power of the service-learning, Stewart recommends that service-learning include these two components.

It is important to note one caution of service-learning found by Swaminathan (2007). Swaminathan's qualitative study highlighted the critical importance of dialogue between the community-partner and the school. The reason for this is that community supervisors might "inadvertently subvert or influence students' service-learning experiences in ways to reinforce stereotypes" (p. 140). It became clear that because of a breakdown in communication between the school and community supervisor about the learning agenda, the community supervisors created their own ideas of what the experience should be about. In the end, where the teachers intended the service-learning experience to flatten hierarchies and highlight issues of injustice and inequality, the community supervisors "contributed to the reproduction of and reinforcement of

29

stereotypes and systemic inequities" (p. 141). Swaminathan argued that in order to counteract this phenomenon, teachers must be even more explicit when communicating with the community supervisors about both the expectations of the learning experience and about the community partner's perspective on the service-learning issue.

This review of service-learning begins to show the transformative potential that service-learning holds. One gap in the literature this study addressed is the use of service-learning united with transformative leadership to understand high school students perceptions of leadership. An understanding gleaned from this combination had the potential to expand the ability to teach transformative leadership in a tangible way.

Catholic Social Teaching

Given the nature of the research setting at a Catholic school, it is important to understand issues of social justice from the Catholic perspective. Catholic Social Teaching (CST) is the Roman Catholic Church's teaching concerning social justice and how Catholics are to engage the world. It is founded upon the teachings of the historical Jesus of Nazareth as understood through Scripture and the Magisterium of the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church teaches that God is revealed through Scripture and Tradition (Catholic Church, 1997). Through this revelation and aided by CST, the Catholic faithful are provided an understanding of how to engage the world that fulfills their response to God's call to participation in the life of the Church and the world.

The principal document from which CST stems is *Rerum Novarum - On Capital and* Labor by Pope Leo XIII (Leo XIII, 1891). In this document, Leo XIII outlined the Church's response to the rights of workers and employers, especially in light of the industrial revolution. Numerous other documents have emerged to guide the Church's

position on social justice including *Quadragesimo Anno - After Forty Years* by Pope Pius

XI (Pius XI, 1931), *Mater et Magistra - Christianity and Social Progress* by Pope John

XXIII (John XXIII, 1961), *Gaudium et Spes - Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the*

Modern World promulgated by Pope Paul VI (Paul VI, 1965b), and *Centesimus Annus -*

The Hundredth Year by Pope John Paul II (John Paull II, 1991). Together these

documents, along with others, have outlined the Church's CST.

CST is grounded in the principle of the "inviolable dignity of the human person"

(Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, 2004, para. 107). Because of the dignity of the

human person, three additional principles guide the foundation of CST. First, CST places

importance on the common good. The common good is "the sum total of social

conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their

fulfillment more fully and more easily" (para. 164). Secondly, the Church maintains the

necessity of the principle of subsidiarity.

> Just as it is gravely wrong to take from individuals what they can accomplish by
> their own initiative and industry and give it to the community, so also it is an
> injustice and at the same time a grave evil and disturbance of right order to assign
> to a greater and higher association what lesser and subordinate organizations can
> do. For every social activity ought of its very nature to furnish help to the
> members of the body social, and never destroy and absorb them (para. 186).

Lastly, the Church focuses attention on the principle of solidarity. Solidarity "highlights

in a particular way the intrinsic social nature of the human person, the equality of all in

dignity and rights and the common path of individuals and peoples towards an ever more

committed unity" (para. 192). Together, the principles of the dignity of the human

person, the common good, subsidiarity, and solidarity guided the development of the

seven themes of CST.

Seven themes are present in the Church's understanding of social justice as identified by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), the governing body for Roman Catholic Bishops in the United States. These seven themes are (1) Life and Dignity of the Human Person, (2) Call to Family, Community, and Participation, (3) Rights and Responsibilities, (4) Option for the Poor and Vulnerable, (5) The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers, (6) Solidarity, and (7) Care for God's Creation (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2014). Together, these themes undergird the focus of Catholic social teaching and the Catholic faithful's call to action. Figure 1 represents the core principles and seven themes of CST.

Figure 1. Core principles and seven themes of CST.

The application of these themes is the function of the Catholic faithful in their everyday lives. Much work regarding CST has surrounded its use in social work.

Donaldson & Belanger (2012) provided one perspective of utilizing CST as a method for critical thought and action on the world.

> In applying the principles of CST to contemporary social conditions, we are called to first examine these conditions in light of the principles of human dignity, the common good, solidarity, and subsidiarity for all people, with particular attention to people who are poor and vulnerable. Our examination of social conditions according to these principles should lead us to assess, for example, whether, current policies (housing, child welfare, immigration) uphold the dignity and worth of individuals, particularly people who are poor and vulnerable. That assessment should lead us to action for justice. (p. 124)

Action for justice is the lens CST provides and was demonstrated at the collegiate level with the work of Sullivan and Post (2011).

Sullivan and Post (2011) specifically looked at the use of CST as a curricular addition to teach students about issues of social justice. They noted how the use of CST "calls students from the 'charity only' mentality most common among students to consider issues of justice" (p. 121). In doing so, students are challenged to move from a "mere participation in service to a critical analysis of conditions under which injustice exists" (p. 121). The benefit of CST is that it provided a framework to challenge students to think deeply and critically about the world around them. Combined with a participatory component, the result is an attitude and perception that changes from a 'doing for' to a 'one with' mentality. Such a change in attitude creates a powerful way for participants to live out their Catholic identity in the world around them.

The strength of CST is that it provides a framework to operationalize a critical reflection of society. Ample opportunities exist for an individual to identify societal problems through one of the seven themes promulgated by the USCCB. Not only does it provide a framework to reflect upon, but it also provides a foundation as to why those seven themes are of critical importance. Although developed and promulgated by the

Roman Catholic Church, implications for broader societal calls to action resonate with Catholics and non-Catholics alike. Framing a leadership inquiry through the lens of CST provided a unique opportunity to interweave and balance a way to teach leadership that is contextualized by and supported the local environment.

Student Leadership

Student leadership was the foundation of this study. In reviewing the student leadership literature, several prominent themes emerged including programmatic features, identity development, importance of relationships, student voice, and cautions of leadership.

Programmatic features. It is clear from numerous empirical studies that leadership is a skill that can be learned (Matsudaira & Jefferson, 2006; Mitra, 2006a; Stafford, 2003; Sullivan & Post, 2011; Thorpe, 2007). To be successful in implementation, several components should be included to foster greater success. At the outset, a clearly defined and articulated definition of leadership is critical (Klau, 2006). Failure to define the desired leadership leads to confusion among participants and an increased chance that the intended leadership skills will not be developed. Along with a clear definition, varied pedagogical approaches should be included (Anderson & Kim, 2009; Klau, 2006; Sullivan & Post, 2011). Pedagogical approaches can include lectures, group work, independent work, and presentations among others. Anderson and Kim (2009) found that interactive, organized, and fun activities had the most significant impact on students. Presentations by national and state officers, lectures, and prizes were the least important to students in quality leadership experiences.

The relevance of the learning experiences to students cannot be overstated and should also be considered (Anderson & Kim, 2009; Hancock et al., 2012; Mitra & Gross, 2009; Mitra, 2006b; Otis, 2006; Spanja, 2008; Stafford, 2003; Yamauchi, 2009). Mitra and Gross (2009) compare the importance of relevant learning to being in the state of flow versus the machine metaphor. When students are in flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 2004), they are challenged and function on higher levels. This is in comparison to being a part of the machine, which concerns habitual, non-thinking behavior. Otis (2006) noted in particular that as students level of interest in the project increased, so too did their commitment (p. 81). Conner and Strobel (2007) argued that in addition to being relevant, leadership programs should be flexible in their design in order to respond to the participants "developmental needs, strengths, and trajectories" (p. 296). When programs did this, Conner and Strobel found that the leadership development program grew as well as the participants. Thus it was imperative that the project be of interest and relevance to the students in order for maximum effect.

Two final elements to include in a leadership program involved the importance of self-awareness and reflection. These two elements are interrelated and so will be discussed together. First is the importance of self-awareness (Matsudaira & Jefferson, 2006; Otis, 2006). Self-awareness is the foundation of the Anytown model described by Matsudaira and Jefferson (2006). The National Conference for Community and Justice runs the Anytown model and focused on "experiential leadership grounded in social justice issues" (p. 107). Matsudaira and Jefferson suggested that as "self-awareness increases, so does awareness of various social justice issues" (p. 111). Otis' (2006) case study of the Lexington Youth Leadership Academy showed how the programmatic

35

structure of activity involvement led to greater self-awareness and increased group and community belonging.

The second interrelated component is the importance of reflection. Numerous researchers have identified that students do not grow in their leadership skills and development without including a reflective element of the course (Komives, Owen, Longerbeam, Mainella, & Osteen, 2005; Ricketts & Rudd, 2002; Stafford, 2003; Sullivan & Post, 2011; Thorpe, 2007; White, 2012). What became clear was that there are a variety of ways to include reflective components, such as journals (White, 2012) and public narratives (Ganz, 2008; Sullivan & Post, 2011). Public narratives allow participants to reflect on their selves, community, and the experiences that have molded them into the people they are today. Whatever method selected, a process of reflection is necessary for students to explore an experience that ultimately leads to a new self-awareness. It is the interplay between reflection and self-awareness that allows individuals to continually become who they are (Heidegger, 1996a). However, White (2012) cautioned that although reflection is an important aspect of leadership development, the challenge lies in creating opportunities for sincere reflection. Participants in White's study did not like "structured reflection because it is forced, but they [did] not complete unstructured reflection without prompting because they do not have time" (p. 151-152). This paradox highlighted the challenge in creating meaningful reflection experiences.

Leadership identity development. Several scholars provided insight on the development of a leadership identity. Komives, Owen, Longerbeam, Mainella, and Owen (2005) posited that developing a leadership identity is a cyclical process. In addition to

36

the cyclical nature, students developed their leadership identity as a result of influences from adults, peers, experiences, and reflection. In their grounded theory study of 13 college-age participants, Komives et al. found that individuals progressed through a series of stages culminating with an integration and synthesis of a leadership identity (See Figure 2). In order to progress from stage to stage, an individual developed his or her self-conceptions, understood the new self-conception in relation to others, and then expanded his or her view of leadership. The synthesized leadership identity then influenced and became a part of the individual's perspective and outlook. Cognitive processing of experiences was the critical factor in an individual moving from one stage to the next. Further, they noted that the development of a leadership identity occurs over time.
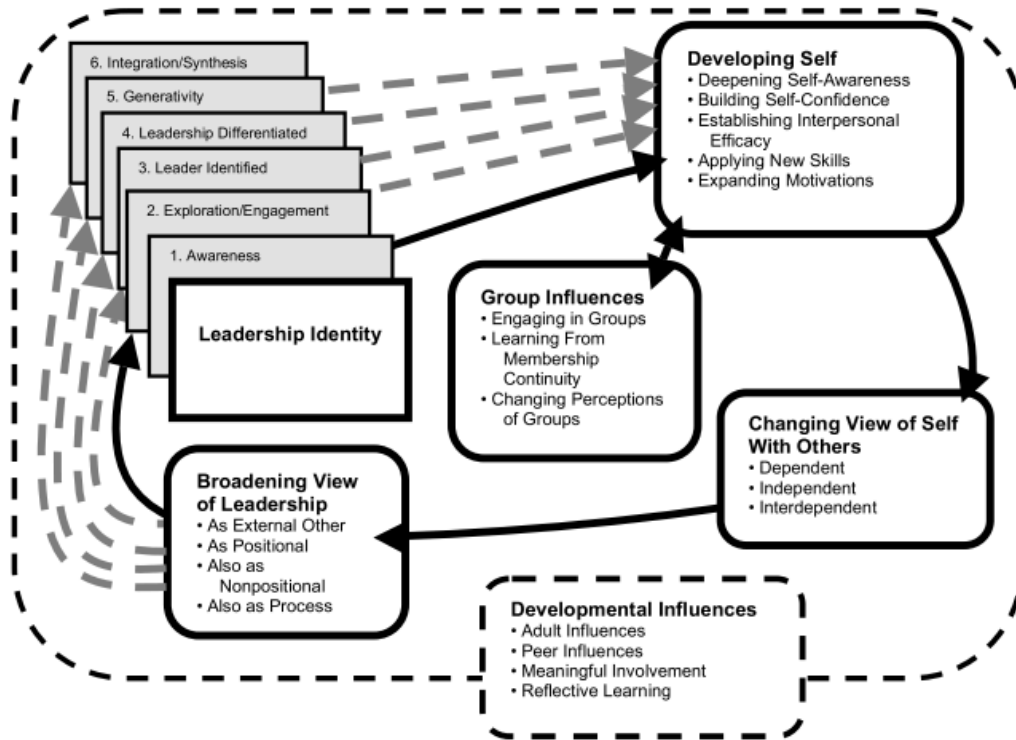
Figure 2. Cycle progression of developing a leadership identity. From "Developing a leadership identity: A grounded theory" by S. Komives, J. Owen, S. Longerbeam, F. Mainella, L. Osteen, 2005, *Journal of College Student Development, 46*(6), p. 599.

During the course of the leadership process, Komives et al. also argued that participants moved from a hierarchical understanding of leadership to a systemic way of thinking. In the cyclical movement from awareness towards integration/synthesis, Komives et al. found that "hierarchical thinking was the view of leadership held in *leader identified* and systemic thinking emerged in *leadership differentiated*" (Komives et al., 2005, p. 609, italics in original). The movement towards a systemic way of thinking helped participants understand their role as part of a larger context or organization.

Ricketts and Rudd (2002) echoed the work of Komives et al., but focused their investigation towards youth leadership development in career and technical education. Rickets and Rudd built a cyclical paradigm that incorporated the work of "vanLinden and

38

Fertman (1998) and Bloom's (1956) Taxonomy of Educational Objectives" (p. 11). They argued that participants will progress through each focus area in three stages; awareness, interaction, and integration. Similar to Komives et al., individual experience and processing of experiences are required in order to advance from stage to stage. Rickets and Rudd expanded the idea of identity development as progressive and specified five curricular units for study: knowledge, attitude, critical thinking, inter- and intrapersonal skills, and communication. Each focus area received a dedicated and focused curriculum. Only when a participant had progressed through all of the curricular areas at each of the taxonomic levels would he or she become fully versed in leadership (See Figure 3). The limitation of Rickets and Rudd's work was that it is based from a theoretical perspective without empirical evidence. Nonetheless, the conceptual framework of a taxonomic progression was useful in constructing a leadership program.
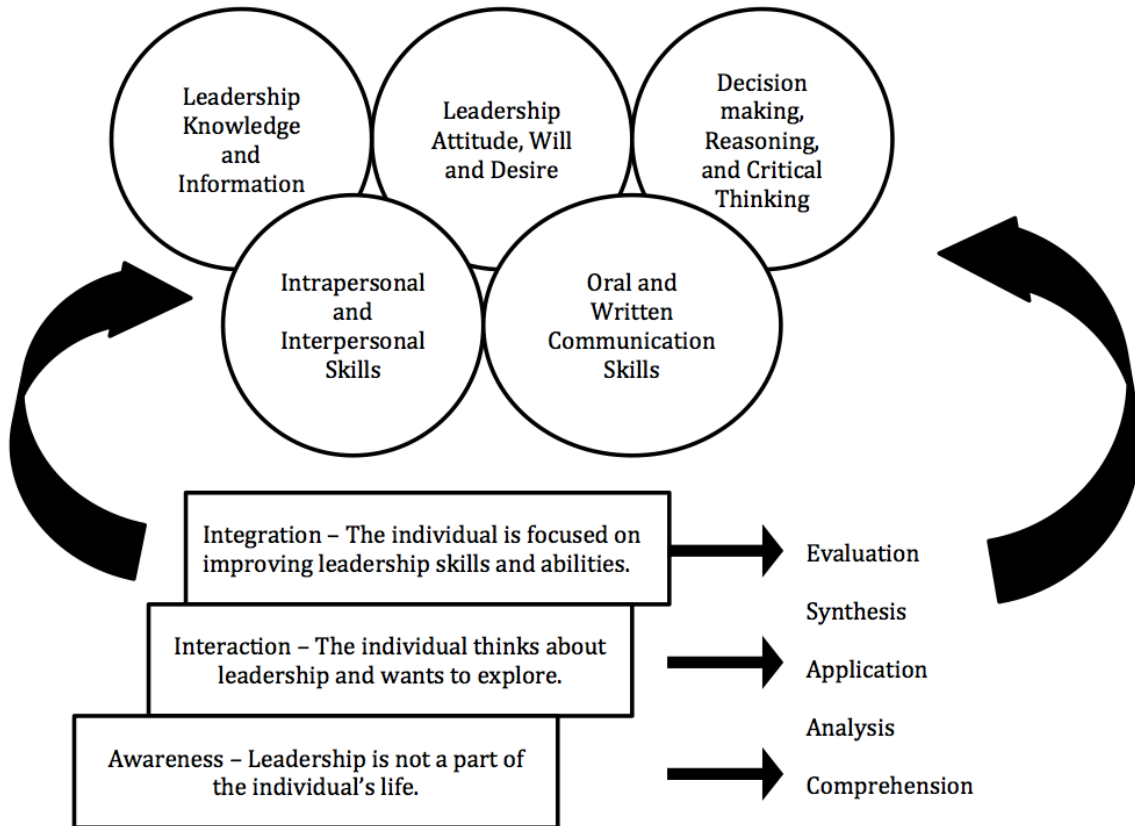
Figure 3. Model for youth leadership curriculum. From "A comprehensive leadership education model to train, teach, and develop leadership in youth" by J. Rickets and R. Rudd, 2002, *Journal of Career and Technical Education, 19*(1), p. 12.

Otis' (2006) investigation of the Lexington Youth Leadership Academy (LYLA) studied a phased approach to leadership development. Otis (2006) noted the three-phase approach of the LYLA included a personal phase, an application phase, and a synthesis phase (p. 76). In the personal phase, the focus was on personal development and capacity building. This was followed in phase two with a focus on the application of the new skills in hypothetical and peer mentoring setting. The final phase, the synthesis phase, focused on using the skills to affect change in the community. Similar to Rickets and Rudd and Komives et al., Otis identified a progressive approach to leadership development.

From these studies, some of the principal elements needed for successful leadership identity development became clear. First, leadership develops in a cyclical manner as students experience and reflect on leadership opportunities. Second, the process of leadership identity development takes time. Third, it can be inferred that not all students will come to the class with the same experience. With this knowledge, it became apparent that while leadership experiences combined with cognitive processing are critical, a proverbial silver-bullet did not exist that allowed an individual to come through an experience as a leader par excellence.

Importance of relationships. Several studies elucidated the importance of relationships in leadership development. The first relationship of importance is adult support and role models (Hancock et al., 2012; Holt et al., 2008; Mitra & Gross, 2009). Using the lens of social learning theory, Hancock et al. (2012) highlighted the importance between learning leadership skills and interaction with adults. Their study investigated youth perceptions of their leadership and found a significant correlation between male and female participants' perception of their leadership skills and having parental and school adult support. According to Mitra and Gross (2009), familial influence was of great concern among high school students. In their case study, it was evident that "families are essential partners since they have such a serious influence on students" (p. 527). It was also apparent that students can have decreased feelings of belonging and consequently detachment from experiences when relationships between adults are unsupportive (Mitra & Gross, 2009).

A second relationship of importance is the partnership between students and adults. Partnership emerges from the adult support and role models previously discussed

and remains a unique component. Several scholars highlighted that when the relationships are about partnership, not just token appreciation, true collaboration occurred (Otis, 2006; Thorpe, 2007). In such cases, Otis (2006) noted that participants credit "staff and other project participants as important contributors to the shift in their own commitments" (p. 81). The reason for this is that true collaboration leads to the ability of students to meaningfully contribute in the decision-making process. This results in youth "sharing the responsibility for the vision of the group, the activities planned and the group process that facilitates the enactment of these activities" (Mitra & Gross, 2009, p. 530). When students partnered with adults, they not only developed their leadership skills, but they became more prepared to participate in a democratic society.

  Student voice. Student voice is the fourth theme that emerged from a review of the literature. Student voice "describes the many ways in which youth have opportunities to share in school decisions that will shape their lives and the lives of their peers" (Mitra & Gross, 2009, p. 523). There is a continuum of opportunities ranging from "passive (information source) to active (participant) to directive (designer)" through which students may be heard (Mitra, 2006a, p. 7, parentheses in original). This continuum is translated into the Pyramid of Student Voice (See Figure 4). As students were heard, they moved from being information sources at the bottom of the pyramid to designers building capacity for leadership. This resulted in increased capacity for leadership development.
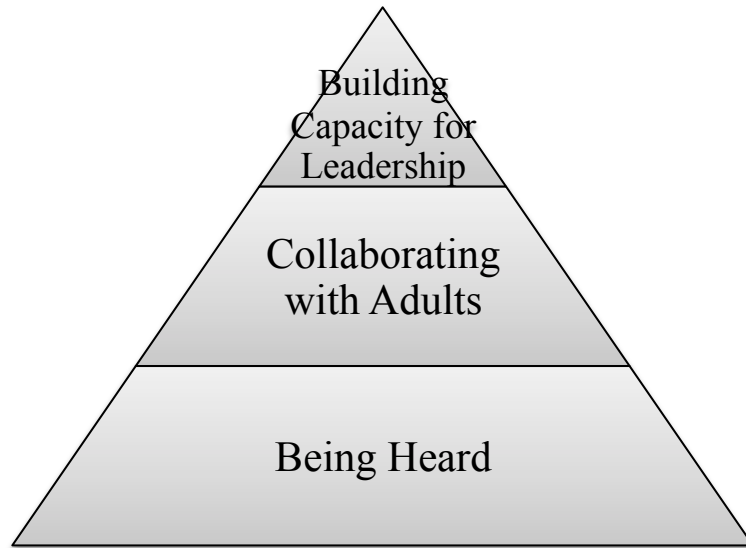
Figure 4. Pyramid of student voice. From "Increasing student voice and moving toward youth leadership" by D. Mitra, 2006, *The Prevention Researcher, 13*(1), p. 7.

Further investigation into what may happen when student voice is privileged became even more relevant for this discussion. Mitra's grounded theory case study found that "the stronger the focus on fostering youth leadership, the more the work of the group moves toward social justice questions" (Mitra, 2006b, p. 8). The analysis found that the common theme between the three groups investigated was social justice. The reason for this is that when students are heard, their view of the world is centralized. Their view includes experiences of both justice and injustice.

Returning to the work of Otis (2006), the result of giving students voice becomes clear. Otis notes that "youth seemed empowered by the experiences, as they recognized that their hard work and systematic approach armed them with knowledge and insight that legitimized their presence" (Otis, 2006, p. 82). Discussed as community change agent projects, student participants in these projects grew in their leadership and their

community involvement. This results in student preparation for personal and community leadership.

