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Presidential Views of Leadership in Seventh-day Adventist Higher Education

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Presidential Views of Leadership in Seventh-day Adventist Higher Education

by

Christopher C. Combie

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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Summary

Research question two

Significant impact of spousal support on career trajectory

Summary

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative research explored the perceptions of presidential leadership in Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) higher education in North America. The perceptions included the identification of leadership competencies and leadership styles that promote the mission of the SDA church in higher education. This research also identified the personal and professional experiences of SDA college and university presidents that contributed to their successful accession to the presidency. The presidents came from the twelve non-medical SDA colleges and universities in the continental United States and Canada. The three themes that emerged relevant to the perceptions of presidential leadership were (1) succession planning, (2) increased professionalization of the presidency, and (3) increased presidential tenure. One theme emerged relevant to the personal experiences that contributed to the successful accession to the presidency and was classified as significant impact of spousal and familial support on career trajectory. One theme also emerged relevant to the professional experiences that contributed to the successful accession to the presidency and was classified as progressively more challenging job experiences. Implications for practice suggest that SDA institutions, their associated governing boards, and church policymakers create and execute strategies to address the lack of qualified presidential aspirants in the pipeline. Recent graduates of doctoral education should express their eventual interest in the presidency and seek out varied leadership experiences early on in their careers. Church officials should consider formal implementation of a leadership track and consider succession planning within the SDA system.
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Leadership is a dynamic and complex topic that inspires and motivates higher education administrators, as well as stimulate great interest. Leadership helps to shape visions and strategic plans. When strategic plans fail, it is often attributed to a lack of leadership. As the study of leadership in higher education informs professional practice, college presidents, vice presidents, deans, directors, and other administrators are inspired to discern appropriate leadership theories and frameworks that guide their leadership mettle. Consequently, much has been researched and written (ACE, 2007a; ACE, 2008; AACC, 2004; Bennis, 1959; Bensimon, 1989; Bensimon et al., 1989; Birnbaum, 1989b; Birnbaum, 1992; Northouse, 2007; Ramsden, 1998a) regarding the leadership characteristics and competencies important to affect professional practice in higher education administration.

A series of leadership practices (discussed in chapter two) that are needed and desired in successful leaders were identified in the landmark work of Kouzes and Posner (2003, 2007). These authors presented five practices of successful leaders as follows: (1) model the way, (2) inspire a shared vision, (3) challenge the process, (4) enable others to act, and (5) encourage the heart. Additionally, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC, 2004) identified a list of leadership competencies, which include organizational strategy, resource management, communication, collaboration,
college/university advocacy, and professionalism, to guide community college presidents to lead effectively. In fact, all of the community and state colleges in the United States that are members of the AACC have a guiding list of competencies that are evidence-based for effective leadership in community colleges. While there are probably some similarities in leadership competencies required of higher education leaders regardless of institutional type, the literature is devoid of research that addresses the need to identify competencies and leadership characteristics necessary for effective leadership at different types of institutions, especially sectarian colleges and universities. Effective competencies and characteristics are critical to higher education leadership, especially as senior administrators retire en masse.

The average age of many community college and university presidents is 60 (ACE, 2007a, 2007b, 2008; Cowen, 2008; Selingo, 2013; Stripling, 2011), and it is predicted that the senior ranks of the academy will vacate in droves leaving in its wake a severe deficit of seasoned university leaders and administrators and a major loss of knowledge and experience, thereby creating a leadership crisis (Appadurai, 2009; Bensimon et al., 1989). Appadurai suggested that the leadership crisis may be stemmed by increasing the role of faculty in financial decisions, identifying leaders who have proven track records of teaching and research, and constructing boards of trustees that are representative of the worlds of art, public policy, medicine, and social foundations. The academy may also abate the leadership crisis by incorporating succession planning into standard operating procedures.