Cautions in leadership development. Several cautions were present throughout the literature. Mitra (2005) provided a cautionary perspective regarding the challenge of working with faculty members to increase student leadership abilities. Mitra studied empowerment of high school students through an examination of two student organizations. In understanding how student voice was enhanced, Mitra noted that faculty members have difficulty in letting go of power so students can authentically lead. Knowing when to step back while supporting students, even in their mistakes, was a struggle for faculty members. Finding ways to support faculty in these situations is important so that students can have authentic opportunities to lead.

Post and Little (2005) recommended avoidance of a few common mistakes in youth-adult partnerships. One mistake is when adults relinquish their role as mentors and simply get out of the way of the youth. The problem with this mistake is that youth still value the input of the adults. Another mistake is failing to remain focused on the adults in the youth-adult partnership. Post and Little warned that the adults in the partnership need development just as the youth do. Post and Little suggest that a clearly defined understanding of who will do what is critical to the success of the partnership.

Mitra and Gross (2009) echoed Post's sentiment when they cautioned against a "clumsy and poorly defined" initiative (p. 536). The result, they argued, is an increase in "disengagement, distrust, and alienation" among students (p. 536). Further, Mitra and Gross noted the challenge in working in a school environment because of the threat

44

teachers feel when empowering students. This is because they are not accustomed to sharing power with students.

Conclusion. From these studies, some of the principle elements needed for a successful leadership development program became clear. First, leadership develops in a cyclical manner over time. Second, the leadership program needed to be flexible and responsive to the students' needs since each comes with a unique background. Third, leadership teachers needed to be aware of the need to let go of power so that students can take an authentic leadership role. Fourth, reflection practices that led to increased self-awareness are an important element of leadership development, but the reflections need to be sincere. Lastly, undergirding all of these studies was the importance of positive relationships between students and adults. When all of these themes were included, the chance for successful leadership development is increased.

Conclusion

Utilizing the literature and concepts reviewed provided a unique perspective to understand transformative leadership among high school students. Transformative leadership, service-learning, and CST all aligned in their design and aim to provide a critical view of the existential experience of those in the world. Further, service-learning could value and validate the expert knowledge of youth, those most directly affected in the current study. With this knowledge, I was buttressed by an array of tools to engage in a study understanding how high school students understand their leadership skills through a community-based project. Figure 5 highlights the direction of this study.
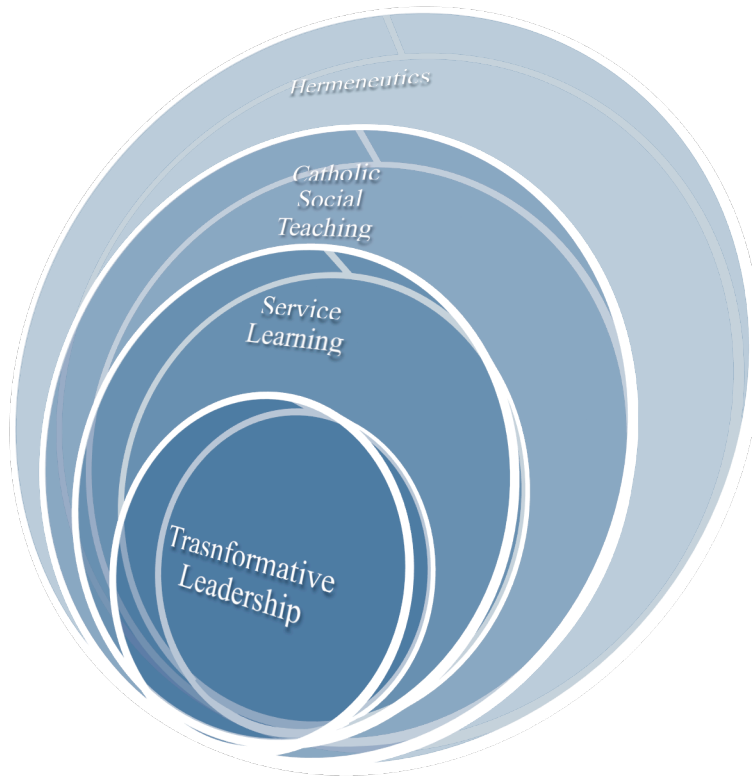
Figure 5. Application model that guided the study.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this action research study was to explore the use of a community-based, service-learning project to develop leadership among high school students. The problem this study addressed was understanding how high school students understand transformative leadership. In particular, the study investigated how high school students understand, developed and demonstrated leadership skills through participation in a community-based, service-learning project. Students at Central Catholic High School had many informal opportunities for leadership development, but limited formal opportunities existed to inform the development of their leadership skills. Introducing a service-learning project within the context of a leadership class provided one solution to this problem.

Theoretical Orientation

Deleted original sentence. Originating in Biblical studies, hermeneutics investigates both texts and acts to understand an individual's lived experience (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009). Understanding is gleaned through the use of the hermeneutic circle (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009) which recognizes that texts and acts are understood as both a part and a whole. Further, understanding is only complete when one moves back and forth between the part and the whole. The central idea is that in order to make meaning of how high school students understand transformative leadership, the researcher must understand both the collective leadership experience and the individual leadership experience.

In order to achieve a full understanding, researchers must navigate between the part and the whole, from pre-understanding to understanding. Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009) noted that "what matters, therefore, is for individuals to *understand* the world in which they live. For this reason, hermeneutics becomes something that permeates the whole of existence. Every understanding, of the simplest everyday things, is at the same time a contribution to better *self*-understanding" (p. 120, italics in original). In this way, the researcher's understanding of both the participants and their "self" becomes most complete. However, this understanding is never finished as individuals are in a constant state of becoming (Heidegger, 1996).

In his seminal work *Being and Time*, Heidegger presented a case for understanding Dasein (Heidegger, 1996). Dasein is an individual's being-in-the-world, and the "essence of Dasein lies in its existence" (p. 67). Heidegger argued that "when understood *ontologically*, [Dasein] is care" (p. 84, italics in original). The focus of this study was to understand how high school students understand, developed, and demonstrated their transformative leadership skills through a service-learning project. The ontological nature of Dasein as care aligned well with the aims of this work. Hermeneutics provided a frame for both participants and myself to understand and grow in our care of the world. As an action research project, both the participants and I were part of the understanding and translating necessary to make meaning.

Through multiple circles of reading, layers of understanding are gleaned (Laverty, 2003). Circles of reading occur when data is read multiple times in order to pull apart understanding. Circling provides a specific function in hermeneutics in that understanding is enhanced as each subsequent layer moves through the part and the

whole of the hermeneutic circle. Each layer informs previous understanding and leads to new understanding. Reading and re-reading the data with new understanding immerses one in the data leading to the deepest understanding.

The hermeneutic perspective for understanding was the most appropriate approach for this study. I sought to understand how high school students understood, developed, and demonstrated their leadership skills. In order to do so, it was necessary to understand participants' Dasein, their care for the world around them. Further, in order to answer the research question, I needed to translate the participants' experience to make meaning. For an authentic translation, I needed to be able to move beyond the prejudgments of both the participants and myself (Heidegger, 1996). The hermeneutic circle, the movement between whole and part and from pre-understanding to understanding, was the most appropriate method to achieve this.

Aligning hermeneutics with action research makes clear how the two support and interact with each other. The hermeneutic circle demands that the researcher move from the part to the whole and back again (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009) and in the process, gain a deeper understanding of an individuals' experience. The action inquiry cycle also follows a similar pattern (Herr & Anderson, 2015; Riel, 2010). A problem of practice is identified leading to research on the topic and an intervention. After the intervention is enacted, the results are studied leading to a new understanding with the cycle continuing again. Figure 6 shows the hermeneutic circle overlaid with the action research cycle. Correlating the two, the area of inquiry in action research relates to the part in the hermeneutic circle. Research on the area of inquiry is akin to movement towards the whole of the hermeneutic circle. Enacting an intervention brings us back to the part while

analysis of the data brings us back to the whole. The continual movement through the hermeneutic circle and action research cycle allows the researcher to gain ever-deeper understanding. When the researcher has answered as completely as possible the initial research question, a new cycle of action research begins as new questions emerge (Herr & Anderson, 2015).
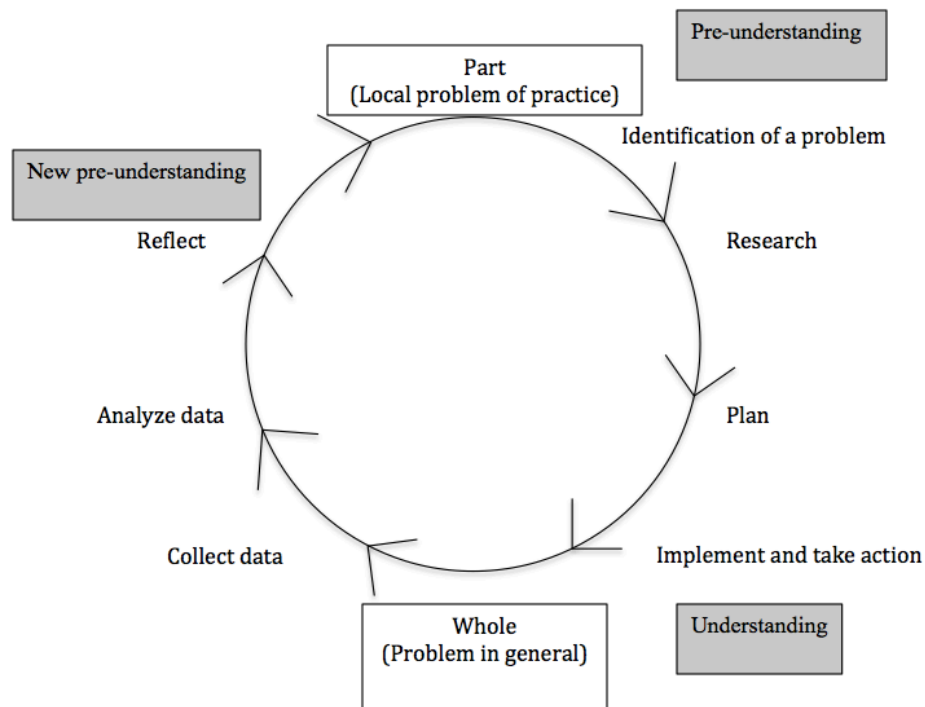
Figure 6. Overlay of hermeneutic circle and action research.

Action Research

This study was designed around the principles of action research, a research methodology attributed to Kurt Lewin (Lewin, 1946; McNiff, 2008). Action research has evolved since the 1930s and Huang (2010) defined action research as

> an orientation to knowledge creation that arises in a context of practice and requires researchers to work with practitioners. Unlike conventional social science, its purpose is not primarily or solely to understand social arrangements,

but also to effect desired change as a path to generating knowledge and empowering stakeholders (p. 93).

The definition provided by Huang demonstrates the collaborative, local, dynamic, and transformative power of action research. Riel added to Huang's participatory nature with the inclusion of action research as a scientific method in which "the effects of an action are observed through a systematic process of examining the evidence" (Riel, 2010, "Goals of Action Research," para. 1). Action research provides a method of scientifically and theoretically studying problems in a collaborative way.

In addition to the scientific and participatory aspects, action research has a special place within the educational context. Mills (2014) articulated this importance by defining action research as an "inquiry conducted by teacher researchers, principals, school counselors, or other stakeholders in the teaching/learning environment to gather information about how their particular schools operate, how they teach, and how well their students learn" (p. 8). Mills' definition clearly placed action research as an appropriate research methodology within education. Herr and Anderson (2015) also traced the many facets of action research and identified the link between action research and education.

Action research's foundation in a critical approach was especially relevant for this study. Action research "advances our commitment to social justice" (Holter & Frabutt, 2009). Herr and Anderson (2015) noted that "the point of departure for participatory research is a vision of social events…[and] the community and researcher together produce critical knowledge aimed at social transformation" (p. 17). Overall, action research provided the most thorough methodology to guide this research project.

Research Design

This action research study utilized an emergent qualitative design grounded in hermeneutic inquiry. The emergent nature of the study was evident through the data collection methods. Subsequent data collection was informed by themes that emerged from analysis of previously collected data. For instance, analysis of participant reflection journals from August informed the questions asked in semi-structured interviews in October. Additionally, analysis of the semi-structured interviews informed the questions asked of the focus groups.

Qualitative inquiry was the most appropriate method for investigating since the present action research study sought to explore and understand a complex concept that is not easily quantified (Creswell, 2013). Conger (1998) identified three reasons why qualitative inquiry was especially appropriate in understanding leadership. First, leadership involves multiple layers including psychological, behavioral, relational, and contextual, among others. "One of the great shortcomings of quantitative research has been its inability to draw effective links across these multiple levels to explain leadership events and outcomes" (p. 109). Second, leadership development is a dynamic process where a leader's experiences result in shifts in his or her leadership: "quantitative methods in any dynamic process…measure only static moments in time. They are not easily able to track in any richness of detail how events unfold or how they may reshape interpretations of events" (p. 110). Lastly, "quantitative methods are designed largely to capture a reality that is composed of concrete and objective structures. They are far less effective in a subjective ever-shifting reality where human beings shape its creation." (p. 110). Leadership is perceived both from the leader and the followers. Qualitative methods

were better suited to capture the inherently subjective nature of leadership from the followers' perspective.

The overall design of this study is summarized as follows. To begin, the theoretical orientation of hermeneutics guided the overall study. The methodology of action research was selected as the most appropriate means of investigating the problem. The intervention demanded by action research included the use of a community-based, service-learning project selected through one of the themes of Catholic Social Teaching. The service-learning project was one aspect of a class called Principles of Leadership in which participants also received formal leadership development. The data collection methods used included participant reflection journals, a researcher observation journal, interviews, and focus groups. Together, this design provided a strong framework to answer the research questions. Figure 7 represents the research design of this study.
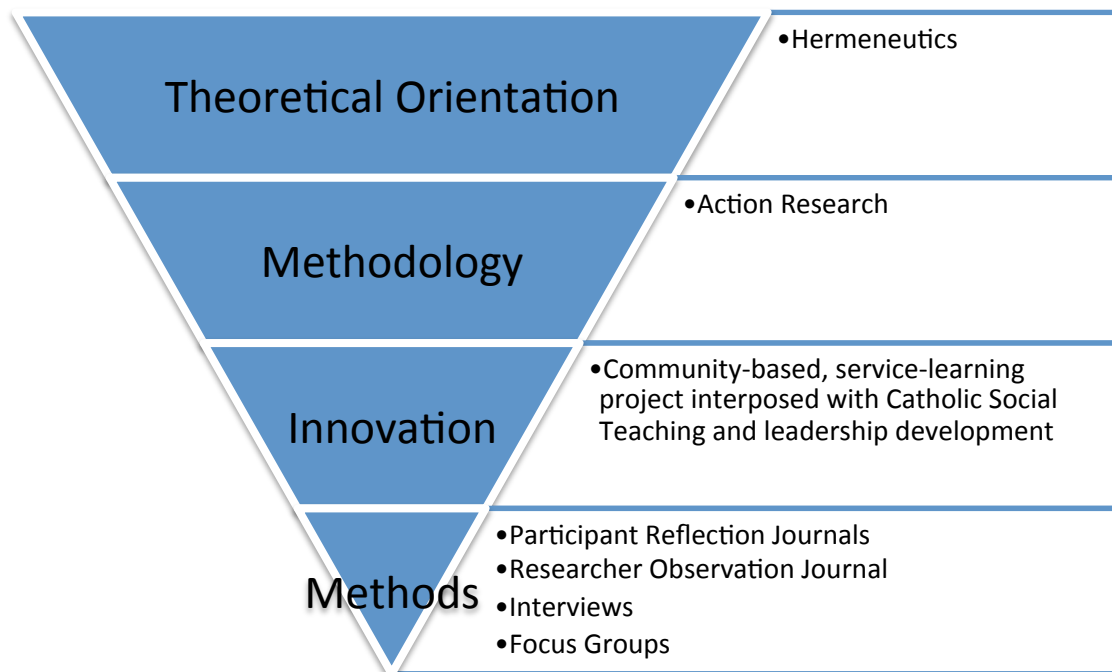

Figure 7. Research design.

Intervention

The intervention this study investigated was the use of a service-learning project to develop leadership skills among high school students. The project was situated within a leadership class called Principles of Leadership and was developed throughout the fall semester of the 2015-2016 academic year. The specific service-learning project was not decided until participants began dialogue to identify a problem of practice as it related to one of the seven themes of Catholic Social Teacher (CST). In approaching the service-learning project this way, two important elements should be noted. First, allowing the students to identify the project privileged student voice and experience about the problem of practice. Second, it supported the emergent design of the study.

For the service-learning project, the class created two separate groups. One group, working under the CST theme of dignity of the human person, selected the problem of the divide between elderly and youth in society. The students were concerned there was a great deal of knowledge not being transmitted to youth because of a disregard for the elderly. They eventually came to call themselves Project Insular. The second group chose a topic closer to the Central Catholic community by studying social pollution. Social pollution is the concept that individuals or groups can spread negative thoughts or words that subsequently foster a breakdown in the relationship between individuals. This group originally operated under the CST theme of care for God's creation, but as they progressed in their understanding, it eventually fell under the auspice of the theme dignity of the human person.

The service-learning project was designed so that students were able to engage with a community organization and members of the community being affected by the

problem of practice. Although students selected the project, I worked to ensure the allotted time frame was sufficient for the scope of the project. When the class identified the problem of practice, they also worked to identify a community-based organization that specialized in this area. By doing so, conversation between the students and the organization fostered a deeper awareness of the problem from both the students' perspective and the organizations perspective.

Project Insular eventually selected two senior living centers to partner with, both of which were located in the East Valley of Phoenix, AZ. The group studying social pollution was provided a number of local and national community organizations to research including the Southern Poverty Law Center and the organization Teaching Tolerance. Even though these resources were provided, the group did not end up selecting an organization to work with. The group subsequently did not work with a community partner.

While identifying the problem and partnering organization, students researched the problem to ascertain a way they could design and implement a solution or intervention within the community. Project Insular came to the conclusion that conducting life-story interviews (Atkinson, 1998) was one way they could affect the divide between elderly and youth in society. The end goal was to create a book that captured the wisdom and knowledge of elderly living in the East Valley or Phoenix, AZ. The social pollution group came to the conclusion that they could affect the problem of social pollution at Central Catholic by creating an awareness campaign. The goal of the awareness campaign was to create a public service video that would be shown during the

school's bi-weekly newscast. The video would be followed by a bracelet campaign focusing student attention on the issue of social pollution.

After implementation, students reflected on the results of the intervention in relationship to the effect of the intervention and the growth of their leadership. Reflection was completed individually in written form and through class discussions of the effectiveness of the work. To help guide their reflection, I provided prompts and questions to help stimulate students thinking and reflection.

Several steps were taken to minimize the power imbalance between the students and myself as teacher. First, the service-learning project was only assigned a completion grade based on submission of required materials and active participation in the project. This was done to encourage honest and authentic participation in the project. Second, in accordance with the principles of action research, I participated in the selected project. I had duties as assigned by the students for research and implementation of the selected project. Third, participants were able to discontinue participation in the study at any time without adverse effect on their grade. The option to discontinue participation in the study was indicated in the consent to participate signed by parents as well as the assent form signed by participants under the age of 18.

The service-learning project was part of the Principles of Leadership course taught at Central Catholic High School. The class was open to any student in the 11th or 12th grade. The class met four times per week for one semester from August 10, 2015, through December 17, 2015. Class periods were 49 minutes 3 days per week with 1 class period of 90 minutes per week for a total of 237 minutes per week. Several weeks had modified schedules due to special events organized by the school so the course did not

meet for the full time. For example, there were certain days off, including federal holidays, that did not permit the course to meet. Also, special events such as guest speakers and all-school celebrations of Catholic rituals prevented the course from meeting the full time period on given days. See Appendix A for the Principles of Leadership course syllabus.

There were three core components of the leadership class. The first component was self-awareness and reflection (Ganz, 2008; HERI, 1996; Komives et al., 2006; Ricketts & Rudd, 2002; White, 2012). Students were provided with opportunities for reflection throughout the course. Through reflection, students were able to understand themselves and their leadership more deeply. The second component was a curricular design covering academic aspects of leadership (P. Northouse, 2013; Ricketts & Rudd, 2002; Sullivan & Post, 2011). These include elements such as communication, theories of leadership, CST, and conflict resolution. The final component of the course was the intervention of this study, a service-learning project (Mitra & Gross, 2009; Post & Little, 2005; Sullivan & Post, 2011).

Setting

The study took place at a metropolitan, co-educational high school in the southwestern United States. Central Catholic High School, founded in 1954, had a student population of 590 students in grades 9 – 12. In addition to the students, there were 45 faculty members and 30 staff members. The school was a diocesan high school owned and operated by a Catholic diocese in the same city. Approximately 46% of students attending the school received some sort of financial aid to attend. The gender composition of the student population was 48% female and 52% male. The largest

ethnicity was Caucasian, representing 65% of the population. The next largest ethnicity was Hispanic, representing 19% of the population. The remainder of the population included African American, Native American or American Indian, Asian, and Multi-racial students (B. Esposito, personal communication, April 10, 2014).

Participants and Sampling

Participants in this investigation included students at Central Catholic High School. Students ($N = 8$) included six male and two female members of the 12th grade in the fall semester of the 2015 – 2016 academic year. Criterion sampling (Creswell, 2013) was used to identify participants who requested and enrolled in a course titled Principles of Leadership. Criteria for participation in the class was to be a student at Central Catholic High School enrolled in the 11th or 12th grade and be willing to participate in the study. Since the course had no prerequisites for enrollment, the potential sample population was representative of the larger demographic population at Central Catholic High School. Final selection for participation occurred the week of August 10, 2015. Table 3 contains information about each participant.

Table 3

Participant demographic information

Participant	Gender	Ethnicity	Grade
Freddy	Male	Hispanic/Latino	12
NSWE	Male	Caucasian	12
Steve	Male	Caucasian	12
Kohl	Male	Caucasian	12
Ken Adams	Male	Caucasian	12
Elle Woods	Female	Caucasian	12
Connor	Male	Caucasian	12
Raintree	Female	Caucasian	12

Action Plan

This study occurred over the fall semester of the 2015 – 2016 academic year. The leadership class in which participants were enrolled met from August 10, 2015, through December 17, 2015. The Principles of Leadership class was designed to foster both the community-based service-learning project and curricular units. The class met four days per week. Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday were 49-minute classes while Friday was a 90-minute class. In weeks where the bell schedule was changed due to other school commitments, the weekly class schedule was also adjusted so that the curricular and community-based components were included.

The original design of the course included time for both the curricular learning of leadership concepts and time for the service-learning project each week. This model was followed through the first part of the course but was modified at the end of September to include a greater focus on the service-learning project. The reason for this shift is it became clear students needed more time for the service-learning project. Even with this

shift, students still received curricular instruction on leadership and opportunities to work on the service-learning project. The syllabus for the class is provided in Appendix A.

The study was implemented according to the following schedule: August 10 through September 4 was spent researching the problem of practice to identify possible problems and solutions. In the first week of the course, students composed written reflections to a series of questions designed to capture their pre-understanding of leadership. September 8 through September 25 was spent researching, designing, and preparing for the service-learning project. Students also worked to identify a community-based organization to understand the problem from their perspective. September 28 through October 30 continued to be an action period of research and engagement with the service-learning project. On October 12, students in Project Insular had a presentation from one of the community partners to understand the problem from their perspective. During the week of October 12, one-hour long semi-structured interviews occurred with study participants. Student in Project Insular conducted life-story interviews on October 23 with residents from local senior living facilities. November 2 through December 4 was a period in which students in Project Insular transcribed the life-story interviews and worked to analyze the data for themes. The social pollution group worked to write the script for their awareness video and record the video. The week of December 7 afforded the opportunity to reflect on the problem of practice and identify ways to improve the respective interventions. On December 11, students from Project Insular gave a presentation to residents at the senior living facility that participated in the life-story interviews. Focus groups took place on December 16 to capture participants' new pre-understanding of their leadership. Table 4 summarizes the key dates of the study.

Table 4

Outline of the research project

Dates	Event
August, 2015 – September, 2015	Students and researcher researched problems of practice to identify possible problems and actions.
August, 2015	Students completed reflection journals with specific questions designed to capture their pre-understanding of leadership
September, 2015 – September, 2015	Students and researcher continued to research, design, and prepare for the service-learning project including identifying a community-based non-profit organization working with this problem to begin a dialogue between the organization and the students.
September, 2015 – October, 2015	Action period in which students and researcher engaged with the community-based service-learning project to continue researching and gaining a deeper understanding.
October, 2015	Presentation to Project Insular from one of the community partners to help them understand the problem the community partner's perspective.
October, 2015	Semi-structured interviews of participants and researcher occurred that captured their present understanding of leadership.
October, 2015	Project Insular conducted life-story interviews with residents at two senior living facilities
November, 2015 – December, 2015	Students in Project Insular transcribed and analyzed life-story interviews. Students in the social pollution group wrote the story-board for their awareness video and worked to film the video.
December, 2015	Students and researcher reflected on the community-based service-learning projects and identified ways to improve the project.
December, 2015	Students in Project Insular presented the results from the life-story interviews to residents at the senior living facility
December, 2015	Focus groups occurred capturing participants new pre-understanding of leadership.

In keeping with the hermeneutic and action research design of the study, I became

a participant throughout the service-learning project. Both students and ~~myself~~ **I** worked

61

to support the project. Students were the primary drivers of the problem identification, but once the problem was identified, I participated by joining students in the research of the project. Together, we worked to design the project and realize its implementation. In this way, both participants and I became a part of the study in an intimate way.

Concurrent with the service-learning project, students also learned about skills of leadership. This curricular element lasted from August through December and included such topics as theories of leadership, communication, and conflict resolution, among others. Curricular units covered specific elements of leadership and management that students were able to utilize in their community-based project. Three textbooks were incorporated in the Principles of Leadership class and provided the curricular foundation for the course. The three texts were *Heroic Leadership: Best Practices from a 450-Year-Old Company that Changed the World* by Chris Lowney (2003), *Management Communication, 5th Edition* by James O'Rourke (2013), and *Leadership: Theory and Practice* by Peter Northouse (2013).

These texts were selected for numerous reasons, each of which supports increasing knowledge of transformative leadership. First, *Management Communication* provided a thorough text to teach and learn about skills of leadership including listening skills, speaking skills, and conflict resolution skills, to name a few. *Heroic Leadership* provided a look at four pillars of leadership from the Jesuit perspective. These four pillars, self-awareness, love, heroism, and ingenuity, provided a concrete way to think about how to enact transformative leadership. Lastly, *Leadership: Theory and Practice* provided the opportunity to learn about various theories of leadership. In doing so, students were able to compare and contrast the various theories of leadership.

Data Collection

Over the course of the intervention, several qualitative data sources were utilized to answer the research questions. Following hermeneutic understanding, both participants and myself participated in data collection (Laverty, 2003). In this way, the understandings of each were captured, leading to a fusion of horizons (Gadamer, 1994). First, participants kept a reflection journal detailing their experiences and any changes they noted in themselves or their perceptions of leadership. Second, I completed an observation journal with entries detailing my own experience. Third, participants were interviewed in October in order to understand their experience of leadership. Last, focus groups were organized in December to ascertain how participants envisioned their leadership as they move forward.

The purpose for this data collection technique was to gain an understanding of participants past, present, and future leadership. Seidman (2013) utilized the past, present, and future three-interview technique; it was appropriate in this context, especially given the hermeneutic circle underpinning this research. The central idea was to use the reflection journal to capture participants' past experience and understanding of leadership up to the beginning of the course. From there, an analysis of the reflection journals led to an interview with participants about their present understanding of leadership. Finally, focus groups were created to explore participants' future understanding of their leadership as a result of the intervention. In this way, the totality of the data moved from past to future and from part to whole. Figure 8 depicts the data collection tools inventory for this study. A discussion of each data source follows.

Data Source	Description	Inventory
Reflection Journals – Appendix B	Participants kept an electronic reflection journal to record their reflections on the community-based project and their leadership. Reflection prompts were provided to participants as reflection starters.	Total: 7 journals
Semi-Structured Interview – Appendix C	Semi-structured, one hour interviews were conducted in October, 2015 with participants and the researcher. The interviews included 8 questions.	Total: 9 interviews, consisting of 9 hours and 7 minutes of interview data.
Focus Groups – Appendix D	Focus groups were conducted in December. Focus groups were organized to understand how students envision their future leadership as a result of the course and the community-based project.	Total: 3 focus groups, consisting of 1 hour and 20 minutes of interview data.
Researcher Class Observation Journal – Appendix E	The researcher will keep an electronic journal. These observations will be used to understand how the researcher's understanding has changed over the course of the intervention	Total: 1 journal

Figure 8. Data collection tools inventory.

Reflection journal. Participants kept a reflection journal over the entirety of the semester (Epp, 2008; Hubbs & Brand, 2005). The journal was an electronic journal created in Google Docs. Participants submitted their reflections through Canvas, a learning management system used by Central Catholic. Participants were provided with reflection starters such as, 'I was a leader this week when…' and 'I witnessed a wrong this week when…'. Participant reflections were not limited to the question starters, and participants were free to include other reflections they had. The reflection journal captured how students developed their understanding of leadership over time. See Appendix B for reflection journal starter prompts.

The reflection journals also provided the opportunity to understand how students perceived their leadership as a result of past leadership development. This was captured with participants responding to a unique set of questions that were answered during the first week of the class. Examples of questions include, 'How did you perceive yourself as a leader throughout middle school?' and 'What experience(s) did you have in middle school that made you a leader?' See Appendix B for the complete list of questions. Analysis of the August reflection journal entries led to the identification of themes related to participants past understanding of leadership. These themes were explored further in semi-structured interviews with participants.

Semi-structured interview. I conducted a semi-structured interview with each of the participants the week of October 12, 2015, (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006; Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2011; Seidman, 2013). Interviews lasted approximately one hour, and the original interview protocol included eight questions. Four of the questions surrounded participants then-current understanding and experience of leadership, and four of the questions probed themes identified from analysis of participant reflection journals. This approach was taken in accord with the emergent design of the research. See Appendix C for the interview protocol. Each interview was digitally recorded. After the interview was complete, a transcription was created for analysis. The interviews provided the opportunity to understand how students were developing in their leadership. This understanding created the framework of the present in relationship to Seidman's (2013) past, present, future framework.

In keeping with the hermeneutic foundation, I was also interviewed for the study using the same protocol as found in Appendix C. The purpose for this was to illuminate

my thoughts and positionality regarding leadership. A colleague of mine conducted the interview. The colleague was provided the interview protocol and was able to ask probing questions for greater clarity. The interview was digitally recorded and transcribed for analysis.

   Focus groups. Three focus groups were conducted on December 16, 2015, with the focus group time split into two separate sessions (Flick, 2014; Kitzinger & Barbour, 1999). The first session lasted approximately 35 minutes with two focus groups of four participants each. The groups were constructed based on how participants perceived their past leadership as identified in their reflection journals at the beginning of the course. The reason for this was to understand how participants grew in their leadership based on a previous self-identification as a leader. Those who identified themselves as being a leader were placed in one focus group while those who identified themselves as not being a leader or just emerging as a leader were placed into a second focus group. These sessions were led by one of the participants as a demonstration of their leadership. In order to help focus their thinking, participants completed a questionnaire for the first few minutes of the session followed by a group discussion of the six questions (See Appendix D). While the focus groups were being conducted, the researcher moved back and forth between each location to observe the focus groups.

   For the second session, all eight participants were brought together in one focus group led by myself. This session lasted approximately 25 minutes and was focused on participants' reflection on the service-learning project and their future projectors. The reason for this focus group was to allow all of the participants to interact and develop

meaning surrounding their leadership. This session included five questions (See Appendix D).

Conducting the focus groups in this way allowed a format of smaller and larger interaction. This format followed the hermeneutic movement from the part to the whole as individual and group experiences and understanding were captured. Focus groups were digitally recorded with a transcription created for analysis. Focus groups included questions developed as a result of the analysis of the interviews (See Appendix D). In this way, I was able to probe more deeply the themes arising from the semi-structured interviews. This led to a deeper understanding of where and how participants project their future leadership as a result of the service-learning project.

Researcher class observation journal. I kept an electronic class observation journal (Borg, 2001; Creswell, 2013; Herr & Anderson, 2015; Laverty, 2003). The observation journal was created in Google Docs and included reflections submitted after each class. Journal entries captured thoughts, understanding, and observations of the class, process, and/or participants. The class observation journal provided the opportunity to understand how I made meaning and developed throughout the research process. See Appendix E for the researcher class observation protocol. Aligned with hermeneutic inquiry, the importance and necessity of the researcher observation journal is clear.

Analysis

The hermeneutic circle is fulfilled when one moves from the part to the whole and then back again. Using circles of readings with inductive thematic analysis worked to achieve this movement around the hermeneutic circle. The result was an iterative process in which I was able to move through the texts of the data building upon each layer of

reading. Each layer took me to the part and to the whole leading to a fusion of horizons (Gadamer, 1994). Completing a circle of reading occurred when I had "reached a place of sensible meaning, free of inner contradictions, for the moment" (Laverty, 2003, p. 25).

In order to achieve the goal of understanding through a hermeneutic foundation, I engaged with multiple readings of the data, or circles. Each time I read, I structured the reading around a different lens to help understand the part and the whole as thoroughly as possible (Laverty, 2003). The lenses I used included the participant perspective and the tenets of transformative leadership; humility, faith, hope, love, critical thinking, solidarity, and praxis. I began each reading with self-reflection on my pre-understanding, moving then through the data to pull apart understanding. As I read the data through the lens of a theme, participant understanding came to the fore and allowed me to pull that piece of understanding from thought. Only once I had pulled apart the understanding and returned it to the experience was I able to interpret the meaning (Laverty, 2003). Thus, the circles of reading allowed for a layered and continuous understanding of the data. Figure 9 depicts the circles of reading layered with the hermeneutic circle.
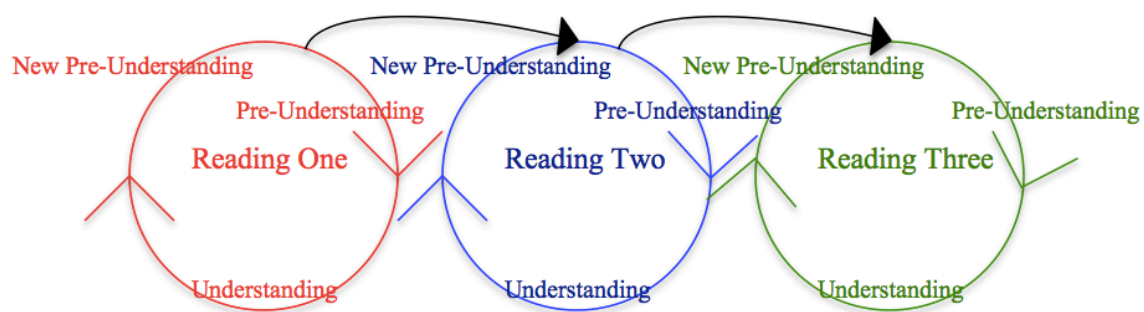

Figure 9. Circles of reading connected with the hermeneutic circle.

It was important to immerse myself in the data and let the participants understanding come to the forefront during each circle. In order to do so, I began by

reading each data source. I then re-read the data sources making notes in the margins about what the data was saying. Next, I used line-by-line open coding to pull apart understanding even further. Once open coding was completed, I turned to the computer program HyperResearch (ResearchWare, 2015) to digitally code the data sources. Using Hyperresearch, I was able to digitally work with codes moving back and forth between the codes and the data to confirm or disconfirming emerging themes.

Inductive thematic analysis was the analysis technique I used to complete the hermeneutic circle. Inductive thematic analysis allowed the emergence of themes from the participants perspective to be centralized and privileged since inductive thematic analysis involves moving from the raw data to the broader themes (Bussing, Koro-Ljungberg, Gary, Mason, & Garvan, 2005; Creswell, 2013). Thus it supports a hermeneutic movement from the part to the whole. Multiple qualitative data sources were available in this study and data was analyzed over the course of the intervention (Creswell, 2013; Flick, 2014; Laverty, 2003; Lindseth & Norberg, 2004).

In order to pull apart understanding, I used line-by-line open coding techniques to code the transcripts after I completed a circle of reading (Creswell, 2013, 2014; Saldana, 2013). After the initial round of open coding, I had more than 800 open codes. These codes were then compared against each other, analyzed, and condensed into 40 codes (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). Another round of analysis condensed the open codes into principal themes and subthemes. In this way, a circle of the analysis was created in which I moved from the parts to the whole. The themes from the study include care between individuals, experiences of leadership, group dynamics, personal qualities of leaders, thinking in leadership, and transformative leadership. Table 5 depicts the theme and

associated codes, along with the number of instances of the code. The themes and

subthemes were finally interpreted to answer the research questions.

Table 5

Themes, codes, and number of instances

Theme	Codes	Instances	Instances per Theme
Care between individuals	care	178	291
	relationship	68	
	understanding	45	
Experiences of leadership	complexity	36	327
	everyone is a leader	33	
	experience	68	
	leadership opportunity	29	
	power base	8	
	process	26	
	role model	90	
	titled roles	37	
Group dynamics	collaboration	58	226
	followers	20	
	goal	53	
	group	42	
	hard work	22	
	limitations to leadership	31	
Personal qualities of leaders	communication	109	374
	personal qualities	246	
	skill	15	
	spirituality	4	
Thinking in leadership	awareness	20	151
	conflict	9	
	decision making	46	
	thinking	76	
Transformative Leadership	critical thinking	22	302
	faith	30	
	hope	20	
	humility	28	
	lack of critical thinking	1	
	lack of faith	5	
	lack of hope	1	
	lack of humility	2	
	lack of love	16	
	lack of praxis	14	
	lack of solidarity	14	
	love	52	
	praxis	21	
	solidarity	76	

In keeping with a hermeneutic foundation, it is important to understand that although I used theory to help inform and expand my understanding, theory did not drive the analysis. Hermeneutics is concerned with an individual's understanding of Dasein (Heidegger, 1996). Thus, applying a theoretical framework to the data itself is a contradiction with the hermeneutic intent. I would not begin to think about the meaning in broader theoretical terms until I completed a circle. However, adding the theoretical understanding contributed a new layer to the understanding and in some ways is an extension of the hermeneutic circle that allowed a fusion between the theoretical tradition and the fused understanding, a fusion of the fusion.

A hermeneutic approach demands such an inductive thematic analysis. It is only through reading and interpreting the data in this layered way that the hermeneutic circle was fulfilled. This approach allowed for an understanding from the participant perspective to the broader topic of transformative leadership, the part to the whole. Analysis in this manner culminated with the participants and my understanding of leadership joining, resulting in a fusion of horizons (Gadamer, 1994). The new horizon provided the most thorough way to understand and answer the research questions.

Trustworthiness

A central focus of qualitative inquiry is authentic representation of the lived experience of the participant (Fossey, Harvey, Mcdermott, & Davidson, 2002). Numerous authors have worked to situate and define trustworthiness in qualitative studies compared with validity in quantitative inquiry (Creswell, 2013; Freeman, de Marrais, Preissle, Roulston, & St. Pierre, 2007; Mayan, 2009; McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). For McMillan and Schumacher (2006), trustworthiness in qualitative inquiry refers to

"the degree of congruence between the explanations of the phenomena and the realities of the world" (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006, p. 324), thus ensuring an authentic representation of participant perspectives. Trustworthiness in this study will be understood in relation to three criteria identified by Lincoln and Guba (1985).

In the work *Naturalistic Inquiry* (1985)*,* Lincoln and Guba situate three criteria of trustworthiness in qualitative inquiry. The three criteria include credibility, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility refers to the degree the data correctly represents the participants. Dependability concerns the degree to which the same findings would be gleaned from the data. Confirmability represents the degree to which the analysis is free from researcher bias.

With this understanding of trustworthiness, several validation strategies were employed to support the rigor of this study. Credibility, dependability, and confirmability were validated using triangulation by method and member-checking. Triangulation by method occurs when data from multiple instruments are used to affirm for convergence between the instruments (Meijer, Verloop, & Beijaard, 2002). Four data sources being collected in this study – reflection journals, observation journal, interviews, and focus groups – were triangulated for convergence by comparing the themes and understanding from each source. Doing so resulted in a confirmation of the themes and understanding across all four data sources. Member-checking provides participants the ability to review transcripts and inductive thematic analysis to affirm the researcher's accuracy in capturing their understanding. Participants were provided the transcriptions and analysis to review for accuracy and make any necessary changes. Utilizing these validation strategies supported the overall trustworthiness of the study.

Study Limits

This action research study, by virtue of the choices I made in the study design and implementation, reached a limit as to what it encompassed or what it touched. In a more traditional sense, I am referencing here study limitations and threats to validity. The first limit is this study did not investigate or distinguish between the influence of the intervention and other learning and maturation experiences of participants. Thus it may not be possible, even with the multiple readings and hermeneutic foundation, to know that a student understands leadership differently simply because of the intervention as opposed to experience in other activities. As an example, all of the participants are in six other classes and most are involved in other extra-curricular activities where new learning and understanding was created each day.

A second limit of the study is that participants were drawn from those students who requested and were enrolled in the Principles of Leadership course. By virtue of their request to enroll, participants demonstrated a bias and predisposition to understand and enact their leadership in a distinct way from those who did not request the course. This prevented members of the community who may otherwise have divergent understandings of transformative leadership to be present in the study.

A third limit relates to the time frame of one academic semester for the intervention. Leadership development is a life-long process (Komives et al., 2005; Ricketts & Rudd, 2002), and so the impact of the service-learning project on participants understanding of transformative leadership is restricted to the arbitrary temporality of four months. In addition, the time frame reduced the opportunity for participants to fully understand the dynamics at play revolving around the selected service-learning project.

74

Consequently, the data collection and analysis was also limited. Engaging in a prolonged project, data collection period, and analysis could result in additional circles of reading and even deeper understanding.

A final threat is the fallibility of validity itself. Koro-Ljungberg (2008) argues that researchers run the risk of capitulating to standard discourses of validity when such discourses limit the actual validity. The reason for this threat is that depending on the epistemological background of the consumer, the "created criteria, standards, and conditions are subject to error" (Koro-Ljungberg, 2008, p. 988). For instance, the fact that participants in this study were not representative of the larger Central Catholic High School community may be problematic in certain epistemological circles. However, from a hermeneutic perspective, this is not the case and thus the fallibility of validity. That said, this study is grounded in the philosophical tradition of hermeneutics, and so the threats to trustworthiness previously identified were mitigated through use of the validation strategies described above.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

In this section, I present findings from analysis of qualitative data available in this action research study. Data were available from a number of sources including reflection journals, an observation journal, and transcriptions from interviews and focus groups. The research question guiding this study was how do students at a Catholic high school understand transformative leadership. Two subquestions were also included: How do students at a Catholic high school develop and demonstrate their leadership skills through a community-based project? And as a result of participation in a community-based project, what is their self-perception of leadership? After a brief review of the analysis procedure and themes, I present an understanding of three circles of reading supported by the data and participant quotes.

Data was analyzed using inductive thematic analysis. To begin, multiple readings of the data through the lens of participants and the tenets of transformative leadership occurred. Following these multiple readings, a line-by-line open coding process was conducted. Open codes were analyzed and compared with one another resulting in 40 codes and six themes. The themes include care between individuals, experiences of leadership, group dynamics, personal qualities of leaders, thinking in leadership, and transformative leadership.

Although intricately and seamlessly connected, in this section I will discuss and pull apart three understandings borne of this study. The first understanding is that by providing authentic opportunities to lead in which decisions had an effect, high school students developed and demonstrated their leadership skills through the experience of a

service-learning project. The second understanding is that high school students' self-perception of transformative leadership develops through participation in a service-learning project. The third understanding is that high school students enact transformative leadership skills more deeply and are bolstered in their ability to lead when the service-learning content is meaningful and relevant to the student. These understandings are explored in the circles below. Participant names used throughout this chapter are pseudonyms selected by the participants.

Circle One: Developing and Demonstrating Leadership

The first circle of understanding relates to how participants developed and demonstrated their leadership abilities through participation in a service-learning project. This reading led to a new understanding that high school students developed and demonstrated their leadership skills through the experience of a service-learning project when they were provided authentic opportunities to lead in which decisions had an effect. This understanding emerged through several of the themes including 'experiences of leadership', 'group dynamics', 'personal qualities of leaders', and 'thinking in leadership'.

The development and demonstration of leadership was a process of becoming. To begin, participants conceptualized leaders and leadership as a result of identifying and observing role models. Once leadership was conceptualized, the next phase of becoming was the importance of experience to inform thinking, either affirming or rejecting previous leadership conceptualizations. Finally, participants began to enact personal qualities they deemed necessary as a result of experience affirming or rejecting conceptualizations of leader and leadership.

Experiences of leadership. Throughout the data, it was evident that role models influenced and played a significant part in developing participants understanding of what leadership is and how to lead. On numerous occasions and in numerous ways, participants discussed the importance of role models for developing their understanding of leadership. It is the various characteristics of role models that participants call upon to help determine what they do at certain points.

The most influential role models participants identified included family members, coaches, teachers, and friends. Ken wrote about this at the beginning of the semester in a reflection journal when responding to questions regarding experiences that made him a leader and who he considered a leader. He wrote that "I also lead inspired by the example of leadership in both of my brothers….Watching them has rubbed off on me, and I lead just like they do" (Ken, Reflection Journal, August 12, 2015). NSWE understood the influence of older students during his interview when discussing how he has shown leadership in drama productions. Specifically, he said "I think being able to…understand how some of the other seniors and juniors worked and how they succeeded…was very beneficial" (NSWE, Interview). Among participants, important characteristics ranged from personality traits such as approachable and friendly to specific skill sets such as organized and good listener. What became clear was that prized characteristics related to participant experience of success and failure. Through a negotiation of experience, participants understood which characteristics were most applicable to their situation.