Succession planning is the idea of preparing for a loss of knowledge or leadership by grooming junior administrators in the facets of leadership with the intent that they will
become senior university administrators (Stripling, 2011). The concept of succession planning has been an anathema to academe based on reasons of tradition and culture. The premise of a “president-in-waiting” at most universities would be cause for ire and suspicion by faculty and students who prefer to provide input in the selection of their next leader; however, this does not mean that seasoned university administrators cannot serve as mentors and train junior administrators (Stripling, 2011). It simply means that senior administrators must be more circumspect in their mentorship approaches so as to avoid creating awkward situations. Thus, it would behoove college and university boards to encourage presidents to identify and groom successor candidates; however, in reality, colleges and universities begin from scratch every time a presidential search begins (Stripling, 2011). Interestingly, Birnbaum (1989c) stipulated that there are no empirical data to measure the efficacy of succession planning, so there is no tangible way to measure the effects of leaders on organizational performance. Succession planning is a part of leadership and should be foremost on the minds of all administrators interested in grooming the next generation of leaders regardless of the type of institution in which an administrator leads.

Research relating to ascending to the presidency, succession planning, and images of leadership have been addressed in community colleges (Carter, 2009; Hannigan, 2008; Kools, 2010; Smith, 2003), four-year institutions/liberal arts colleges (Erik-Soussi, 2008; Fritz, 1990; Mangano, 2007; Ogu, 2006; Pagan, 2011; Smerek, 2009), research universities (Farris, 2011; Kuhnle-Biagas, 2007; Welch, 2002), and sectarian institutions (Catholic and Lutheran) (Arceo, 2010; Childers, 2012). Little research has been done on the subject of ascending to the presidency, succession planning, and images of leadership
in the Christian higher education literature. A few books have been written about models for Christian higher education (Hughes & Adrian, 1997; Sterk, 2002); conceiving Christian colleges (Litfin, 2004), the future of religious colleges (Dovre, 2000), and church-related higher education (Mahoney, 2003; Parsonage, 1978). Nothing has been found that specifically addresses leadership in Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) higher education. In examining research related to Seventh-day Adventist presidential leadership, the results were alarming. In fact, only one research study could be found (Thorman, 1996) related to SDA higher education leadership. This particular study examined leadership in non-medical SDA higher education institutions.

The revelation that only one study exists related to presidential leadership in non-medical Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) colleges and universities in North America, written 17 years ago, begs the need for inquiry. This proposed study will serve to update the research on presidential leadership in SDA colleges and universities and provide views of leadership from perspectives of the participating presidents.

As the researcher is a product of Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) higher education and attended one of the universities included in this study, this topic is of particular interest in that SDA institutions have a unique mission and not only prepare the mind and body, but the spirit, as well, as is evident in the missions, values, and mottos of the institutions (White, 1903). Within North America (Canada and the United States), there are 15 SDA colleges and universities, of which three are medical schools.

**Statement of the Problem**

With the increasing number of higher education senior administrators deferring retirement in hopes of improved economic situations, academic forecasters are predicting
a tidal wave when these senior leaders eventually retire. This mass exodus of seasoned, veteran administrators will create an epic shortage of qualified individuals and thereby foment a leadership crisis (Appadurai, 2009; Bensimon, Neumann, & Birnbaum, 1989; Stripling, 2011). Like secular colleges and universities, the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) higher education institutions share strikingly similar demographic data and will also be impacted by the leadership crisis. Thus, current research is needed to inform the SDA and higher education communities of the leadership skills and competencies necessary to lead SDA colleges and universities, especially at a time when secular institution presidents are aging and devoting more time to fundraising and external affairs (Selingo, 2013).

Findings from the annual survey conducted by the Chronicle of Higher Education (CHE) of what college and university presidents think in 2013 revealed that the American presidency has changed dramatically (Selingo, 2013). Presidents are yielding the academic functions of the institution to the provost/chief academic officer/executive or academic vice president. Of the presidents polled in the CHE study, the number one issue commanding their attention was fundraising. This proposed research study will explore some of the issues and trends facing SDA college and university presidents.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was three-fold. (1) It identified the perceptions of presidential leadership in Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) higher education. The first sub component of perceptions of presidential leadership included the identification of the leadership competencies of SDA college and university presidents that prepared them to accede to the presidency. The second sub component examined the extent to which leadership style promotes the mission of the SDA church in higher education. (2) It
identified the personal experiences that contributed to the successful accession to the presidency. (3) It identified the professional experiences that contributed to the successful accession to the presidency.