Beyond calling on the various characteristics of role models, participants identified the importance of leading by example. Responding to the reflection journal prompt *'what is a leadership and what does it mean to be a leader?',* Elle Woods wrote

78

that "to be a leader you are an example for those around you. They will do as you do" (Elle, Reflection Journal, August 10, 2015). Participants viewed role models as examples and did not look to role models who lead with poor examples. This was true even within the service-learning project groups. Reflecting at the end of the semester on what would be needed to improve the service-learning project, Kohl wrote "instead of being leaders, we became hypocrites" (Kohl, Reflection Journal, December 11, 2015). This quote was written while Kohl was discussing how members of his group ended up being involved in the negative behavior the group was trying to address at Central Catholic. Participants' disdain for those who do not set a good example highlights the importance of role models in establishing a positive conceptualization of how to lead.

Thinking in leadership. Once participants established a conceptualization of leadership from role models, it was experience that affirmed or rejected those conceptualizations. This theme was captured in codes including 'awareness', 'thinking', 'decision making', and 'experience'. Shifts came at various points and in various ways, but ultimately it was the shift in thinking that caused behavioral changes and awareness of the complexities of leadership. Evidence of change shows how students developed and demonstrated their leadership skills

The first change in thinking relates to self-awareness. Kohl showed this when responding in his reflection journal to a prompt about whether or not his thinking about leadership and leaders had changed within the first three weeks of the course. He wrote "my thinking has changed because I realized that leadership begins with self-awareness. I cannot lead others if I do not know my ambitions, what I am passionate about, and what my most effective leadership qualities are" (Kohl, Reflection Journal, August 31, 2015).

79

Steve showed how self-awareness is important for changes in thinking. Responding to a prompt about the skills that made him a leader and how he developed them, he wrote in his reflection journal that "I developed [leadership] skills simply by recognizing I had them. The first step for leadership is realizing what skills the leader has to use to his advantages. Recognizing these skills has also enabled me to learn more about them" (Steve, Reflection Journal, August 14, 2015). Participants thus understood self-awareness as a foundation to re-conceptualize their leadership. I say re-conceptualize because participants already conceptualized their leadership through role models. Also, participants saw self-awareness as a continuing and evolving process. Numerous tools are available to aid in developing self-awareness, but the important element is that participants engaged with self-awareness.

In addition to the importance of self-awareness, reflective moments caused recognition of a deeper understanding of leadership. Responding to a series of prompts such as *'I used to think leadership was…because…'* and *'I am beginning to think leadership is…'*, Steve wrote on September 14, 2015, that "I am beginning to think leadership is much more in depth than most people are aware of; certainly more than I was aware of before this class" (Steve, Reflection Journal). He went on to discuss that this understanding was because he recognized the myriad ways that people conceptualize and define leadership, and the myriad ways to enact leadership. Through reflection, participants took the time and space to address the concept of leadership. Since most had not addressed leadership to the extent this study addressed leadership, they had not reflected on the depth of leadership. The breadth and depth of leadership was seen when participants reflected on understanding multiple perspectives. Elle discussed this in her

interview when she talked about how she makes decisions as a leader. She said that it is hard for her to make decisions because she can "put herself in both shoes" (Elle, Interview). Although Elle took pride in understanding both sides of a situation, she also saw the challenge this presented. The recognition of multiple perspectives resulted in deeper understanding of participants' leadership.

Changes in thinking also demonstrate the complexity of leadership. NSWE wrote about this recognition in his reflection journal responding to the prompt *'I used to think leadership was…because…'* when he said "I used to think leadership was just standing up for what you believe in and representing a group. I now realize that it entails much more (NSWE, Reflection Journal, September 14, 2015). This sentiment demonstrates the rejection of a previously conceptualized notion of leadership as being about representation. The 'much more' NSWE referenced was the interaction between all involved individuals. Watching the service-learning projects develop, participants realized they had to spend time focusing attention on internal group dynamics as well as external relationships. Moments like this demonstrate how changes in thinking caused development of the participants' leadership skills.

A final dimension concerns changes in leadership behavior as a result of experience. Ken captured his change in behavior during a focus group when responding to a question about how the service-learning project affected his development as a leader. He said

> I think the project helped my development as a leader. I think it did that because it gave me experience. We worked on this project for three or four months so it gave me that much time as experience being a leader. I learned what not to do, or what to do to motivate people or to step up if the group needed someone to do something. I think overall this helped my development as a leader as a whole. I

think it helped every aspect of my leadership abilities because of all the experience that I got from it. (Focus Group, December 16, 2015)

Participants understood the importance of experience to influence the way in which they lead. The way in which they lead is governed by the self-awareness, reflection, and experience they have of leadership. In this study, participants understood their self-awareness and experience as two sides of the same coin. In other words, reflection informs doing and doing informs reflection.

Personal qualities of leaders. Resulting from a new understanding of leadership, participants understood, identified, and enacted desired personal qualities of leaders. Personal qualities were captured in one of four codes including 'communication', 'personal qualities', 'skill', or 'spirituality'. The principal ways that students developed in their leadership skills were identified in the codes communication and personal qualities. The themes of communication and personal qualities of leaders are discussed in more detail below. It is important to note that although participants understood and defined particular qualities of leadership, all the qualities they defined are qualities that can be developed and enhanced. This is consistent with the premise of this study that leadership is developed and accessible to all.

Communication. Communication encompasses multiple skills including listening, speaking, and feedback. Over the course of the experience, participants understood and developed their communication skills in various ways. Throughout the course, participants had to advocate for their ideas when the service-learning groups were developing their plan. Reflecting at the end of the course about how she has grown as a leader, Elle Woods wrote that she "witnessed myself speaking up when I thought

82

necessary, offering different solutions, and allowing compromise to come more easily"

(Elle, Reflection Journal, December 11, 2015). This quote from Elle demonstrates how

communication is a multi-faceted element that includes not only the ability to

communicate, but to be an advocate. Students had opportunities to practice effectively

communicating to achieve group goals through the process of negotiation within the

service-learning group.

Communication extends to other dimensions with participation growing in these

ways as well. Throughout the experience, participants grew in their listening abilities,

ability to give feedback, and ability to speak. Reflecting at the end of the course about

how he grew as a leader, NSWE stated that his "listening to others has increased"

(NSWE, Reflection Journal, December 11, 2015). Responding in a focus group at the end

of the course to a question about the extent that the service-learning project affected their

development as a leader, Steve said that "what I learned and how the service-learning

project effected my development is that...throughout being the leader I learned to be more

open to others, be more listening" (Focus Group, December 16, 2015). An interaction

during the focus group between Ken Adams and Kohl shows how they not only learned

to give effective feedback, but that they did so outside of the service-learning project.

Ken was asked if he could give an example of one of the skills he learned that he had

used in his sports team when the following conversation occurred.

> Ken Adams: Definitely not just having the courage but knowing what to say.
> Knowing what will be most effective for the team.
> Kohl: The feedback component.
> Ken Adams: Yeah. If you're just there yelling at the team, it's not going to be very
> effective.
> Kohl: Or yelling at someone when they mess up because even though they're
> trying they're not going to take that very well.

Ken Adams: Yeah….I didn't know any of that stuff before I took this class.
(Focus Group, December 16, 2015).

My own understanding grew regarding the participants' abilities to speak with others. In

an observation journal entry from October 23, 2015, the date that Project Insular

interviewed residents at senior living communities, I noted that

> I was incredibly amazed at how well the students did at the interviews today.
> Steve and NSWE did an amazing of job of clearly articulating to the residents
> what the project is about and why they were there. The response and enthusiasm
> as a result of this was amazing. Then watching the students complete the
> interviews was awesome. They were able to comfortably engage with the
> residents despite the fact they had never met before. (Researcher Observation
> Journal)

These brief snapshots provide a view as to how participants grew in their communication

abilities, and how the participants and others recognized the enactment of these skills.

Participants not only grew in their ability to communicate, but they grew in their

understanding of the importance of communication. The previously discussed skills were

developed as a result of participants understanding of the need for those skill sets. And

these are important skill sets that leaders need. Without the opportunity of the service-

learning experience, participants may not have needed to develop those skills to the same

extent. Or more importantly, they may not have extended the skills to other aspects of

their lives such as sports teams, other classes, and personal lives.

Personal qualities. Participants recognized that specific personal qualities are

needed within leadership. Personal qualities include the more intangible charismatic and

personality-based elements of leadership. Throughout the course, participants understood

and developed these different qualities. Several qualities worth highlighting include

perseverance, courage, and confidence. Although different concepts, participants

understanding of perseverance, courage, and confidence appeared to be interrelated so I

will discuss all three together. Being intangible elements, personal qualities were understood and demonstrated through participants' self-identification and perception. As such, I begin by highlighting several quotes that capture this self-identification. Following that, I discuss the meaning of this dimension.

Kohl discussed how he developed perseverance as a result of the service-learning project. Particularly, Kohl recognized the challenges of working in a group. Responding in a focus group about what he took from the service-learning project, he said

> dealing with the project I think it's helped me learn to persist, because leadership can be a tedious process especially when you're working in the group. Our group was a lot of people I hadn't usually worked with academically before, because usually you have the same kids in the AP classes. They have different ambitions. I would typically collaborate with students. So it helped me persist and understand their point of view, which helped me a lot. (Focus Group, December 16, 2015)

However, Kohl also noted in his reflection journal the difficulty of persevering. This recognition highlighted the conflict that Kohl experienced between the initial passion and energy a group can have and how that passion and energy can dissipate. Kohl wrote in his reflection journal at the end of the course about the project that

> at the beginning of the semester, zeal ran rampant as everyone was eager to create a project that could touch the lives of others. As the semester comes to a close, the initial vigor our project was founded upon has depleted as senioritis kicked in and the light at the end of the tunnel of graduation is finally visible. (Kohl, Reflection Journal, December 11, 2015)

Ken identified his growth and use of courage in his final reflection journal entry when he was writing about how the class changed his views on the concept of leadership. He wrote that

> this project has shown me that being a leader takes lots of courage as well as skill. Leaders obviously need skill to be able to lead a certain position, but they also need the courage to block out fear and step up in the position of leader. (Ken, Reflection Journal, December 11, 2015)

Elle Woods demonstrated her growth in confidence in a focus group. At one point, she was talking about how she would have rated herself as a leader at the beginning of class compared with how she was a leader at the end of the class. She said that at the beginning of the class she was "just scared of people not liking my ideas or liking me" and that "this class just helped me go and realize that none of that matters" (Focus Group, December 16, 2015). At the end of the class though, she was more confident in herself and her abilities as a leader. These examples highlight how participants understood and developed perseverance, courage, and confidence.

The intangible aspects of leadership are an important component of leadership regardless of the leadership theory. More importantly, intangible aspects can be developed and demonstrated. Each of the participants demonstrated the qualities they articulated. Kohl continued to persevere throughout the project even though things within the project were not always going well. Ken demonstrated courage within his group when he corrected group members who were off-task. Elle demonstrated her confidence when she vocalized her thoughts in the group. Participant understanding and recognition of these intangibles shows how important these dimensions are to their understanding of leadership.

Situated learning and communities of practice. After conducting multiple readings leading to this new understanding, it became more evident that the theoretical frameworks of situated learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991) and Communities of Practice (CoP) (Wenger, 1999) offered additional insight to the new understanding. I begin with

an introduction to situated learning and CoPs followed by a brief discussion of how situated learning and CoPs expand the understanding of circle one.

Situated learning and CoPs concern an individual's engagement and understanding of the social world around. At the core is an understanding of the relational quality of the world. Lave and Wenger (1991) argue that learning in this type of relational context must take into consideration the "integration in practice of agent, world, and activity" (p. 50). Doing so realizes that learning

> can be neither fully internalized as knowledge structures nor fully externalized as instrumental artifacts of overarching activity structures. Participation is always based on situated negotiation and renegotiation of meaning in the world. This implies that understanding and experience are in constant interaction – indeed are mutually constitutive. The notion of participation thus dissolves dichotomies between cerebral and embodied activity, between contemplation and involvement, between abstraction and experience: persons, actions, and the world are implicated in all thought, speech, knowing, and learning. (pp. 51 – 52)

The implication for understanding is that participants demonstration and deepening of their leadership is negotiated through participation in activity.

The concept of participation is where legitimate peripheral participation adds to the discussion (Lave and Wenger, 1991, p. 29). Lave and Wenger (1991) lay the foundation for legitimate peripheral participation using the example of apprenticeship. Apprenticeships for Lave and Wenger connote a movement towards greater knowledge of a practice or activity coming from "legitimate peripherality" (p. 36). Legitimate peripherality provides "access to a nexus of relations otherwise not perceived as connected" (p. 36). The connected relations that legitimate peripherality reveals are the sociocultural practice of a CoP (p. 29). It is through legitimate peripherality that an individual is able to recognize and gain access to a CoP.

CoPs embody the codified processes and understanding of particular practices of a community (Wenger, 1998). Specifically, CoPs encompass the "community created over time by the sustained pursuit of a shared enterprise" (p. 45). CoPs surround any number of communities including familial units, work departments, and sports teams. Each community has their own understanding, meaning, and way of doing. Individuals are placed on a trajectory within relation to a CoP. Properly understood in this context, trajectories

> suggest not a path that can be foreseen or charted but a continuous motion – one that has a momentum of its own in addition to a field of influences. It has a coherence through time that connects the past, the present, and the future. (p. 154)

Individuals can be on multiple trajectories at any given time for any number of CoPs.

The implication for this theoretical perspective to aid in the understanding of how high schools students develop and demonstrate their leadership becomes clear. By understanding participants relation to the CoP of leadership and to their own CoP that was developed, it can be seen how they developed and demonstrated their leadership skills. Much like the apprenticeship model of becoming entrenched in meaning and practice, participants became stronger in the meaning and practice of their leadership. With this foundation, returning to the three dimensions previously discussed shows that participants developed and demonstrated their leadership skills through participation in a service-learning project.

Experiences of leadership and CoPs. Participants view of role models as more developed leaders shows the participants as legitimate peripheral participants to a leadership community of practice (Wenger, 1998). By identifying what has worked for others and conceptualizing that characteristic in themselves, participants have begun

88

developing leadership identities and enacting their leadership skills. Although participants have not fully developed their leadership skills and abilities, they are on an inbound trajectory of the leadership community of practice. Being on an inbound trajectory, they are "joining the community with the prospect of becoming full participants in its practice" (Wenger, 1998, p. 154). Thus, role models play a significant part in participants understanding of leadership.

Thinking in leadership and CoPs. The understanding of the duality of awareness and experience can be enhanced through Wenger's (1998) comprehension of meaning. Wenger argues that meaning is made only through the duality of participation and reification. The reason for this is that meaning includes not only reified forms, but it also includes all the "social relation[s] as factors" as well (p. 53). The reified forms in this study include the proverbial 'how to' of leadership; how to communicate most effectively, how to make a decision, how to motivate people. The social relations include participation and experience of leading and working with group members. In other words, the thinking and doing of leadership.

Wenger captures the duality of reification and participation in Figure 10 presented below. The outside circle of this figure represents the social world and the meaning, experience, and negotiation contained therein. The inner circle represents an individual's action within the world. This includes participation and reification where participation is the doing and reification presents the cultural manifestations of social concepts.
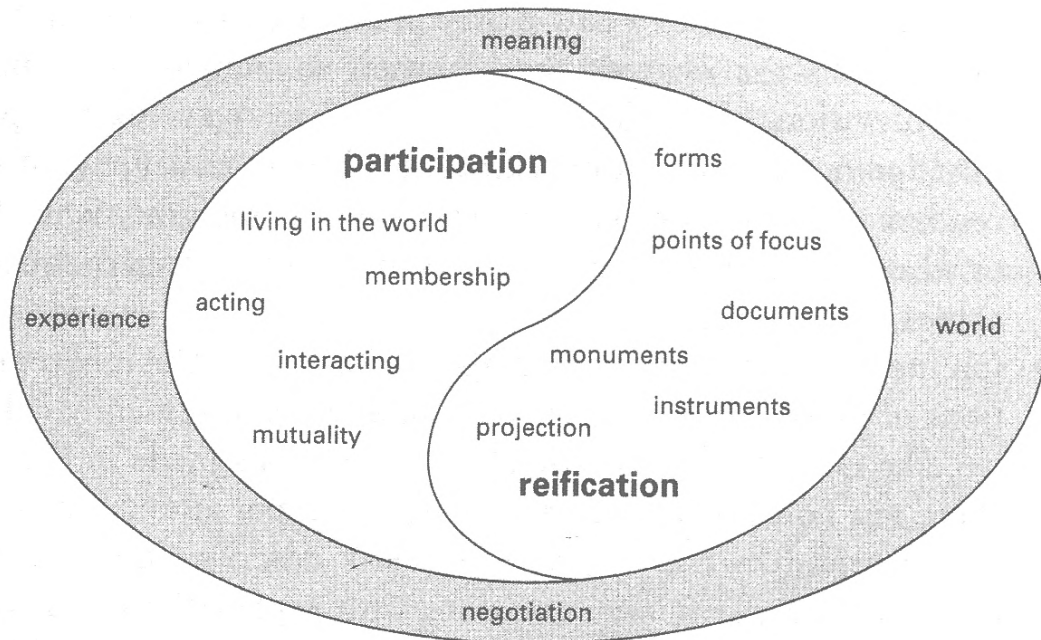
89

Figure 10. The duality of participation and reification. From *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity* by E. Wenger, 1998, Cambridge University Press, p. 63

Relevant to this study, participants change as a result of experience has caused them to participate in the world differently. They are making meaning of leadership differently and so the reification of cultural concepts of leadership is understood more deeply. Subsequently, this has resulted in development of participants leadership skills.

Personal qualities of leaders and CoPs. Applying Lave and Wenger's (1991) concept of apprenticeship and legitimate peripheral participation to the theme 'personal qualities of leaders' provides another view of how students grew in their demonstration of leadership skills. CoPs operate with a centripetal movement toward deeper understanding of the CoP. The more knowledge an individual has, the deeper within the CoP they become embedded. Participants gained new understanding of what it means to enact personal qualities of leaders throughout the course thus moving them deeper within the CoP of leadership.

90

Summary of circle one: developing and demonstrating leadership. In his or her own way, each participant understood, developed, and demonstrated leadership skills through the themes of role models, experience, and enactment of personal qualities of leaders. Role models provided an initial conceptualization of leadership for participants. It was through experience and reflection that participants affirmed or rejected these leadership conceptualizations resulting in a new conceptualization of leadership. Subsequently, participants enacted qualities of leadership they understood to be most associated with leaders and leadership.

This evidence supports the understanding from the first hermeneutic circle that students developed and demonstrated their leadership skills through participation in a service-learning project. The new understanding was further enhanced by the use of the theoretical perspectives of situated learning and CoPs. Situated learning and CoPs provided insight as to how participant understanding related to their centripetal movement towards deeper understanding and demonstration of the leadership skills.

Circle Two: Self-Perception and Demonstration of Transformative Leadership

The second circle of understanding relates to participants self-perception and demonstration of their transformative leadership skills. This reading led to the understanding that high school students self-perception and demonstration of transformative leadership develops through participation in a service-learning project. This understanding emerged through the theme transformative leadership, broken down by the seven tenets of transformative leadership.

Participants self-perception of transformative leadership skills was evident in both their thinking and their doing throughout the study. Numerous data sources support this

understanding and it is clear the foundations of transformative leadership were present. For some, the foundations were present in affirmative understandings where they recognized the presence of tenets of transformative leadership. For others, the foundations were present when they recognized a lack of presence of transformative leadership tenets. Both forms of understanding were powerful and helped students grow in their understanding and self-perceptions.

This section examines students recognition of the presence or lack of presence of transformative leadership tenets. In order to understand this dimension, a second reading of the data sources was conducted guided by the tenets of transformative leadership. Seven codes were created for each of the seven components of transformative leadership. Each tenet is examined below in order of most referenced to least referenced throughout the data. The resulting order is solidarity, love, faith, praxis, humility, critical thinking, and hope. Since the theoretical perspective of transformative leadership is in its infancy, a saturation of data is presented to more completely understand each tenet.

Solidarity. The tenet of solidarity is the union of two individuals by which each finds their self in the other. Solidarity was the most coded tenet of transformative leadership with 90 instances of the code either in the affirmative or in recognition of a lack of solidarity. Solidarity for participants appeared to be a foundational aspect that was a precursor to any other tenet of transformative leadership.

Solidarity, like love, is a powerful connector between people. The notion of finding oneself in another is a tenet that can bridge a wide gap and result in powerful learning. Connor demonstrated this when he wrote in his last reflection journal entry that he

found the service learning experience to be an amazing, eye opening, and exciting experience. I truly felt that I interviewed the most interesting person possible…whose incredible stories I will always remember. The project taught me volumes, not only about leadership, but about my and my peers' interactions with each other, and with our elders, those we interviewed. (December 15, 2015)

Connor's experience of solidarity in the service-learning project is not isolated. Throughout the project, group members in Project Insular connected with one another and found themselves as equals. After completing the interviews with residents, the excitement resulting from group members connection with the residents was palpable. It was as though they had found a new friend in a new world that never existed.

In addition to understanding solidarity within the service-learning project, participants extended the concept of solidarity to the broader world. Participants affirmed that solidarity encompasses all people regardless of physical, emotional, or intellectual ability. Freddy captured this understanding in his interview when he said

everyone no matter, you know, if they have disabilities or circumstances where they're not given the opportunity either to grow as a person, they're still people with dignity that are given this certain amount of humanity in them, so we have to respect that humanity and be able to be friendly, caring, just no matter what. You can't like pass judgment on someone just because they might look a little different than us or talk a little different or do something a little different. You have to be able to respect that. (Freddy, Interview)

Raintree's understanding of solidarity resulted in action on her part. When asked if there is anything that causes a reaction based on how previous experiences shape who she is, she shared a story about how she is effected when she sees kids eating alone. She said that she is so bothered when someone eats alone because she had experiences being ostracized in elementary school. Consequently, her and her group of friends will invite underclassmen who eat alone to join them at lunch.

One final way that participants understood solidarity is the uniting of people

regardless of racial or socio-economic differences. NSWE had an experience where he

was the outsider, but solidarity allowed him to move past the external markers of skin

color. Discussing his attendance at a camp in California, he commented that

> it was funny, because I was the only white kid there. I showed up, and 'Oh. I'm
> the only white kid. Okay.' It was cool to see that we were able to bond regardless
> of what our backgrounds were….It was just interesting to see how we could come
> together for this common goal regardless of our backgrounds. We became really
> good friends. I'm probably going to visit them in California this summer. Just
> knowing that we were able to connect without any barriers. (NSWE, Interview)

The most powerful aspect of solidarity is that it breaks down walls between people.

NSWE was able to become friends and develop a relationship that extended beyond the

camp experience. So much so that he is planning a trip to see them this summer. During

the interview, he also talked about other friends from the camp who were in college and

how he talked with them as well.

The power and pervasiveness of solidarity for participants is clear. However, the

recognition of a lack of solidarity and the problems that result is also powerful. Kohl

articulated this point when he wrote in his reflection journal on the social pollution

service-learning project. Talking about the group itself and what could be done to

improve the project, he said that

> in order to improve our project, our group needs to foster a desire to work towards
> our goal. Around the same time our group became disenfranchised with our goal,
> several members were caught up in the same type of social pollution scandal we
> were trying to expunge in the Central Catholic community. Instead of being
> leaders, we became hypocrites. These events divided our group and made it
> difficult to progress toward our end objective. Our project would have been better
> if our group was more harmonious and were dedicated to the end cause. (Kohl,
> Reflection Journal, December 11, 2015)

It was a lack of solidarity that caused a breakdown in the social pollution group. Since members of the social pollution group were not able to find themselves in one another, there was a disconnect between them later in the project. The experience of lack of solidarity was as powerful and de-energizing as was the experience of finding solidarity. It is evident that solidarity is both a connector and detractor depending on the situation.

Love. Love is a connector between people that brings freedom and care. This element of transformative leadership was the second most present tenet behind solidarity. Each participant had love coded to at least one of their data sources indicating the pervasiveness of this tenet. Love was understood and shown in different ways by participants, but was evidenced each time as a connector.

Love was understood and seen in thought, word and in deed. As a thought, love was seen in the goals the groups had. Project Insular's goal was to connect elderly and youth while the social pollution group's goal was to connect the Central Catholic community more deeply. Writing the final entry in her reflection journal, Elle Woods discussed how Project Insular achieved their goal, which was a goal founded in love. She said that "Project Insular has already achieved a goal we hadn't expected to reach for months. That goal was to touch people and help them bridge the gap between our generation and those older than us" (Elle, Reflection Journal, December 11, 2015). In this way, goals founded in love served to connect people.

As words, love was seen in the interactions of group members inside and outside of the classroom. The power of words founded in love had the power to overcome words founded out of a lack of love. Regular words of support and encouragement were heard among group members in class. These verbal encouragements were the high school

95

equivalent of a hug. When talking about some of his sports teammates and how they do not always act with love, Kohl said that to counteract these negative behaviors, he "always make[s] it a point to say hi to [younger teammates] at school and stuff when I pass them by" (Kohl, Interview). Specifically, Kohl was talking about younger teammates who were teased by the senior baseball players. Participants thus demonstrated love in the way they spoke with those around them.

As action, love was seen and recognized by participants. Participants particularly recognized and affirmed when others showed love. Asked in the focus group if care was demonstrated in the service-learning project, NSWE responded that

> I think Elle Woods showed a lot of care in this project for others….She was a big motivator for others. She worked really hard. She never stopped, and knew what was expected of her. She went beyond what was expected of her throughout this process. (Focus Group, December 2015)

NSWE's remarks captured the impact when others demonstrate love. In these ways, love was understood and shown by participants in thought, word, and deed. While these examples show the affirmative dimensions of love by participants, lack of love was also present in the data.

Examples of a lack of love show the destructive power of an absence of love. When asked about whether connections between individuals who do not know each other warrants care, Kohl said the following about love in society.

> I think [care] can be overlooked really easily especially in like a capitalist, free market society like America. Where like money and power can definitely corrupt. I guess leadership can corrupt. I think because humans operate in self-interest most of the, well not most of the time but. They tend to operate in self-interest and do what's best for them and their families and sometimes don't take into consideration people under them as much as they probably should. (Kohl, Interview)

96

Although framed through the conceptualization of care, Kohl's comments depict how participants recognized the problems that result when there was a lack of love in relationships. Within the social pollution group, a lack of love was also evident among some group members. At times, some group members were isolated from the rest of the group and did not interact. Thus, the negative dimension of love was also understood and demonstrated.

Faith. The tenet of faith is the confidence in the other to name their experience. The code of faith was used 35 times and was evident in a number of places. Although not referenced as faith, the concept is present among participants. Participant understanding of faith was seen both in thought and in action.

Several times, participants iterated the importance of faith in their leadership and how they have grown in faith. While responding to how he has grown as a leader, Steve said in a focus group that he has grown by "being more open to people's ideas and being more understanding to how other people view things, and being able to see different perspectives on things" (Focus Group, December 2015). This perspective of faith was also shared by NSWE when he said he "definitely increased [his] leadership capacity because [his] perspective has broadened throughout getting to know more people and seeing how they think and how they choose their course of action" (Focus Group, December 2015). Both of these responses reveal the increased self-perception of faith that participants had. Throughout the experience, participants developed in their ability to let the other name their experience.

Beyond developing faith, participants understood and recognized that faith was needed in order to be a successful leader. NSWE identified faith as one of his skills that

helps him be a leader. In his interview NSWE said that "if you don't grasp what others

want…and…how they themselves lead or how they themselves work, I'm not going to

say you can't be successful, but you're setting yourself up for more obstacles later on"

(NSWE, Interview). NSWE's understanding depicts the challenge for those who do not

have confidence in others to name their experience. NSWE and Steve, along with the

other group members, demonstrated this aspect of faith when they were analyzing

transcripts from interviews with the elderly. NSWE and Steve led the group discussion

while group members worked to narrow down the analysis to central themes. There were

a number of times where participants made a point to return to the interview transcripts to

make sure they correctly captured the interviewees meaning. Returning to the transcripts

was the penultimate way to ensure they engaged the process with faith.

Participants also recognized lack of faith as a problem in leadership. At one point

during the focus group, Kohl, Raintree, and Steve discussed the effects of a lack of faith

by an adult when they were working on their service-learning project. The implication

from the conversation was that the substitute did not understand or trust the participants

and what they were doing.

> Kohl: I think the leadership in our group really kind of suffered when [a substitute
> teacher] was here for the week and…split everyone out into little 2 or 3 person
> subcommittees, so no one interacted for like 2 and a half, 3 weeks straight, pretty
> much. We all just worked our little individual tasks, and they ended up
> completely different from each other. We didn't use anything that we came up
> with in that 2 and a half, 3 weeks.
> Steve: You guys said that you had to scrap that.
> Raintree: We had to scrap everything that we did.
> Ken Adams: Yeah.
> Kohl: Cause nothing correlated or worked together. (Focus Group, December
> 2015)

98

This interaction shows that group members perceived they were not able to successfully continue with their service-learning project because of a lack of faith by someone else. From these perspectives, participants grew in their understanding and demonstration of faith.

Praxis. Praxis concerns engagement with the world through reflection and action. Like faith, praxis was coded a total of 35 time. In the affirmative sense, or recognition of praxis, participants could identify both reflection and action. Instances of a lack of praxis were representative of understanding where action was lacking.

Similar to other tenets, praxis is powerful. When achieved, praxis allows for a deep and transformative interaction with the world. NSWE captured the power of praxis and the need for both reflection and action when he wrote the following in his reflection journal.

> I learned that you can only dream so much about a project. You can only have so much passion about a project, until you actually do it. I was passionate about the Insular Project from the get-go; however, now that the wheels of the project are turning, I know what we are doing has meaning. It has a purpose. Once a leader truly sees the meaning in a goal, they become unstoppable. (October 26, 2015)

As can be seen, praxis leads to a sense of freedom. The reason for this is that when an individual finds true praxis, they are fully engaged and in control with the world around them. As NSWE said, someone engaged with praxis is unstoppable.

Participants also recognized the power of praxis to effect change. This recognition underscored participants developing sense of praxis since it demonstrated the recognition of reflection and action. Kohl specifically articulated this sense of the power of change when he wrote about a comparison between the Central Catholic community and students he met on a college visit. He said that

in the Central Catholic community, social pollution can be curbed…if everyone realizes that they are a part of one community and a Central Catholic family, they will strive to uphold the dignity of their family members. Surly students would not dare say some of the comments that come out of their mouths during the school day to their immediate family at home. (Kohl, Reflection Journal, October 4, 2015)

Kohl understood that social pollution could be reduced, but that it takes everyone achieving praxis. In this recognition, Kohl has achieved praxis. Also in this recognition, there is a sense of frustration with the rest of the Central Catholic community's lack of praxis. That is the interesting thing about praxis; once praxis is achieved, it is frustrating to watch and engage with others who have not achieved the same level of praxis. Kohl showed this aspect when he talked about how he dislikes the motto 'life isn't fair'. The reason for this is he says that more often than not, people who say this can do something to make things fairer but they choose not to.

One other dimension to be noted is participants seemed to limit the amount of action they would engage in, even though they recognized action was needed. Freddy shared a limitation of action during his interview when he said that he is

pretty passionate about…human rights kind of things, but…I'm not like an activist….I'll stand up for people's rights if it's within my like three degrees of separation, but I'm not going to be that person to picket outside of state buildings. I'm not that kind of person. (Freddy, Interview)

Overall, participants struggled with the idea of the extent beyond their world they should act. As Freddy said, he would act if it is within three degrees of separation. Praxis was present in that he understands the issue of human rights and the dignity of all people, but he only acts to three degrees. Similarly, other participants indicated in interviews that they recognized when a stranger was being treated unfairly but they were not sure of the

extent they would act. These instances of praxis demonstrate participants growth in

praxis, but also their limitations in praxis.

Humility. The tenet of humility surrounds an individual's openness to one's own

fallibility in order to learn from another. Humility is evidenced when an individual

changes direction as a result of learning from another they are wrong. Essentially,

humility is the understanding that one is not the sole possessor of truth. Participants

demonstrated an understanding and enactment of humility at various points. Ken Adams

captured his understanding of humility in a focus group at the end of the course. Ken had

said that courage is important in leadership and when another participant asked him to

expand on courage and whether that was needed to take accountability, he said

> that might be one of the most important components of leadership because you
> need to be able to realize when you're wrong. If you're stubborn and you just keep
> going with your idea even though it's wrong, it's not going to be the best for the
> group. You need to be able to realize when you're wrong and to have the humility
> to say 'Yeah I was wrong, and this is the way we should go instead of my way.'
> (Focus Group, December 2015)

What was unique about this is that Ken interwove the concepts of courage and humility.

For the participants, a comingling of concepts was not unusual while they worked to

develop their understanding.

Steve also captured the importance of humility when writing his final reflection

journal entry. Steve was reflecting on his group's contribution to solving the problem of

bridging the divide between youth and elderly when he said that

> we all want to learn from our fellow man's mistakes, we all want to be better than
> those who have messed up before, yet we do not take a minute to evaluate
> ourselves. I think that is part of the issue and part of the solution. As soon as
> mankind can take a look at themselves, and see what others are learning, we can
> change ourselves. (Steve, Reflection Journal, December 13, 2015)

101

Steve's understanding of the importance of learning from the experience of others highlights how he extended his understanding of humility from himself to the world around. These instances demonstrate participants understanding of humility throughout the service-learning project.

These personal affirmations of humility were also turned into action throughout the study. Participants in Project Insular, the group working with the elderly, frequently had conversations surrounding the best way to move forward. Group members had weekly conversations about how the project was going, what was coming up, and what could be done better. It was through the negotiation of what could be done better that participants enacted their humility. Participants had to recognize when an idea they had could be improved upon and when the idea they offered would not work. The process of negotiating humility became easier the more comfortable group members became with one another.

Participants in the social pollution group also demonstrated humility throughout the service-learning project. Like Project Insular, they had weekly conversations about how the project was going and what could be done better. Using the example of the project's video script shows how participants enacted humility. The main content and focus of the project changed several times. The reason for the change was that members would question the effectiveness of the script. Through conversations and group discussions, the script would be altered according to the group's new understanding of the best way to proceed.

Critical thinking. Critical thinking is an awareness of the systems and structures that surround us. Beside hope, critical thinking was evidenced the least with only 23

instances of the code being applied. Although limited in use, the instances where the code was applied highlighted powerful and deep understandings of the world surrounding the participants.

Participants understood critical thinking when they were on the restrictive end of the systems surrounding them. Specifically, two participants referenced critical thinking related to their experience in sports. Kohl and Freddy both discussed the example of coach favoritism, an experience they both shared and were frustrated by. This is when a player knows the coach and subsequently is given preferential treatment and more playing time, even though they may be less qualified. Both participants indicated the way to deal with this situation is to simply work harder because there is not much you can do. Consequently, they understood very personally what the tenet of critical thinking is.

Students recognized structures that were unfair in several instances. Asked about how he responded to unfair situations, Freddy captured a general understanding when he said "unfair…to me is never just the outcome. The outcome can never be unfair unless something happened in between that was unfair" (Freddy, Interview). Freddy understood that the entirety of a situation needs to be examined to comprehend all of the nuances. Writing about changes in his attitude, Freddy mentioned that "when interviewing, one of the [elderly residents] suggested that there either be more employees or less residents. This is because she believed that people with more needs were given less attention" (Freddy, Reflection Journal, November 2, 2015). These highlight Freddy's understanding and recognition of critical thinking. Speaking about times when she was unfairly treated, Raintree remarked about upper classmen in a physical education class she took at Central Catholic that "if a girl was chosen to be captain then [the senior boys] would take over as

captain because they didn't assume we had any sports knowledge or any ability when it came to doing physical activity" (Raintree, Interview). In each of these examples, it was the oppressive nature that participants experienced and understood. As a result, they became aware of critical thinking whether they intended to or not.

While those examples show a more developed sense of critical thinking, one participant showed the foundations of critical thought. When talking about how he would address an unfair situation, Connor remarked that "I know there are some times that I think, 'Oh, that's a social norm,' or something like that. In those cases, I don't always act" (Connor, Interview). The inference of this comment was that social norms, whether right or wrong, are a dynamic at play in the world that can limit choice and need to be negotiated.

In all of the understandings of participants, it was only through being on the restrictive or oppressive side that recognition of critical thinking was achieved. The implication of this is that critical thinking cannot occur until one is oppressed and achieves a degree of critical consciousness of the oppression. In order to develop critical thinking, it is necessary to raise their consciousness to the systems and structures in place that prevent true freedom.

Hope. Hope concerns itself with an attitude of possibility. Of all the tenets of transformative leadership, hope was the least present used only 21 times throughout the study. In his interview, NSWE had discussed three different places where he was a leader. When asked if there was any commonality between them, he said that as a leader you have to "not only work to better yourself as a leader but better others….By doing that…you'll be able to accomplish what you want for yourself and for others" (NSWE,

104

Interview). This represents the power and infusion of hope to help a leader achieve the goals of the group. Elle Woods talked about the necessity of hope when asked about the ease of stepping in when you have a connection with someone. She said as a leader "you just have to believe you're doing the right thing and it's going to end up okay, even if it takes a long time" (Elle, Interview). The underlying positivistic attitude demonstrated in these quotes is how participants understood hope.

Participants also demonstrated that hope can be developed and encouraged. Elle wrote in her reflection journal at several points throughout the course on hope. Writing in her journal after interviewing elderly, she said "this project taught me personal strength and determination. I never knew people could go through so many hard times in their life and be this at peace with the world. It was truly inspirational and motivating for my own life" (October 24, 2015). While reflecting on whether her beliefs or attitudes had changed, Elle said that "everything we have done including classwork and interviews simply confirmed that everyone has their own struggles and it is how you pick yourself up or carry yourself through them that will lead to success" (Elle, Reflection Journal, November 2, 2015). Elle recognized the necessity of hope to achieve goals and to persevere. Further, her own sense of hope was encouraged in response to the experience of others. In this sense, hope worked as a connector.

Hope also supported participants sense of accomplishment. During the focus groups, a conversation between Elle, Steve, and Connor showed hope manifested among the three of them. When discussing their service-learning project and what they learned from it, they had the following interaction.

Elle Woods: The project just also taught me as a leader that you can accomplish anything you want….I was surprised we actually got to where we were, because in every other big project I've even been involved in, we always have to downsize or just not do it.

Steve: Yeah, we set a goal at the very beginning and we haven't changed from that.

Connor: We haven't had any setbacks. We haven't had anything we've had to take out.

Steve: We haven't taken out anything. We haven't reduced anything….What we've done in the group with everybody is perfect. We've been able to do everything that we needed with a group of people….The group was so important in that aspect….We set a goal in the beginning, and we've gotten there in a good time. (Focus Group, December 2015)

This interaction was infused with hope. Further, it showed hope's ability to encourage, support, and energize participants throughout the project. Beyond the service-project, participants also manifest hope in the conceptualization of their future selves. In particular, NSWE recognized hope in his conceptualization of his future self and future leadership. He said that

the goal is by the end of my life I want to be proud of who I was and how I led….I still think there's a lot more to learn and a lot more to practice to make that leadership a permanent part of my life (Focus Group, December 2015)

The recognition that there is still more to learn and practice but that his goal is to reach this by the end of his life underscores the hope that he will do so. Together, it was evident that students self-perception of their transformative leadership includes the tenet of hope.

Freire's critical consciousness. After conducting multiple readings for this layer, adding Freire's conceptualization of critical consciousness to the understanding of participants self-perception and demonstration of transformative leadership enriches the understating further. To that end, I frame Freire's conceptualization of critical consciousness presented in his works *Education for Critical Consciousness* (Freire, 2005a) and *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire, 2005b). Following the framing, I discuss

106

how the movement towards critical consciousness indicates participants development of transformative leadership.

Critical theorist Paolo Freire has contributed much to education and beyond through his conceptualization of conscientização, translated as critical consciousness. Critical consciousness is important in relation to the data and subsequent understanding for circle two. In his work *Education for Critical Consciousness* (2005a), Freire presents a model to understand aspects of critical consciousness. The model of critical consciousness includes naïve consciousness, dialogue and awareness, possibilities of response, and critical consciousness. Each of these elements is briefly described below. Figure 11 depicts the model of Freirean critical consciousness.
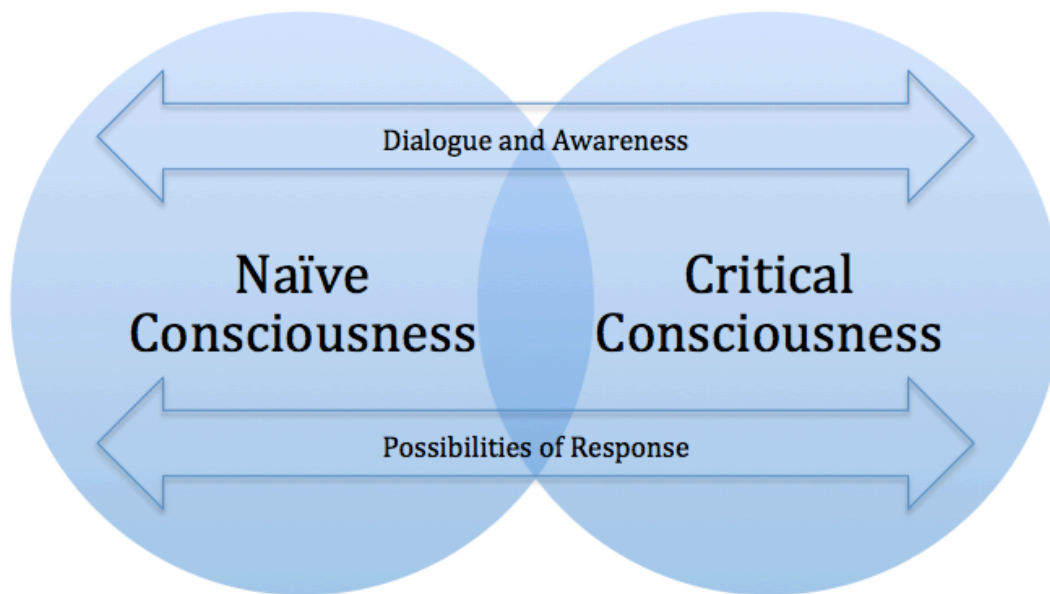

Figure 11. Freirean model of critical consciousness.

Naïve consciousness and critical consciousness constitute two modes of being. A naïve consciousness does not subject causality to analysis, rather "naïve consciousness sees causality as a static, established fact" (Freire, 2005a, p. 39). Critical consciousness,

on the other hand, "always submits…causality to analysis" (p. 39). For Freire, "the more accurately men grasp true causality, the more critical their understanding of reality will be" (p. 39). So consciousness, critical or naïve, relates to the extent that an individual analyzes causality. In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, (2005b) Freire argues that the naïve thinker "accommodates to [the] normalized 'today'" while critical thinking is working towards the "transformation of reality" (p. 92). Perspectives of critical consciousness undergird the understanding of transformative leadership.

Two other aspects of Freire's model of critical consciousness include dialogue and awareness and possibilities of response. In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (2005b), Freire argues that "dialogue is the encounter between men, mediated by the world, in order to name the world" (p. 88). True dialogue thus takes on action, it is an interaction between two resulting in a new naming of the world. True dialogue necessarily is communication with another while false dialogue, or "anti-dialogue", concerns communication of one individual over another. (Freire, 2005a, pp. 40-41). In anti-dialogue, the person who is over the other sends edicts as opposed to naming the world with the other. The result of dialogue then is awareness.

Resulting from dialogue and awareness, an individual is presented with ways to respond. They can analyze for accuracy and freedom or for oppression. If an individual choose naïve consciousness, the dialogue is anti-dialogical and the response is to maintain the status quo. However, if the individual chooses critical consciousness, dialogue ensues and the response is to work to transform the environment. Critical consciousness, dialogue, and response result in praxis.

One challenge of Freire's model of critical consciousness is that he presents the elements of critical and naïve consciousness as opposing forces. What Freire does not directly address is movement between the two. This omission is where Wenger's concept of trajectory can aid in understanding high school students self-perception of their transformative leadership skills. To recall, Wenger's understanding of trajectory is not linear. Rather trajectory suggests "a continuous motion – one that has a momentum of its own in addition to a field of influences. It has a coherence through time that connects the past, the present, and the future" (Wenger, 1998, p. 154). Data from this study suggest a sense of 'movement towards' rather than a more absolutist either/or proposition.

With this understanding of critical consciousness and movement, returning to the previously presented themes from this reading enhances the understanding that high school students self-perception and demonstration of transformative leadership develops through a service-learning project. Various instances of dialogue, awareness, and/or response were present to some extent for each of the seven themes of transformative leadership. From a Freirean perspective, the presence of one or more of these elements with an attitude of subjecting causality to analysis means that an individual is in the world of critical consciousness. That understanding is where the data suggest participants reside.

The opportunities provided by the service-learning project presented participants the opportunity to begin taking steps towards deeper levels of critical consciousness. Although some participants took larger steps and some merely turned their heads in a new direction, this movement indicates that participants developed and demonstrated

109

their transformative leadership. It is as though participants were beginning to straddle the worlds of naïve consciousness and critical consciousness in a new way.