**Significance of the Study**

Prior research studies examined higher education leadership relative to ascending to the presidency, succession planning, and images of leadership in community colleges (Carter, 2009; Hannigan, 2008; Kools, 2010; Smith, 2003), four-year institutions/liberal arts colleges (Erik-Soussi, 2008; Fritz, 1990; Mangano, 2007; Ogu, 2006; Pagan, 2011; Smerek, 2009), research universities (Farris, 2011; Kuhnle-Biagas, 2007; Welch, 2002), and sectarian institutions (Catholic and Lutheran) (Arceo, 2010; Childers, 2012). Little has been done on the subject of leadership and ascending to the presidency in the SDA higher education literature. A few books were written about models for Christian higher education (Hughes & Adrian, 1997; Sterk, 2002) conceiving Christian colleges (Litfin, 2004), the future of religious colleges (Dovre, 2000), and church-related higher education (Mahoney, 2003; Parsonage, 1978), but nothing that specifically addresses presidential leadership in SDA higher education.

**Context of the Study**

The Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) church was organized into a denomination in 1863 with 125 churches and 3,500 members based in the United States until the first missionary went overseas in 1874. As of January 4, 2012, the church has expanded to include 71,048 churches in 232 countries. There are 17,214,683 members worldwide. The church is known for its holistic enrichment of the individual by providing health care institutions (173 hospitals and sanitariums; 354 dispensaries and clinics; 132 nursing
homes and retirement centers; 36 orphanages and children’s homes), food industries (20), education (7,806 schools), and publishing (63 publishing houses; 377 languages) (GC, 2012).

The Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) church operates 7,806 schools, colleges and universities worldwide with a combined enrollment of 1,668,754. There are 5,813 elementary schools, 1,823 secondary schools, and 111 colleges and universities. Fifteen of these colleges and universities are in North America with fourteen in the United States and one in Canada (GC, 2012).

The Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) church is organized into geographically based administrative layers (Lawson, 1990) with 13 divisions worldwide which include 51 union conferences comprising 321 local conferences. The 13 divisions report to a central administrative office, the General Conference (GC) near Washington, D.C., in Silver Spring, MD. The GC has a pyramid-like organizational structure with a president, vice-presidents, and other administrative leaders, as do the divisions (GC, 2012).

The North American Division (NAD) includes the United States and Canada and contains eight of the 51 union conferences (Southern Union, Lake Union, Columbia Union, Atlantic Union, Southwestern Union, Mid-America Union, Pacific Union, and the North Pacific Union). Each union owns and operates at least one SDA college or university. In the past, the college and university names represented the geographic affinity to the respective union (i.e. Columbia Union College (now Washington Adventist University), Pacific Union College, and Southwestern Adventist University); however, many of the colleges have become universities and shed their geographic monikers (GC, 2012).
Of the 15 Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) colleges and universities in the North American Division (NAD), three confer medical or health-care degrees (Loma Linda University in Loma Linda, CA; Kettering College of Medical Arts in Kettering, Ohio, and Adventist University of Health Sciences (formerly Florida Hospital College of Health Sciences) in Orlando, Florida. There are also 12 institutions which identify as liberal arts, comprehensive, or doctoral granting institutions. They are Andrews University in Berrien Springs, MI; Griggs University (formerly Home Study International in Silver Spring, MD) in Berrien Springs, MI; Southern Adventist University in Collegedale, TN; La Sierra University in Riverside, CA; Walla Walla University in Walla Walla, Washington; Pacific Union College in Angwin, California; Union College in Lincoln, Nebraska; Southwestern Adventist University in Keene, Texas; Washington Adventist University in Takoma Park, MD; Atlantic Union College in South Lancaster, Massachusetts; Oakwood University in Huntsville, Alabama; and Canadian University College in Lacombe, Alberta, Canada (GC, 2013).

This dissertation research was based on the twelve non-medical (rationale in chapter 3) Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) colleges and universities in North America. The missions and academic/institutional cultures of these institutions are distinct and their operation by a conservative, Protestant denomination ensures that the spiritual, moral, and cultural values are prominent in strategic plans, policies, curricula, and the mission statements. They differ from mainstream institutions based on faculty expectations, beliefs and attitudes, student life, academic freedom, student enrollment, and financial status (Thorman, 1996).
Table 1.1