Summary of circle two: self-perception of transformative leadership. Understanding gleaned from the second circle is that high school students self-perception and demonstration of their transformative leadership developed as a result of participation in a service-learning project. Participants understood and demonstrated each of the seven tenets of transformative leadership to some degree. Adding the lens of critical consciousness, the evidence supports that students are moving towards deeper levels of critical consciousness. The approach to the class and intervention was one of communication with instead of communication to or for. Consequently, participants had the opportunity to engage with all seven themes of transformative leadership including humility, faith, hope, love, solidarity, critical thinking, and praxis.

Circle Three: Relevance Fosters Deeper Transformation

This circle of understanding is born from readings of the data and from observations of the way the service-learning projects evolved. The understanding gleaned from this circle is that high school students enact transformative leadership skills more deeply and are bolstered in their ability to lead when the service-learning content is meaningful and relevant to the student. To understand this circle, I begin by detailing the evolution of the two service-learning projects that took place during the Principles of Leadership class.

Service-learning project evolution. The innovation for this action research study was the utilization of a community-based service-learning project to develop high school students understanding of transformative leadership. The innovation was employed in a

110

class called Principles of Leadership that was open to any 11th or 12th grade student at Central Catholic High School. The eight participants for this study were enrolled in the class, along with 21 other students that elected not to participate in the study for a total of 29 students in the class. In designing the study, I anticipated the class would engage with one service-learning project for the duration of the course.

When the class began in August and students learned about Catholic Social Teaching, a lens through which the student-selected service-learning project was to be framed, it became clear that organizing 29 students around a single theme was going to be difficult, if not impossible. The reason for this is that students have different passions and interests related to the seven themes of Catholic Social Teaching and consequently wanted to engage with different projects. Examples of the variety of interests students had include veterans, abortion, the environment, elderly, disabled individuals, discrimination, animal shelters, gun control, immigration, suicide, and homelessness.

After several class discussions on what would be most effective, the class decided that two projects would be the best approach. Out of this decision came the final two service-learning projects; connection with the elderly and pollution. Originally, a total of 15 students chose to work on the project to address the gap between elderly and youth and 14 students chose to work on the issue of pollution. After a week of discussion, one student decided to switch groups and moved from the pollution group to the group working with the elderly. This brought the final group numbers to 16 working with the elderly and 13 working with pollution. Of the eight participants in this study, five worked on the project with the elderly and three worked on the pollution group.

Project Insular. The 16 students who engaged with bridging the gap between elderly and youth eventually called themselves Project Insular. They intentionally selected 'insular' because of the definition of being "ignorant of or uninterested in cultures, ideas, or peoples outside one's own experience" (form letter to elderly participants, October, 2015). After researching their topic, the approach they selected to address the problem was to conduct life-story interviews (Atkinson, 1998) of local residents.

Their goal was to conduct and analyze the life-story interviews to write a book that could be shared with not only the elderly participants, but with the community at large. This group was able to successfully conduct, transcribe, and analyze 12 interviews resulting in seven themes. The seven themes the students identified include communication, individuality, honesty, preparation, perseverance, goal-orientation, and strong virtues. In addition, they worked with leadership at the local senior living facility to understand the issue of youth being disconnected from elderly from their perspective. At the end of the semester, students in the class went to one of the senior living facilities to present their findings to participants. Although the group was not able to complete the book within the allotted time frame, two of the students committed to continue with the project to complete the book in spite of the class being completed.

Social pollution. Thirteen students elected to work on the topic of pollution. Originally geared toward environmental pollution, the group was researching different types of pollution when one of the students came upon the concept of social pollution. Social pollution is about the way negative ideas spread to breakdown relationships between people. The group began to think about the problem of social pollution within

the school community at Central Catholic. After investigating the concept and the Central

Catholic community more deeply, they found that although people are supposed to

become more respectful and tolerant as they grow, the opposite is true. Specifically

related to the Central Catholic community, they noticed that as students moved from 9th

to 12th grade, social groups became more pronounced and interacted with each another

less.

The solution to the issue of social pollution was an awareness campaign. After

considering the issue and the community, they felt a video awareness campaign would be

the most successful way to combat social pollution at Central Catholic. Following the

video awareness campaign, the group also designed plastic bracelets they were hoping to

distribute with funding provided by the Central Catholic student council. This group did

not work with a community partner to understand the issue more deeply. Also, the video

they created was not completed until two weeks before the end of the semester. A lack of

communication with the student council resulted in the bracelets not being ordered.

A comparison of two service-learning projects. The pronounced difference

between the two service-learning projects warrants attention. In this section, I will outline

and present data that shows how the two projects took different paths. Specifically, I will

look at leadership within the groups, attitudinal differences, and group engagement to

provide an understanding of how the groups differed.

Leadership within the group. Project Insular had two defined leaders at the

beginning of the project in NSWE and Steve. NSWE and Steve were the ones who

directed the work and organized the group around what needed to be done (Researcher

Observation Journal, September 4, 2015). They specifically took steps to organize the

group's shared Google folder, establish deadlines, and read *The Life-Story Interview* (Atkinson, 1998). As an example of their commitment, I offered to obtain copies of the Atkinson text but Steve replied that he already had ordered a copy (email communication from Steve, September 2015). The leadership of NSWE and Steve was very strong and helped propel the group forward.

Eventually, their leadership spread throughout the group. The transition from NSWE and Steve being the primary leaders to a collective group was understood in a conversation during the focus groups. Connor and Steve had the following interaction while Connor was responding to Steve's response of the effect of the service-learning project.

> Connor: I remember in the very beginning [of the project] when we were defining our problem, or some time then, I was just thinking, 'Oh well, look, Steve and NSWE are, they're doing something. They've got some idea.' It all just evolved from that. Having our group leaders and looking at them and just thinking, 'Okay, they know what they're doing. They've got this great plan.' I was a little bit confused to what exactly we were doing.
> Steve: In the very beginning we were all ... I want to say scared. In the very beginning when it was just NSWE and me as the leaders ... I'd say that with quotes around leaders because we're all leaders leading all the time, so we weren't the only leaders, but in the beginning it seemed that way. In the beginning, everybody was quiet. It was just us. It was us leading everybody else. Towards the end ... not even really towards the end, towards the middle, once we were all on the same page with the same end goal and we all knew what we were doing, we all knew the impact that we were going to make, and how we were going to do it, I think everybody stepped up to be a leader at that point. The only difference NSWE and I made was just facilitating it. We just made it run. Everybody else still had just as much input and value as everyone else. (Focus Group, December 2015)

This movement from NSWE and Steve being the primary leaders to everyone being a leader proved effective and empowering for all the group members. A conversation between Elle, NSWE, and Steve showed how their service-learning group was able to encourage all of the group members to lead. The following conversation took place when

participants were asked whether or not care was demonstrated and the effect of care on

the leader-follower relationship.

> Steve: I think the reason that we were so successful was because NSWE and I
> showed care for the other members of our group, that they were able to step up
> themselves. If we didn't show care to them, then we would have kept that divide
> between us being the leaders, them being the followers, as opposed to us all being
> the leader.
> NSWE: We almost trashed the LMX theory. We didn't have an in group and an
> out group. We tried to bring our out group into the in group.
> Elle Woods: That's what I was going to say. Even when someone's idea wasn't
> liked, or we didn't choose it, everyone in the group, and especially Steve and
> NSWE, you really showed that it was still appreciated that they had input, even if
> wasn't good input. (Focus Group, December 2015)

It was through the demonstration of care that everyone was supported and encouraged to

lead. In these ways, Project Insular's leadership was able to move from being driven by

two, to being driven by all.

Contrary to Project Insular, the social pollution group did not have a defined

leader. Leadership of this group was more fluid in terms of who was in charge. At the

beginning of the project, one student was adamant and vocal about doing pollution but

focusing on environmental pollution. As the group researched the topic to identify a

problem, another student came upon the topic of social pollution. The group changed

their direction and pursued this option. From that point, Raintree and one other student

were the main note-takers of the group and did their best to lead the class discussions

(Researcher Observation Journal, October 9, 2015). On days when one or the other was

absent, very little was accomplished. However, unlike NSWE and Steve, students in the

project did not actively work to move the project forward outside of class meeting times.

The next challenge came when I was absent the week of November 2, 2015. By

this point, Project Insular had already conducted their interviews with the elderly, but the

social pollution group was still working on their idea for a video. The substitutes and I

had arranged for the group to speak with the film teacher at Central Catholic to learn

about storyboarding and video production. After this, the group was split into different

groups that were responsible for different aspects of the video project. Again, no single

individual or individuals were in charge of coordinating the whole video project. This

was specifically talked about in the focus group between Kohl, Steve, Raintree, and Ken.

> Kohl: I think the leadership in our group really kind of suffered when [the
> substitute teacher] was here for the week she split everyone out into little 2 or 3
> person subcommittees, so no one interacted for like 2 and a half, 3 weeks straight,
> pretty much. We all just worked our little individual tasks, and they ended up
> completely different from each other. We didn't use anything that we came up
> with in that 2 and a half, 3 weeks.
> Steve: You guys said that you had to scrap that.
> Raintree: We had to scrap everything that we did.
> Ken Adams: Yeah.
> Kohl: Cause nothing correlated or worked together. (Focus Group, December
> 2015)

When I returned the week of November 9, 2015, the conversation of the group turned

from doing a video and understanding the video process to what the script was going to

be about.

Once the group determined the script idea, another student began writing the

script. When ideas or concerns were brought to the group about the script, they would

often times change what they were going to do. I wrote in my observation journal and

told the group it was like they would take "one step forward and two steps back. Every

time they were challenged to think more deeply, they would just throw out what they did

and start over." (Researcher Observation Journal, November 10, 2015). This was

frustrating for some of the group members who wanted to achieve something while

others seemed to block progression on the project and were happy to do nothing. For

most of November, the responsibility fell to one student to write the script with minimal help or assistance from the other group members.

The result of these different group experiences became clear in the focus groups. When asked which approach was better, having a defined leader like Project Insular or a fluid leadership like social pollution, participants unanimously said having a defined leader (Focus Group, December 2015). Based on their experience, NSWE and Steve both said that having two leaders as opposed to one was a very effective approach (Focus Group, December 2015). Participants appreciated and recognized that everyone has strengths and weaknesses, and it is to their advantage to capitalize on strengths to achieve their goal.

Adding Freire's understanding of critical consciousness, it is clear one of the differences between the groups was dialogue. Based on student reflections and conversations, Project Insular achieved higher levels of dialogue. The social pollution group on the other hand did not achieve dialogue. They were more representative of anti-dialogue where whoever was in charge at the time said what would be done. When the group did not like that, they would say something and changed course. It was an interesting dynamic where the group became in charge over the individual. The result of Project Insular's dialogue was dialogue outside of the group with residents at local senior living centers. The social pollution group's anti-dialogue resulted in a lack of dialogue with the Central Catholic community, the very group they were working to help.

The power of passion. The attitudes of the two groups were also very different and worth exploring. It was clear that passion was present with Project Insular, echoed by several participants in that group throughout the course and in response to different

117

prompts. Responding to the prompt *'I learned from our project this week that…why…'*,

NSWE wrote "I have also seen that we are very passionate about our topic because we

care about the problem" (NSWE, Reflection Journal, September 21, 2015). Writing about

what made her group effective, Elle Woods wrote on November 18, 2015 that "my

project group is very effective. Most of us are passionate about this project" (Elle,

Reflection Journal). Connor also shared this feeling. Writing in his reflection journal at

the end of the semester about the overall project, he said, "I feel that most of the other

group members, as well, were passionate" (Connor, Reflection Journal, December 11,

2015). It was passion that led to motivation to persevere and continue with the project.

In contrast, participants in the social pollution group had the opposite reflections

towards passion. At one of the focus groups, Ken said he learned how to motivate people

causing Kohl to have a reflection on passion and success. Kohl responded to Ken's

comment and noted the difference between the two groups saying he thought

> the main difference between our two projects was that we didn't really have a
> passionate leader or any passionate leaders who actually thought that they were
> making a difference. No one really cared about our problem, which I think was
> our biggest issue. That's why nothing ever got done. I think that manifested in the
> fact that half of our group ended up being the source of what we were trying to
> stop, so it was very hypocritical. (Focus Group, December 2015)

Raintree made an observation during the focus group that reflects why the social

pollution group's project was not successful. After participants in Project Insular had

discussed why their project was successful, she said the following about the social

pollution group.

> I think that care, or rather the lack thereof, was the downfall to our project. Even
> from the beginning, I wasn't really sure why we chose social pollution, because no
> one really seemed to care. I mean, we chose it, but no one was like, 'Oh, I'm so
> passionate about this. We're going to end social pollution at Central Catholic and
> the whole world.' I don't think anyone really cared. In our group, overhearing the

conversations that people were having, they were actively participating in social pollution.…No one really cared what ideas were presented, and even if they knew that they were bad ones, they didn't really care enough to offer a solution. (Focus Group, December 2015)

The reflections by Kohl and Raintree, both participants in the social pollution group, highlight the difference between the two groups. Project Insular was a project of care, passion, and hope while the social pollution group's project was merely an exercise.

Understanding of this dichotomy between the two groups is clarified further when Freire's contextualization is included. In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (2005b), Freire says that "if the dialoguers expect nothing to come of their efforts, their encounter will be empty and sterile, bureaucratic and tedious" (p. 92). This is precisely the difference between the two projects. The social pollution group expected nothing to come of their efforts while Project Insular did. Consequently, hope was pervasive among Project Insular's group members and they were dialoguers. The social pollution group was not in dialogue and thus the encounter was empty.

The power of a name. The final point of comparison between the two groups is the difference between group engagement. When referencing engagement, I am talking about solidarity and love more so than participation. The reason for this is that participation is merely a manifestation of solidarity and love. The most telling evidence of solidarity and love is that one group named themselves while the other did not. Project Insular found a uniting in their group name. The name was specifically chosen because it united them with each other, with the elderly, and with the problem. Cleary, aspects of solidarity and love were present with the group. Further, the name directly manifested praxis insofar as the group's name and work reflected their praxis of the world.

Conversely, the social pollution group never united under the banner of name. The power of solidarity and love was not found within the social pollution group.

Turning to Freire once again provides additional insight with this aspect. In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (2005b), Freire understands the necessity of dialogue to name the world. For Freire, "dialogue is the encounter between men, mediated by the world, in order to name the world" (p. 88). In fact, speaking a true word is to "transform the world" (p. 87). Together, Project Insular dialogued with one another and named their world Project Insular. In doing so they transformed their reality and the reality of those they interviewed. The social pollution group on the other did not share this experience. As Freire understands, the social pollution group did not achieve freedom or praxis.

Including one final perspective adds to the richness of understanding the power of a name. Shields (2004) articulates the power of dialogue for transformative leadership. Acknowledging that dialogue may be "convergent or divergent" (p. 116), it is in the creation of "learning environments that are both socially just and deeply democratic" that students will "develop meaningful and socially constructed understanding" (p. 115). This is what occurred with participants in the two groups. For Project Insular, dialogue was convergent while the social pollution's dialogue was divergent. Consequently, members of Project Insular developed meaning and understanding in deeper ways than members of the social pollution group.

Summary of circle three: relevance fosters deeper transformation. The understanding that high school students enact transformative skills more deeply and are bolstered in their ability to lead when the service-learning content is meaningful and relevant to the student was examined from several themes from the data. These

perspectives included an investigation into the leadership within the two service-learning

projects, the power of passion, and the power of naming. Adding a Freirean lens to this

understanding, it becomes clear not only how students enacted their transformative

leadership skills, but why.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this action research study was to explore how high school students understand transformative leadership. The definition of transformative leadership used in this study was gleaned from the literature, and is defined as leadership rooted in humility, faith, hope, love, critical thinking, and solidarity focused on a praxis of reflection and action. The foundational concepts of transformative leadership are drawn from the work of Freire and other scholars from the realm of social justice. The innovation explored was the use of a community-based service-learning project framed through one of the seven themes of Catholic Social Teaching. As a Catholic school, the inclusion of Catholic Social Teaching provided a way to connect the school's faith background with current scholarship. Findings from the study revealed that participants understood and enacted the foundations of transformative leadership, and grew in their leadership skills as a result of participating in a service-learning project.

One research question and two subquestions guided this action research study.

1. How do students at a Catholic high school understand transformative leadership?

    a. How do students at a Catholic high school develop and demonstrate their leadership skills through a community-based project?

    b. As a result of participation in a community-based project, what is students' self-perception of leadership?

In order to answer the research question, qualitative data was collected through reflection journals, observations, interviews, and focus groups. The data was analyzed from a hermeneutic perspective resulting in three readings discussed in the previous chapter. In

this chapter, I begin with a discussion of the findings in relation to the research questions. Following this, I discuss limitations of the study, implications for research, implications for practice, and lessons learned.

Discussion of Findings

Inductive thematic analysis revealed six themes within the data. The themes include care between individuals, experiences of leadership, group dynamics, personal qualities of leaders, thinking in leadership, and transformative leadership. In this section, I begin with a framing of Brian Massumi's work to lay a foundation that results in a greater understanding of the research question. After this, I will discuss each research subquestion, followed by a discussion of how high school students understand transformative leadership.

Transformative leadership is as transformative leadership doesn't. Over the course of this work, I have shown the various tenets of transformative leadership and how they were understood by the participants. Understandings from the data was enhanced and contextualized to the theoretical underpinnings of CoPs and critical consciousness. The next question necessarily becomes one of what these new understandings means as we move forward with transformative leadership. For this answer, I turn to the work of Brian Massumi.

In *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation* (2002), Massumi provides understanding of the world through movement and change. Most relevant for this study, I will focus on Massumi's theorizing of movement. At its foundation, Massumi states that "the world is in a condition of constant qualitative growth" (p. 12).

An objects becoming is only understood and seen when its movement stops. Massumi

uses the example of an arrow to understand this concept.

When an arrow is shot, it becomes in its movement through the air but is only

signified once it comes to stop in its target. Consequently and paradoxically, "a thing is

when it isn't doing. A thing is concretely where and what it is…when it is in a state of

arrest." (p. 6). Returning to the example of the arrow,

> when it comes to stop in the target, it will have undergone a qualitative change. It
> will not just be an arrow. It will have been a successfully shot arrow. It is still the
> same thing by definition, but in a different way, qualitatively changed by the
> passing event. (p. 7)

Similarly, a photograph captures a moment in time, a resting. It is true that the captured

image changes both before and after the picture was taken. For if it was a picture of

something natural – and here I am referencing anything dynamically alive in nature – it

will necessarily change since all of nature is becoming. Applying this to participants

developing and demonstrating transformative leadership, only at moments when

transformative leadership came to rest can the qualitative change be recognized.

Since a thing is what it is in a state of arrest, participants development,

demonstration, and self-perception of transformative leadership is what it is when it is

frozen. The 'frozen state' of transformative leadership is seen in the data from the study

as the reflections, thoughts, and actions of participants now that those elements have

come to rest. The participants are still the same by definition but they have been

qualitatively changed, they have developed their transformative leadership. So it is true

that transformative leadership is as transformative leadership doesn't. Transformative

leadership is nothing other than humility, faith, hope, love, critical thinking, solidarity,

and praxis. The fact is that participants movement through these experiences has left

them qualitatively changed as a result. This foundation, a sense of recognizing growth only insofar as recognizing moments of rest, provides an effective method for understanding the discussion of the subquestions and research question. The discussion of the research question and subquestions, which I turn to next, is understood upon the foundation that participants have been qualitatively changed as a result of participation in a community-based service-learning project.

Research Subquestion 1.

The first subquestion, *how do students at a Catholic high school develop and demonstrate their leadership skills through a community-based project*, offers insight into how high school students enact their leadership. Returning to the literature, a discussion of how students developed and demonstrated their leadership skills is presented below.

The research literature highlights several dimensions to be included in order for successful leadership development including programmatic features, relevance of content, and reflection. Programmatically, a leadership development curriculum should include different components for success. A clear definition of leadership (Klau, 2006) along with varied pedagogical approaches should be incorporated. Throughout the experience, participants were provided numerous pedagogical approaches to support the development of their leadership skills. These approaches included lectures, discussions, large group work, small group work, and guest presentations. From this perspective, all of the participants had equal opportunity to develop and demonstrate their leadership.

Relevance of the learning experience is the second consideration to successful leadership development. Scholars highlight the importance of the relevance and

flexibility of the learning experience to support leadership development (Conner & Strobel, 2007; Otis, 2006). Development is less successful when programs are not relevant or flexible. The difference between the two groups in this study bears this out. Project Insular found the experience to be extremely relevant and so they engaged with the project in a heightened way resulting in more opportunities for leadership development. The social pollution group, however, found the project to be less relevant and so interest in the topic waned resulting in fewer opportunities for development.

A third component to leadership development is reflection. Although reflection is important for students to process the experience and learn, it is also one of the most difficult tasks. White (2012) cautioned that students do not like forced reflection, but do not participate in unstructured reflection. This caution was evident in this study. Although participants completed written reflections, they were sometimes sparse or inconsistent. Yet participants did not want to simply talk about their thoughts and feelings, perhaps a reflection of an adolescent's development.

Leadership identity development is also an important consideration. Komives et al. (2005) discuss the difference between hierarchical and systemic thinking in leadership. A hierarchical thinking of leadership understands leadership in a top-down manner whereas a systemic thinking views leadership in relation to the larger context. According to Komives et al. (2005), the two types of thinking mark the break between leader identified and leader differentiated. Results from the study show that participants achieved this level of distinction. Participants in Project Insular and the social pollution group both realized their leadership in relation to the broader context of the problem they

126

were working to address. Participants self-perception understood that leadership was no longer a top-down process, but a complex process.

Harkening back to the thoughts of Massumi (2002), these moments showed that participants developed and demonstrated their leadership, and that they did so while on a trajectory of becoming. Using Massumi's metaphor, the participants in this study became the shot arrow. They moved through the moments of the service-learning project only to come to a stop at the end of the semester. That moment of rest is what I discussed in this work, but the participants have already been shot again on a new trajectory. Whenever these words are read, the participants have already and continued to demonstrate and develop their leadership as they become through an infinite number of experiences.

Research Subquestion 2.

The second subquestion was *as a result of participation in a community-based project, what is students self-perception of leadership*. Overall, participants demonstrated a shift in their self-perception of leadership as evidenced within the theme 'thinking in leadership'. The movement and shift in thinking was supported and encouraged through reflection (Komives et al., 2005; Ricketts & Rudd, 2002; Stafford, 2003; Sullivan & Post, 2011; Thorpe, 2007; White, 2012). Three dimensions were apparent and help understand participants self-perception; self-awareness, identification as a leader, and everybody is leading all the time.

Self-awareness is a foundation for participants perception of their leadership (Matsudaira & Jefferson, 2006; Otis, 2006). The dimension of self-awareness was framed through the text *Heroic Leadership* (Lowney, 2003) that the class read as a part of the Principles of Leadership class. Lowney presents four pillars of Jesuit-inspired leadership

127

with self-awareness being one of the pillars. Participants took this pillar to heart and engaged several tools including the Myers-Briggs inventory (Hogan, Champagne, & Glaser, 1990) and the VIA Character Strength survey (VIA Institute on Character, n.d.) to understand their self-awareness better. The result was an affirmation or reconceptualization of participants leadership identities.

In this study, participants demonstrated the primacy of self-awareness as a foundation for leadership. Allow me to briefly return to the data to demonstrate. Steve indicated the importance of self-awareness and recognition when he wrote at the beginning of the course that "the first step for leadership is realizing what skills the leader has to use to his advantages. Recognizing these skills has also enabled me to learn more about them" (Steve, Reflection Journal, August 14, 2015). Later in the course, Steve continued to identify the importance of self-awareness when he wrote that "self-awareness is key, without first knowing who we are, what we stand for, and how we lead we cannot know how to use that knowledge to our advantages" (Steve, Reflection Journal, September 14, 2015).

Additional examples from other participants exist, but Steve's words were congruent with the experience of the other participants. These examples demonstrate that participants self-perception of leadership is first conceptualized through self-awareness. Tools such as guided reflection and the Myers Briggs Inventory, along with experiences such as a service-learning project need to be provided to help attain this objective.

Over the course of the semester, participants conceptualized and affirmed their self-perception as a leader. In the focus group at the end of the study, participants were asked to rate their leadership on a scale of 1-10 with 1 being no leadership capacity and a

10 being the epitome of leadership. Raintree responded that she is at a 6, Ken said between a 6 and 7, NSWE, Elle, Freddy, and Connor said a 7, and Kohl and Steve responded with an 8 (Focus Group, December 2015). The responses indicate that participants have assumed and assert a leadership identity (Komives et al., 2005).

Turning to the concept of legitimate peripheral participation and inbound trajectories (Wenger, 1998) provides understanding and support for participants response that they are a leader. Framed as an inbound trajectory (p. 154), participants identification of their leadership between a six and eight indicates they are moving centripetally within the leadership CoP. Wenger suggests that as an individual participates more fully in a community, they are "joining the community with the prospect of becoming full participants" (p. 154). Thus, participants are leaders and are continuing to move towards full participation within the community (p.166).

The phrase 'we're all leading all the time' comes from the book *Heroic Leadership* (Lowney, 2003), one of the texts used in the Principles of Leadership course. Participants began to expand their thinking from leadership being about titled roles and positionality to leadership being something everyone does everyday. The shift to leadership being something done everyday by everyone supports transformative leadership as a leadership theory that applies to an entire ecosystem, not just an organization (Shields, 2006). Participants thinking of transformative leadership as everyday demonstrates the expansion of their self-perception.

At various points and in various ways participants expressed the sentiment of transformative leadership as everyday. Again, briefly returning to the data shows this

expanded conceptualization. In his interview, Connor was asked about his thoughts on

the concept that we are all leading all the time. In response, he said that

> we are all leading all the time…because no matter how small the act is, you could call a lot of things leadership. You could lead in a couple of seconds, whereas, it doesn't have to be a set leadership role. You don't have to be leading a nation. You don't have to be even leading a small group of people. You can be leading one person. (Connor, Interview)

This shows how participants conceptualized leadership as being everyday by everyone.

Participants developed the perception that leaders are not only those in titled positions,

but that leaders are everyone everyday. There was a movement from the recognition of

the importance of self-awareness, to the recognition of the participant as a leader, to the

recognition that everyone is a leader. This movement signifies a trajectory or sense of

becoming.

Wenger's (1998) understanding of identity offers assistance to comprehend the

trajectory of increased self-perception. Wenger posits identity as a negotiated experience

of self. Specifically, Wenger says that an identity is a

> layering of events of participation and reification by which our experience and its social interpretation inform each other. As we encounter our effects on the world and develop our relations with others, these layers build upon each other to produce our identity as a very complex interweaving of participative experience and reificative projections. Bringing the two together through the negotiation of meaning, we construct who we are. In the same way that meaning exists in its negotiation, identity exists – not as an object in and of itself – but in the constant work of negotiating the self. It is in this cascading interplay of participation and reification that our experience of life becomes one of identity, and indeed of human existence and consciousness. (Wenger, 1998, p. 151)

Applying this perspective of identity to the participants, it is clear that while participants

negotiated the meaning of transformative leadership through the experience of a service-

learning project, their self-perception, or identity, grew.

Research Question.

The overarching research question guiding this study was how do high school

students understand transformative leadership. This study used hermeneutics as a

foundation upon which to answer this question. The hermeneutic circle takes one from

the part to the whole, and from pre-understanding to understanding (Alvesson &

Sköldberg, 2009). The previous discussion of subquestions one and two were forays into

the part from which an understanding of the whole emerges, which is discussed next.

The treatment of others is the foundation of transformative leadership, and

participants understood transformative leadership to be about care. The theme of care in

the relationship and how one is treated was present throughout. This theme has already

been discussed, which only goes to show the pervasiveness of care among participant

understanding of leadership. For participants, the relationship was about care and when

care was present they achieved greater results.

As participants progressed through the project, care, or lack thereof, became a

stronger focus of the work. This was seen in the development of the two projects. Project

Insular increased in the care they had for not only the members of their group, but for

those they interviewed and connected with outside of Central Catholic. Participants in the

social pollution group, while still developing care, did not apply care in the same manner

as those in Project Insular. Some participants of the social pollution group demonstrated

care, but the influence of the group members that did not care was overpowering and led

to apathy, frustration, and inaction.

The dichotomous experience of the two groups highlights the difficulty and

challenge of care and transformative leadership. Conner and Strobel (2007) and Otis

(2006) argued that the importance of relevance of the service-learning project to achieve the deepest result. Relevance of the service-learning topic was one aspect that helped Project Insular demonstrate greater amounts of care. When an individual is in flow, he or she is challenged and functions on a higher level. However, when an individual is a part of the machine, they engage in habitual and non-thinking behavior (Csikszentmihalyi, 2004). This is what happened with participants in the two projects. Although participants in Project Insular were in flow enabling higher performance and more care, participants in the social pollution group were in the machine resulting in habitual and non-thinking behavior.

Throughout the work, it was evident that participants were developing in their understanding of transformative leadership and their ability to engage in the various tenets. Despite the observed growth, limitations to the scope of critical thinking and praxis were also evident. This element was most apparent when participants talked about unfair situations and their response.

Several responses from participants capture and demonstrate this particular limitation. When asked how he responds to unfair situations he encounters, Connor said "if it's something that I know I can change, for the most part I think I would change it….If it's something bigger, I'll definitely think about it first and then, depending on the circumstances, usually work to fix it" (Connor, Interview). Note that Connor said he thinks he would change it and that he usually works to fix it, not that he always changes and fixes situations. He went on to explain how he recognizes his own limitations in caring for others being treated unfairly when he said he knows

132

there are some times that I think, "Oh, that's a social norm," or something like that. In those cases, I don't always act…. If it's something that I'm going to say is going to hurt my reputation or maybe hurt one of my friendships, then [taking action is] a lot harder to do. (Connor, Interview)

The limitations identified in the passage include social norms and his reputation. These larger external forces work to suppress Connor's ability to act.

Connor was not alone in dealing with conflict and his timidity while extending care. When Ken was asked about how he responds to unfair situations in his interview, he commented that he was "not sure how I would react in a situation like that, but I know how I would feel" (Ken Adams, Interview). Again the struggle with thought and action is clear. Ken did not know how he would react but he knew how he would feel. These quotes from Connor and Ken illuminate the conflict and timidity participants felt in extending care to everyone, not just those they knew.

Understood through Freire's model of critical consciousness (Freire, 2005a; Freire, 2005b), it is as though participants are moving toward critical consciousness while maintaining elements of naïve consciousness. Living with feet in both realms of consciousness pulls participants in multiple directions. There is a pull towards engaging with critical consciousness because of the freedoms it provides yet the dimensions of naïve consciousness are comfortable and do not take participants from their comfort zone. It is a matter of whether or not an individual accepts the new critical consciousness.

One reason for this limitation may be the scope of experience and knowledge of participants. Participants in the study come from more privileged backgrounds living in the suburban area surrounding Central Catholic. As such, they may not have experienced the broader world around them and are limited in their awareness of larger social constraints and dynamics. Or more possibly, they are aware of larger social dynamics but

133

have had limited interaction with diverse people. As the participants' worlds continue to expand when they move from high school to college and beyond, they will come into contact with a more diverse population causing them to be legitimate peripheral participants in new communities of practice. The result will be new understandings of larger social dynamics and who care extends to.

A critical point to transformative leadership, and any leadership for that matter, is action. Action in transformative leadership is understood as praxis, a combination of reflection and action (Freire, 2005b). This was most evident in discussions and sentiments regarding noticeable differences between Project Insular and the social pollution group. Project Insular fully engaged with the various aspects of their project including working together, understanding the problem, developing and enacting a plan to address the problem, and completing the plan. The social pollution group on the other hand completed their plan but with much less enthusiasm because of a lack of working together and understanding of the problem. Participants in both groups recognized this difference between the groups.

The sense of necessity for action hearkens back to Freire's understanding of praxis that reflection without action is merely verbalism (Freire, 2005b, p. 87). In Raintree and Ken's focus group, Connor's interview, and Elle Woods' reflection journal, all commented that leadership is about guiding a group to a goal, not simply verbalism. Elle clarified that guiding towards a goal is regardless of "how big or small the group is," indicating the leader-follower relationship can include few or many (Elle, Reflection Journal, August 10, 2015). With the sense of action, participants began to understand

how their everyday transformative leadership effects change in themselves and those around.

Overall, participants understood three aspects of transformative leadership. First, the leader-follower relationship is founded upon care. A leader-follower relationship can exist without care, but is far less successful and is not transformative. Second, there is a limit to the extent of participants' view of the world. Due to limitations in their ability to process the broader systems and structures in place, participants were left in a world in which they recognized problems but did not always know how to respond. Third, transformative leadership is actionable. For participants, leadership without action is not leadership.

Understood with the contexts of Massumi (2002) and Wenger (1998), this hermeneutic action research study realizes a new pre-understanding of transformative leadership. As legitimate peripheral participants in a constant state of becoming, participants grew in the understanding of transformative leadership. Through participation in a community-based, service-learning project, participants demonstrated the seven tenets of transformative leadership. This finding supports the usefulness and practicality of transformative leadership as a theoretical perspective for high school students.

Implications for Research

Drawing upon the results of this study, three implications for future research exist. The first implication is to investigate the successive emergence of transformative leadership tenets. Theoretical perspectives from numerous disciplines point to a sense of directionality, or movement towards something. Examples of these theoretical

135

perspectives include hermeneutics (Heidegger, 1996b), communities of practice (Wenger, 1998), leadership development (Komives et al., 2005; Ricketts & Rudd, 2002), and post-modernists (Massumi, 2002). Every one of these perspectives proposes a sense of movement or becoming, whether that is becoming an expert, becoming self, or becoming understanding. This extends to the literature on leadership development. From a constructive-developmental perspective, Kegan and Lahey (1984) and McCauley, Drath, Palus, O'Connor, and Baker (2006) both articulate a method for understanding leadership in a successive fashion.

Evidence from this study suggests that the tenets of transformative leadership are no different. Participants demonstrated greatest understanding and enactment of the tenets of solidarity and love while the least demonstrated were critical thinking and praxis. Freire himself affirms this sense of hierarchy when he states that dialogue cannot exist without love, humility, and faith (Freire, 2005b, pp. 89-90). Based on the findings, I propose that an emergence of transformative leadership tenets exists. The proposed order of emergence is presented in Figure 12.
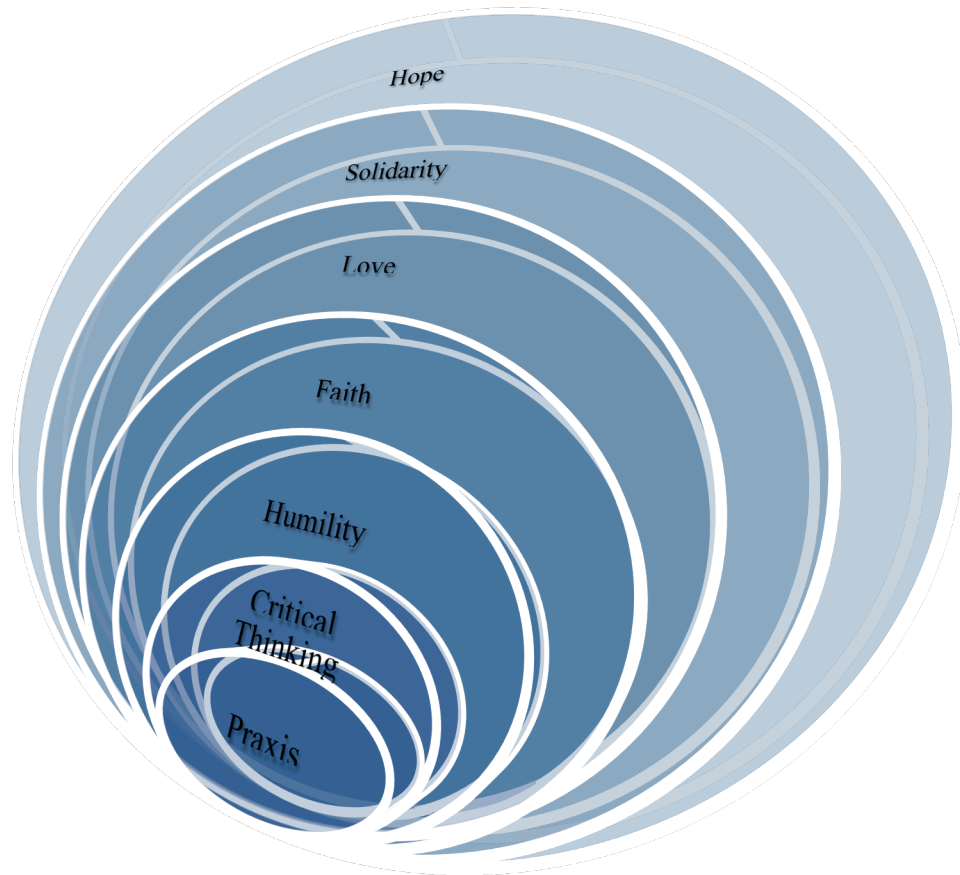
Figure 12. Proposed emergence of transformative leadership.

A successive emergence of transformative leadership tenets is reasoned based on

the limitations of certain tenets. Undergirding all of the tenets is hope. Without a sense of

hope, no other sense of movement is possible since the alternative to hope is a defeatist

mentality. After hope, the first tenet to emerge is solidarity. This makes sense because

solidarity is a finding of oneself in the other. Emerging from solidarity is love since

recognition of oneself in the other naturally leads to love. Only when love is present can

faith be possible. The reason for this is that once love is present, you trust in the other to

name their reality. Once you trust someone to name their reality, their reality may be

correct, which means your reality may be wrong. And thus humility, the tenet concerned

with the fact that you may be wrong, appears. Once there is recognition that multiple perspectives exist, with one right and one wrong, an individual can begin to engage with critical thinking of why one perspective is right and one is wrong. Praxis, of course, is not possible without critical thinking. My proposed framework for the emergence of transformative leadership tenets warrants further examination. Investigation in this area can lead to a deeper understanding of how to develop transformative leadership.

The second implication for further research is how to develop each tenet of transformative leadership. The literature identifies the tenets but offers little by way of suggestions for how to develop each individual tenet. This study focused on participant understanding of transformative leadership and consequently investigated the tenets more broadly. If the desire is to increase ability to understand and enact each tenet of transformative leadership, further research is needed to understand the best way to develop each specific tenet. Once identified, this knowledge could be used to advance successful methods of developing transformative leadership.

The final implication for future research is to understand when the various tenets can be developed given the cognitive development of individuals. In this study, the participants developed in solidarity and love, with fewer participants developing praxis. The suggestion and next logical question is when did those students develop solidarity and love. On the other end of the development spectrum, at what point is an individual able to develop praxis. A stronger understanding of this could result in more successful development programs based on participant ability.

Implications for Practice

Three implications for practice are present as a result of the study. The first implication is the power of service-learning as a method for high school students to engage with transformative leadership. Numerous studies have demonstrated the benefits and magnitude of service-learning (Celio et al., 2011; Kahne et al., 2013; Lee et al., 2007) as a tool to engage with youth. This is the first study to pair service-learning with transformative leadership. The power of the experience for participants, regardless of the success of the project in achieving their goals, still created deep and meaningful learning for participants. Ken Adams wrote in his reflection journal that the "experience has been inspirational. I have learned over the course of this semester what it means to be a good leader and the effort that it takes. This class on leadership has changed my views on the concept of leadership" (Ken, Reflection Journal, December 11, 2015). Moving forward, it is important to continue combining leadership development, transformative leadership, and service-learning experiences. Doing so allows participants to experience a life-changing project that can enhance and develop skills to truly transform an environment.

The second implication for practice is the necessity of focused attention on leadership development through formalized training. Of all the participants, only one had attended or participated in any sort of formalized leadership experience. The expectation remains that leadership skills are developed, but in order to be successful, schools must be attentive to the formal leadership curriculum. Enhancing leadership development with opportunities to engage leadership skills and reflection provide the most lasting way to effect a change in thinking for participants. Only through such a focused approach will schools such as Central Catholic achieve their mission to develop leaders.

The third implication for practice is focused specifically on Catholic schools. Catholic schools exist to educate in body, mind, and spirit. Catholic schools need to continue to develop their ability to integrate and foster connections between the spiritual and the real for students. Too often, religion and theology are seen as separate from the rest of the curriculum. In this study, in spite of explicitly integrating Catholic foundations such as Catholic Social Teaching, participants did not connect their faith life with their leadership. As a Catholic educator, this is a serious area of concern that needs to be addressed in practice.

Lessons Learned

I would be remiss if I did not discuss three of the most significant lessons learned from this experience that will make me a better educator, administrator, and person. The first lesson is the power, and dare I say necessity, of action research. It is easy to fall into the trap of assumptions when dealing with problems. This type of thinking is lazy and simply says this is the way we have always done things and this is the way we will continue to do things. All you need to do is look around to see how the world is changing, becoming. I understand 'becoming' so differently now than I did three years ago. Like action research, becoming is a process. Possibilities that were never imagined or thought possible suddenly become real when the process of action research is conducted authentically and with a critical lens. And possibilities become real through the power of collaboration and care. In short, action research is transformative for the participants and the researcher.

The second lesson to discuss is the power of theory. A theoretical underpinning is necessary for quality research, but I never knew how necessary theory was to understand

life. There were many times when I was left immobilized because I did not know where to turn. It was theory that pushed me from my immobilized state, or should I say it unfroze me. Turning to theory gave me answers, but it also left me with more questions. That is the beauty of theory: it is an endless cup of new beginnings. Every time I returned to a theory, I saw it anew. Although theory hurt my brain at times, it also healed it. My theoretical journey will continue and I look forward to the next twist and turn that awaits. In short, theory engages with reality to help make sense of life.

The final lesson learned is the power of praxis. I must admit that I was not, never had been, nor ever wanted to be a critical theorist. As an aside, I am reluctant to call myself a theorist of any sort - I prefer to think of myself as a legitimate peripheral participant. Regardless, my own transformation can be seen when I return to my original notes from reading Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (2005b). I thought Freire's conceptualizations were nothing but a bunch of hooey. Now that I am on the other side of the river, I see it as only the beginning. My praxis started when I began this journey three years ago. It is safe to say I had reflection and action, but it was not critical, and it certainly was not praxis. Three years later, it is impossible to proceed without praxis. And when I proceed with praxis, it is truly liberating.

Concluding Thoughts

The world is hurting. Thousands of people are senselessly and needlessly injured or killed in wars and other acts of violence. Advances in technology and artificial intelligence present challenges to what it means to be human. Greed works to suppress the rights of others. As the world becomes more connected, people are becoming more disconnected. What will it take to change this? It will take the power of transformative

141

leadership. It will take the power of one person to find their self in another, to love the other with faith and humility, to think critically, and to take action. And there is hope this will occur.

I believe we are on the cusp of a new understanding of leadership. The new understanding of leadership is transformative, but it is beyond that. When broken down, transformative leadership is about becoming; becoming praxis. And in fact, life is about becoming. So what are the students in our schools becoming? Are they becoming transformative or are they becoming destructive? We must continue to do everything we can to help them become transformative. And when we do that, we will transform ourselves.

REFERENCES

Alvesson, M., & Sköldberg, K. (2009). *Reflexive methodology* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.

Anderson, G. L., & Herr, K. (1999). The new paradigm wars: Is there room for rigorous practitioner knowledge in schools and universities? *Educational Researcher*, *28*(5), 12–21, 40. doi:10.3102/0013189X028005012

Anderson, J., & Kim, E. (2009). Youth leadership development: Perceptions and preferences of urban students enrolled in a comprehensive agriculture program. *Journal of Agricultural Education*, *50*(1), 8–20. doi:10.5032/jae.2009.01008

Anglican Journal Staff. (2014). Faith groups sign accord to combat modern slavery, human trafficking.

Aquinas, T. (1948). *The summa theologica vol. 2*. New York, NY: Benzinger Brothers, Inc.

Atkinson, R. (1998). *The life story interview*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Avolio, B. J., Walumbwa, F. O., & Weber, T. J. (2009). Leadership: Current theories, research, and future directions. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *60*(October), 421–49. doi:10.1146/annurev.psych.60.110707.163621

Bartleby.com. (2003). Respectfully quoted: A dictionary of quotations. Retrieved December 9, 2014, from http://www.bartleby.com/73/1593.html

Billig, S. H., Jesse, D., & Grimley, M. (2008). Using service-learning to promote character education in a large urban district. *Journal of Research in Character Education*, *6*(1), 21–34. Retrieved from http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=nvolv7DdgoEC&oi=f nd&pg=PA21&dq=Using+service-learning+to+promote+character+education+in+a+large+urban+district&ots=Zr xAtCH3Al&sig=ifqjjLSjyghRC0LGhLhIejBcJ-U

Borg, S. (2001). The research journal: A tool for promoting and understanding researcher development. *Language Teaching Research*, *5*(2), 156–177. doi:10.1191/136216801678766895

Bussing, R., Koro-Ljungberg, M. E., Gary, F., Mason, D. M., & Garvan, C. W. (2005). Exploring help-seeking for ADHD symptoms: a mixed-methods approach. *Harvard Review of Psychiatry*, *13*(2), 85–101. doi:10.1080/10673220590956465

Catholic Church. (1829). The catechism of the Council of Trent: published by command of Pope Pius the fifth. Baltimore, MD: Fielding Lucas, Jr.

Catholic Church. (1990). *The Catholic study bible: New American bible*. (D. Senior, M. A. Getty, C. Stuhlmueller, & J. J. Collins, Eds.). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Catholic Church. (1997). *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (2nd ed.). Washington, D.C.: Libreria Editrice Vaticana.