Institutional Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Founded</th>
<th>Student Population</th>
<th>Institutional Type</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Degree Programs</th>
<th>Faculty/Student to faculty ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andrews University</td>
<td>1874</td>
<td>3,551</td>
<td>Comprehensive Doctoral</td>
<td>Berrien Springs, MI</td>
<td>130 Baccalaureate / 70 Graduate</td>
<td>272/13:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlantic Union College</td>
<td>1882</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>Art &amp; Sciences/No Graduate Coexistence</td>
<td>South Lancaster, MA</td>
<td>Under academic suspension due to loss of accreditation Not available/ Not reported</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian University College</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>Art &amp; Sciences/No Graduate Coexistence</td>
<td>Alberta, CA</td>
<td>35 Baccalaureate</td>
<td>60/9:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Griggs University</td>
<td>1909</td>
<td>2,290</td>
<td>Post-baccalaureate in Religion (Other fields dominant)</td>
<td>Berrien Springs, MI</td>
<td>6 Baccalaureate / 3 Graduate</td>
<td>205/10:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Sierra University</td>
<td>1922</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>Comprehensive Doctoral</td>
<td>Riverside, CA</td>
<td>60 Baccalaureate / 30 Graduate</td>
<td>120/17:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oakwood University</td>
<td>1896</td>
<td>1,953</td>
<td>Comprehensive Doctoral</td>
<td>Huntsville, AL</td>
<td>60 Baccalaureate / 2 Graduate</td>
<td>171/18:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Union College</td>
<td>1882</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>Single Post-baccalaureate in Education</td>
<td>Angwin, CA</td>
<td>34 Baccalaureate / 1 Graduate</td>
<td>110/14:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Adventist University</td>
<td>1892</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>Post-baccalaureate in Arts &amp; Sciences (Business dominant)</td>
<td>College-dale, TN</td>
<td>46 Baccalaureate / 16 Graduate</td>
<td>250/16:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwestern Adventist University</td>
<td>1893</td>
<td>807</td>
<td>Post-baccalaureate Professional (Education &amp; Business dominant)</td>
<td>Keene, TX</td>
<td>37 Baccalaureate / 3 Graduate</td>
<td>68/12:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union College</td>
<td>1890</td>
<td>881</td>
<td>Art &amp; Sciences/No Graduate Coexistence</td>
<td>Lincoln, NE</td>
<td>18 Baccalaureate</td>
<td>120/10:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walla Walla University</td>
<td>1892</td>
<td>1,940</td>
<td>Post-baccalaureate in Arts &amp; Sciences (Education dominant)</td>
<td>College Place, WA</td>
<td>7 Baccalaureate / 5 Graduate</td>
<td>121/16:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington Adventist University</td>
<td>1904</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>Post-baccalaureate in Arts &amp; Sciences (Other fields dominant)</td>
<td>Takoma Park, MD</td>
<td>40 Baccalaureate / 10 Graduate</td>
<td>54/11:1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This dissertation research does not even come close to filling the gap in the literature by providing insight into the experiences of current Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) college and university presidents. This research is only the tip of the iceberg. It
may also serve to begin the dialogue on the unique experiences of SDA college and university presidents whose focus is unique in that these institutions educate and cater to the body, mind, and spirit of their students as is reflected in the motto of Andrews University—*corpus, mens, spiritus*—in Berrien Springs, MI.

**Research Questions**

1. What are your perceptions of presidential leadership in SDA higher education?

2. What are the personal experiences that helped you to accede to the presidency of a SDA college or university?

3. What are the professional experiences that helped you to accede to the presidency of a SDA college or university?

**Conceptual Framework**

This dissertation research is grounded in the leadership theories found in the extant literature. Leadership theory is an all-encompassing field with theory dating back to the time of Aristotle and increasing exponentially each year. The most relevant theories are those of implicit leadership: *trait theory, power and influence theory, and behavioral theory*. *Trait theories* reveal explicit characteristics that can assist a person in becoming a leader or serve in a leadership position. *Power and influence theories* frame leadership by examining the source and amount of power available to leaders. *Behavioral theories* dissect activity patterns, managerial roles, and behavior categories of leaders (Northouse, 2007). These implicit leadership theories are most recognized by higher education leaders and administrators (Birnbaum, 1989b).
Delimitation of the Study

This study confined itself to Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) college and university presidents of non-medical colleges or universities. Additionally, it considered the experiences of the few presidents who lead them. The study sample consisted of 12 colleges and universities that fit the criterion for inclusion. Thus, generalization to the broader higher education community could be limited and caution should be exercised when making inferences from the findings.