Celio, C. I., Durlak, J., & Dymnicki, A. (2011). A Meta-analysis of the Impact of Service-Learning on Students. *Journal of Experiential Education*, *34*(2), 164–181. doi:10.5193/JEE34.2.164

CNN. (2014). Complete coverage on Ferguson shooting & protests. Retrieved from http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/us/ferguson-shooting-protests

Congar, Y. (1967). *Lay people in the church* (2nd Revise.). Westminster, MA: The Newman Press.

Conger, J. A. (1998). Qualitative research as the cornerstone methodology for understanding leadership. *Leadership Quarterly*, *9*(l), 107–121.

Conner, J. O., & Strobel, K. (2007). Leadership development: An examination of individual and programmatic growth. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, *22*(3), 275–297. doi:10.1177/0743558407299698

Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2015). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (4th ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2004). Flow, The secret to happiness. Retrieved from http://www.ted.com/talks/mihaly_csikszentmihalyi_on_flow

DiCicco-Bloom, B., & Crabtree, B. F. (2006). The qualitative research interview. *Medical Education*, *40*(4), 314–321. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2929.2006.02418.x

Dobosz, R. P., & Beaty, L. A. (1999). The relationship between athletic participation and high school students' leadership ability. *Adolescence*, *34*(133), 215–220.

Donaldson, L. P., & Belanger, K. (2012). Catholic social teaching: Principles for the service and justice dimensions of social work practice and education. *Social Work & Christianity*, *39*(2), 119–127.

Eisler, R., & Carter, S. (2010). Transformative leadership: From domination to partnership. *ReVision*, *30*(3&4), 98–106.

Epp, S. (2008). The value of reflective journaling in undergraduate nursing education: A literature review. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, *45*, 1379–1388. doi:10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2008.01.006

Flick, U. (2014). *An introduction to qualitative research* (5th ed.). London: Sage.

Fossey, E., Harvey, C., Mcdermott, F., & Davidson, L. (2002). Understanding and evaluating qualitative research*. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry36*, *36*, 717–732.

Freeman, M., de Marrais, K., Preissle, J., Roulston, K., & St. Pierre, E. A. (2007). Standards of evidence in qualitative research: An incitement to discourse. *Educational Researcher*, *36*(1), 25–32. doi:10.3102/0013189X06298009

Freire, P. (2005). *Education for critical consciousness*. New York, NY: Continuum.

Freire, P. (2005). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York, NY: Continuum.

Gadamer, H. (1994). *Truth and method*. New York, NY: Continuum.

Ganz, M. (2008). *What is public narrative?* Retrieved from http://wearesole.com/What_is_Public_Narrative.pdf

Garoutte, L., & McCarthy-Gilmore, K. (2014). Preparing students for community-based learning using an asset-based approach. *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, *14*(5), 48–61. doi:10.14434/josotlv14i5.5060

Hancock, D., Dyk, P., & Jones, K. (2012). Adolescent involvement in extracurricular activities: Influences on leadership skills. *Journal of Leadership Education*, *11*(1), 84–101. Retrieved from http://aole.memberlodge.org/Resources/Documents/jole/2012_Winter/JOLE 11 1 (Winter 2012).pdf#page=96

Heidegger, M. (1996a). *Being and time. (J. Stambaugh, Trans.)*. *NY: State University of New York*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Heidegger, M. (1996b). *Being and time. (J. Stambaugh, Trans.)*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Hennink, M., Hutter, I., & Bailey, A. (2011). *Qualitative research methods*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

HERI. (1996). *A social change model of leadership development guidebook version III*. Los Angeles, CA.

Herr, K., & Anderson, G. L. (2015). The action research dissertation: A guide for students and faculty (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Hogan, R. C., Champagne, D. W., & Glaser, R. O. (1990). *Personal style inventory*. Organization Design and Development.

Holt, N. L., Tink, L. N., Mandigo, J. L., & Fox, K. R. (2008). Do youth learn life skills through their involvement in high school sport? A case study. *Canadian Journal of Education*, *31*(2), 281–304.

Holter, A. C., & Frabutt, J. M. (2009). *Action research in Catholic schools: A step-by-step guide for practitioners*. Notre Dame, IN: Alliance for Catholic Education Press.

Huang, H. B. (2010). What is good action research? Why the resurgent interest? *Action Research*, *8*(1), 93–109. doi:10.1177/1476750310362435

Hubbs, D. L., & Brand, C. F. (2005). The paper mirror: Understanding theories behind the paper mirror. *Journal of Experiential Education*, *28*(1), 60–71.

Jackson, A., & Mazzei, L. (2012). *Thinking with theory in qualitative research: Viewing data across multiple perspectives*. London: Routledge.

John Paull II. (1988). Christifideles laici. Retrieved from http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp -ii_exh_30121988_christifideles-laici_en.html

John Paull II. (1991). Centesimus annus. Retrieved from http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_01051991_centesimus-annus_en.html

John XXIII. (1961). Mater et magistra. Retrieved from http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_xxiii/encyclicals/documents/hf_j-xxiii_enc_15051961_mater_en.html

Johnson, H. H. (2008). Mental models and transformative learning: The key to leadership development? *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, *19*(1), 85–89. doi:10.1002/hrdq.1227

Kahne, J., Crow, D., & Lee, N.-J. (2013). Different pedagogy, different politics: High school learning opportunities and youth political engagement. *Political Psychology*, *34*(3), 419–441. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9221.2012.00936.x

Kegan, R., & Lahey, L. L. (1984). Adult leadership and adult development: A constructionist view. In B. Kellerman (Ed.), *Leadership: Multidisciplinary perspectives* (pp. 199–230). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Kitzinger, J., & Barbour, R. S. (1999). Introduction: The challenge and promise of focus groups. In R. S. Barbour & J. Kitzinger (Eds.), *Developing focus group research: Politics, theory and practice* (pp. 1–20). London: Sage.

Klau, M. (2006). Exploring youth leadership in theory and practice. *New Directions for Youth Development*, (109), 57–87. doi:10.1002/yd

Komives, S. R., Longerbeam, S. D., Owen, J. E., Mainella, F. C., & Osteen, L. (2006). A leadership identity development model: Applications from a grounded theory. *Journal of College Student Development*, *47*(4), 401–418. doi:10.1353/csd.2006.0048

Komives, S. R., Owen, J. E., Longerbeam, S. D., Mainella, F. C., & Osteen, L. (2005). Developing a leadership identity: A grounded theory. *Journal of College Student Development*, *46*(6), 593–611. doi:10.1353/csd.2005.0061

Koro-Ljungberg, M. (2008). Validity and validation in the making in the context of qualitative research. *Qualitative Health Research*, *18*(7), 983–989. doi:10.1177/1049732308318039

Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

Laverty, S. M. (2003). Hermeneutic phenomenology and phenomenology: A comparison of historical and methodological considerations. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *2*(3), 1–29. Retrieved from http://wigan-ojs.library.ualberta.ca/index.php/IJQM/article/view/4510

Lee, S.-Y., Olszewski-Kubilius, P., Donahue, R., & Weimholt, K. (2007). The effects of a service-learning program on the development of civic attitudes and behaviors among academically talented adolescents. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, *31*(2), 165–197.

Leo XIII. (1891). Rerum novarum. Retrieved from http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/leo_xiii/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_15051891_rerum-novarum_en.html

Lewin, K. (1946). Action research and minority problems. *Journal of Social Issues*, *2*(4), 34–46. doi:10.1111/j.1540-4560.1946.tb02295.x

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Lindseth, A., & Norberg, A. (2004). A phenomenological hermeneutical method for researching lived experience. *Scand J Caring Sci*, *18*, 145–153. Retrieved from http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1471-6712.2004.00258.x/full

Lowney, C. (2003). *Heroic leadership: Best practices from a 450-year-old company that changed the world*. Chicago, IL: Loyola Press.

Massumi, B. (2002). *Parables for the virtual: Movement, affect, sensation*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Matsudaira, J., & Jefferson, A. (2006). Anytown: NCCJ's youth leadership experience in social justice. *New Directions for Youth Developmentirections for Youth Development*, (109), 107–115. doi:10.1002/yd.158

Mayan, M. (2009). *Essentials of qualitative inquiry*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.

McCauley, C. D., Drath, W. H., Palus, C. J., O'Connor, P. M. G., & Baker, B. A. (2006). The use of constructive-developmental theory to advance the understanding of leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *17*(6), 634–653. doi:10.1016/j.leaqua.2006.10.006

McMillan, & Schumacher. (2006). *Research in education* (6th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.

McNiff, J. (2008). Action research, transformational influences: Pasts, presents and futures. Retrieved from http://www.jeanmcniff.com/items.asp?id=11

Meijer, P. C., Verloop, N., & Beijaard, D. (2002). Multi-method triangulation in a qualitative study on teachers' practical knowledge: An attempt to increase internal validity. *Quality & Quantity*, *36*, 145–167.

Meinhard, A., & Brown, S. (2010). School community service programs: Essential features for success. *Journal of Nonprofit & Public Sector Marketing*, *22*(3), 216–230.

Miller, P. M., Brown, T., & Hopson, R. (2011). Centering love, hope, and trust in the community: Transformative urban leadership informed by Paulo Freire. *Urban Education*, *46*(5), 1078–1099. doi:10.1177/0042085910395951

Mills, G. E. (2014). *Action research: A guide for the teacher researcher* (5th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.

Mitra, D. L. (2005). Adults advising youth: Leading while getting out of the way. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *41*(3), 520–553. doi:10.1177/0013161X04269620

Mitra, D. L. (2006a). Increasing student voice and moving toward youth leadership. *The Prevention Researcher*, *13*(1), 7–10. Retrieved from https://eboardsecure.dcsdk12.org/attachments/080aee20-ba2b-4149-b28f-7d402eb4de1c.pdf

Mitra, D. L. (2006b). Student voice or empowerment? Examining the role of school-based youth-adult partnerships as an avenue toward focusing on social justice. *International Electronic Journal for Leadership in Learning*, *10*, 1–17.

Mitra, D. L., & Gross, S. J. (2009). Increasing student voice in high school reform: Building partnerships, improving outcomes. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, *37*(4), 522–543. doi:10.1177/1741143209334577

Montuori, A., & Fahim, U. (2010). Transformative leadership. *ReVision*, *30*(3 & 4), 1–3.

National Youth Leadership Council. (2008). *K-12 service-learning standards for quality practice*. St. Paul, MN. Retrieved from https://nylcweb.files.wordpress.com/2014/08/standards_oct2009-web.pdf

Ncube, L. B. (2010). Ubuntu: A transformative leadership philosophy. *Journal of Leadership Studies*, *4*(3), 77–82. doi:10.1002/jls.20182

Northouse, P. (2013). Leadership: Theory and practice (6th ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Northouse, P. G. (2013). *Leadership: Theory and practice* (6th ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

O'Rourke, J. S. (2013). *Management communication* (5th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.

Otis, M. D. (2006). Urban youth building community: Social change and participatory research in schools, homes, and community-based organizations. *Journal of Community Practice*, *14*(1), 71–88. doi:10.1300/J125v14n01

Paul VI. (1965a). Apostolicam actuositatem. Retrieved from http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651118_apostolicam-actuositatem_en.html

Paul VI. (1965b). Gaudium et spes. Retrieved from http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_cons_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html

Petrie, N. (2011). *Future trends in leadership development*. Retrieved from http://www.ccl.org/leadership/pdf/research/futureTrends.pdf?campaign=HP0813

Pius XI. (1931). Quadragesimo anno. Retrieved from http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_19310515_quadragesimo-anno_en.html

Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace. (2004). Compendium of the social doctrine of the church. Retrieved from http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/justpeace/documents/rc_pc_justpeace_doc_20060526_compendio-dott-soc_en.html#I. SOCIAL DOCTRINE AND THE PERSONALIST PRINCIPLE

Post, M., & Little, P. (2005). Youth engaged for action. *The Prevention Researcher*, *12*, 7–9.

Reed-Bouley, J. (2008). Social analysis in service-learning: A way for students to discover Catholic social teaching. *Journal of Catholic Higher Education*, *27*(1), 51–64.

ResearchWare. (2015). HyperRESEARCH. ResearchWare, Inc.

Ricketts, J. C., & Rudd, R. D. (2002). A comprehensive leadership education model to train, teach, and develop leadership in youth. *Journal of Career and Technical Education*, *19*(1), 7–17. Retrieved from http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/JCTE/v19n1/ricketts.html

Riel, M. (2010). Understanding action research. Retrieved from http://cadres.pepperdine.edu/ccar/define.html

Saldana, J. (2013). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (2nd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Scales, P. C., Roehlkepartain, E. C., Neal, M., Kielsmeier, J. C., & Benson, P. L. (2006). Reducing academic achievement gaps: The role of community service and service-learning. *Journal of Experiential Education*, *29*(1), 38–60. doi:10.1177/105382590602900105

Seidman, I. (2013). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences* (4th ed.). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Shields, C. M. (2004). Dialogic leadership for social justice: Overcoming pathologies of silence. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *40*(1), 109–132. doi:10.1177/0013161X03258963

Shields, C. M. (2010). Transformative leadership: Working for equity in diverse contexts. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *46*(4), 558–589. doi:10.1177/0013161X10375609

Spanja, S. (2008). Forum Syd Balkan project. Best practice. PRONI/FSBP education model university course: Leadership and developmental community youth work. *Intercultural Education*, *19*(6), 547–552.

Stafford, J. (2003). The effects of service learning on leadership life skills of 4-H members. *Journal of Agricultural Education*, *44*(1), 10–21.

Stewart, T. (2008). Comparing the intended and the perceived: Administrator expectations and student perceptions of teacher roles in Catholic service-learning. *The High School Journal*, *91*(4), 59–76. doi:10.1353/hsj.0.0005

Sullivan, S., & Post, M. (2011). Combining community-based learning and Catholic social teaching in educating for democratic citizenship. *Journal of Catholic Higher Education*, *30*(1), 113–131.

Swaminathan, R. (2007). Educating for the "Real World": The hidden curriculum of community service-learning. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, *40*(2), 134–143. doi:10.1080/10665680701246450

Theodorerooseveltcenter.org. (n.d.). Theodore Roosevelt quotes. Retrieved January 8, 2015, from http://www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Learn-About-TR/TR-Quotes.aspx

Thorpe, T. (2007). Youth learning from the world, leading in their community: A summary report. *The Ontario Action Researcher*, *10*(1), 15–30.

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. (2014). Seven themes of Catholic social teaching. Retrieved from http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/seven-themes-of-catholic-social-teaching.cfm

VIA Institute on Character. (n.d.). The VIA survey. Retrieved from http://www.viacharacter.org/www/The-Survey

Weiner, E. J. (2003). Secretary Paulo Freire and the democratization of power: Toward a theory of transformative leadership. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, *35*(1), 89–106. doi:10.1111/1469-5812.00007

Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

Wenger, E. (1999). Communities of practice: Stewarding knowledge. Retrieved from http://www.ewenger.com

White, J. V. (2012). Students' perception of the role of reflection in leadership learning. *Journal of Leadership Education*, *11*(2), 140–157. doi:10.12806/V11/I2/RF8

Yamauchi, L., & Purcell, A. (2009). Community involvement in a place-based program for Hawaiian high school students. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, *14*(2), 170–188.

APPENDIX A

PRINCIPLES OF LEADERSHIP COURSE SYLLABUS

Principles of Leadership Syllabus for 2015-2016

Instructor: Mr. David Sorkin
Class location: C3
Class time: Period 5
Availability: Before school from 7:30 – 7:55 and after school during 8th hour

Course Overview:
- Students in Principles of Leadership will study leadership theory and skills expressed in communication and management styles of prominent figures. Students will work to hone their own skills at leading in their daily lives, understanding communication, as well as giving and receiving effective feedback. Finally, students will study what being an ethical leader means. The course will culminate with a service-learning project in which students identify, research, and enact a solution to a problem identified through Catholic Social Teaching. (11,12) (.5 credit)

Additional Course Information:
- *Student must have instructor consent.*

Text, Readings, Materials:
- Textbooks:
    - Heroic Leadership: Best Practices from a 450-Year-Old Company that Changed the World by Chris Lowney. ISBN 978-0-8294-2115-6
    - Management Communication, 5th Edition by James O'Rourke. ISBN 978-0-13-267140-8
    - Materials will be provided to students from Leadership 6th Edition by Peter Northouse, ISBN 978-1-452-20340-9
- Notebook and pen/pencil

Course Policies:
- Grading
  This grading for this course is a total point system. Each assignment will be awarded an amount of points relative to the level of work required. All points earned will be divided by the total points possible resulting in the final grade. There will be various assignments throughout the course of the semester including quizzes, tests, presentations, leadership challenges, and reflections, among other assessments. Active participation is expected and critical to your learning. As such, participation points will be awarded.

Course Calendar/Schedule:

- August:
  - *Introduction and review of syllabus*
  - *Defining leadership*
  - Catholic Social Teaching
  - Self-Awareness and Leadership
  - *Heroic Leadership* chapters 1, 2, and 5 thru 9
  - Service-Learning Project
- September
  - Service-Learning Project
  - Management Communication chapters 2 (communication and strategy), 4 (speaking), and 5 (writing)
- October:
  - Service-Learning Project
  - Management Communication chapters 6 (persuasion) and 8 (listening and feedback)
- November:
  - Service-Learning Project
  - Management Communication chapters 9 (nonverbal communication), 10 (intercultural communication), and 11 (managing conflict)
- December:
  - Theories of Leadership
  - *Heroic Leadership*, chapters 11 and 12
  - *Persuasion, Speaking, and Writing*

This syllabus may be subject to revision as the course progresses.

APPENDIX B

REFLECTION JOURNAL STARTERS

Participants will be provided the following prompts to be completed the first week of the course to gain an understanding of their past understanding of leadership.

1. What is leadership? What does it mean to be a leader?

2. How did you perceive yourself as a leader throughout middle school?

3. What experience(s) did you have in middle school that made you a leader?

4. What skills did you have that made you a leader? How did you develop the skills you had that made you a leader?

5. Who were some people you knew personally that you considered a leader? Why did you feel this way?

Participants will be provided the following prompts for the reflection journal for the remainder of the course.

1. I was a leader this week when…

2. I witnessed a wrong this week when…

3. I witnessed a right this week when…

4. I used to think leadership was… because…

5. I am beginning to think leadership is…because…

6. I learned from our project this week that…

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Thank you for participating in this interview. Your participation in this interview is voluntary and you are welcome to stop participating at any time. You do not have to answer a question if you do not want to. Please answer the questions with your honest thoughts. There are no right or wrong answers! Let's begin.

1. Tell me about the kind of leader you currently see yourself as?

2. Where and how do you show your leadership?

3. What skills or strengths do you have that help you lead? How have you developed those?

4. What do you think about when you see an unfair situation? How do you respond?

5. In order to be a leader, there has to be a follower. What responsibility does a leader have to their follower(s)? What should that relationship be focused on?

6. We have talked in class about the premise in the book Heroic Leadership that we are all leading all the time. What does that mean to you? Are we all leading all the time?

7. Is there anything else you would like to add about leadership?

APPENDIX D

FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL

Thank you for participating in this interview. Your participation in this interview is voluntary and you are welcome to stop participating at any time. You do not have to answer a question if you do not want to. Please answer the questions with your honest thoughts. There are no right or wrong answers! To begin, I'm going to give you about 5/10 minutes to write your answers to the following questions about your perception of yourself as a leader. Following this, we will discuss each one together.

Student Questionnaire and Focus Group Session 1

1. In what ways have you grown as a leader throughout the class and the service-learning project? Changes in thinking/acting/doing/etc.? Specifically, what were the experience(s) that caused the shifts in your thinking?
2. On a scale of 1 – 10, with 10 being the epitome of leadership and 1 being no leadership capacity whatsoever, where do you rank as a leader? Why?
3. Thinking back to the beginning of the class, on the same scale of 1-10, how would you have rated your leadership at that point?
4. To what extent did the service-learning project effect your development as a leader? On the same scale, where would you have ranked yourself at the beginning of the class?
5. Of the theories of leadership we learned about (situational, contingency, transformative, LMX, transformational, servant, transactional, etc.), which one most closely aligns with your belief on what leadership is and why?
6. How do you define leadership?

Focus Group Session 2

1. To what extent did the service-learning project effect your development as a leader?
2. What were the most effective leadership moments, either by yourself or somebody else, during the service-learning project? Why do you think they were so effective?
3. The two projects operated very differently; one had more direction from Weston and Dominick while the other was more fluid in terms of who the leader was. Which approach is better? Which approach are you most comfortable in?
4. We've talked about care and the leader-follower relationship. Did you demonstrate care in the service-learning project? If so, how? If care was present, did it make the experience more meaningful?
5. What kind of leader do you think you will be in the future?

APPENDIX E

RESEARCHER CLASS OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

Daily Class Observation Journal	
Date:	
Descriptive Notes	*Reflective Notes*

APPENDIX F

IRB APPROVAL

APPROVAL: EXPEDITED REVIEW

Daniel Dinn-You Liou
Division of Educational Leadership and Innovation - West
-
dliou@asu.edu

Dear Daniel Dinn-You Liou:

On 7/29/2015 the ASU IRB reviewed the following protocol:

Type of Review:	Initial Study
Title:	Understanding Transformative Leadership Among High School Students: Creating Conditions to Lead Through Service learning
Investigator:	Daniel Dinn-You Liou
IRB ID:	STUDY00002920
Category of review:	(6) Voice, video, digital, or image recordings, (7)(b) Social science methods, (7)(a) Behavioral research
Funding:	None
Grant Title:	None
Grant ID:	None
Documents Reviewed:	• Understanding Transformative Leadership Among High School Students: Creating Conditions to Lead Through Service Learning, Category: IRB Protocol; • Appendix H - Recruitment Script, Category: Recruitment Materials; • Appendix A - Parental Consent, Category: Consent Form; • Appendix B - Assent Form, Category: Consent Form; • Appendix G - Researcher Journal Protocol, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • Appendix C - Consent Form, Category: Consent Form; • Appendix E - Interview Protocol, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • Appendix D - Reflection Journals, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions);

	• Site Authorization Letter, Category: Off-site authorizations (school permission, other IRB approvals, Tribal permission etc); • Appendix F - Focus Group Protocl, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions);

The IRB approved the protocol from 7/29/2015 to 7/28/2016 inclusive. Three weeks before 7/28/2016 you are to submit a completed Continuing Review application and required attachments to request continuing approval or closure.

If continuing review approval is not granted before the expiration date of 7/28/2016 approval of this protocol expires on that date. When consent is appropriate, you must use final, watermarked versions available under the "Documents" tab in ERA-IRB.

In conducting this protocol you are required to follow the requirements listed in the INVESTIGATOR MANUAL (HRP-103).

Sincerely,

IRB Administrator

cc: David Sorkin