Limitations of the Study

First, the researcher is a Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) and attended one of the universities included in this study. It is possible that he may be somewhat biased in the outcomes. In an effort to maintain transparency, the researcher bracketed his opinions in a journal and disclosed them apart from the research findings. The researcher also used an outside observer to strengthen the reliability and dependability of the research findings by conducting a peer review (please see explanation in chapter three).

Second, even though the researcher is a member of the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) higher education community, there are demographic factors which differentiate him from the study participants, which may influence the data. The current presidents are largely male (13), over the age of 60, and are ordained as clergy (or physicians) in addition to their academic credentials. The researcher is a male in his late twenties and has only three years of experience working in SDA higher education administration. He is younger and less experienced (in terms of years in the system) than all of the study participants.
Third, there may be a mentality of an “old boys’ club” when the participants are contacted to participate in this study. It may prevent them from disclosing information that they may have disclosed to an older researcher. Painstaking care was taken to establish credibility and a professional demeanor to prevent this possible problem, though this outside attribution and naïveté may have benefit the researcher as the participants tried to “educate” him. This may add additional insight and substance to the responses.

Fourth, this study looked only at Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) college and university leadership, which is a microcosm of Christianity and Protestantism.

Fifth, this study looked only at four-year institutions that range from baccalaureate granting to master’s to doctoral granting institutions. It was difficult to solely examine schools that are only one of the three compared to public and private colleges and universities, as there are only fourteen SDA colleges and universities within the continental United States and one in Canada.

Sixth, this study examined only current sitting college and university presidents.

Seventh, the researcher knows two of the participants included in the study. One served as president of his undergraduate institution and continues to serve in that capacity. The other participant, currently serving as a president, served as provost of the researcher’s undergraduate institution during his final year of study.

Eighth, two of the participants were college classmates with the researcher’s mother at two different institutions in two different countries.

**Definitions of Terms**

*Christianity:* The religion based on the person and teaching of Jesus of Nazareth, or its beliefs and practices. Today, it is the most widespread religion with more than a
billion members divided between the Roman Catholic, Protestant, and Eastern Orthodox Churches (Apple, 2011).

College and university presidents: Chief executive officers (CEOs) of private, parochial SDA colleges and universities.

Competencies: observable and measurable skill sets defined by professional associations as the standard or norm for administration in higher education (AACC, 2004).

Currently sitting: Any president presiding over a private and parochial SDA college or university identified through an online search between December 31, 2012, and January 6, 2013.

Executive leader: Any person who holds the position of president at a college or university.

Personal factors: Factors that are personal in nature including, but not limited to: personal values and beliefs; health habits, including exercise and sleep; entertainment, hobbies, and recreation; spiritual habits/faith/prayer; family; race/ethnicity; gender; role models; drive; determination; personality; leadership style; and/or other personal attributes (Carter, 2009).

President: Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or the person in the highest executive leadership position within a private and parochial SDA college or university who is referred to as “President” or “Chancellor.” This includes “Interim Presidents” since they are referred to as “Presidents,” and they are the highest officials who preside over institutions until a permanent president is selected (Smith, 2003).
Professional Factors: Developmental opportunities/experiences including, but not limited to, formal leadership trainings such as the ACE Fellows Program, Harvard Millennium Executive Leadership Institute, League of Innovation, National Institute for Leadership Development, university doctoral student leadership institutes, and/or other professional training and/or learning opportunities.

Protestant: A follower of any of the Western Christian churches that are separate from the Roman Catholic Church and follow the principles of the Reformation, including the Adventist, Baptist, Presbyterian, Lutheran, and Methodist churches (Apple, 2011).

Protestantism: It is the faith, practice, and church order of the Protestant churches. It is adherence to the forms of Christian doctrine that are generally regarded as Protestant rather than Catholic or Eastern Orthodox (Apple, 2011).

Role Models: People who are already in a specific position or career role of which a person has a future interest. These people may be observed or actually shadowed, such as watching and/or shadowing a currently sitting president. Role models can be positive or negative (Carter, 2009).

Senior Administrator: Any person who holds the position of dean or higher at SDA colleges and universities.

Seventh-day Adventist (SDA): A member of a Protestant sect that preaches the imminent return of Christ to Earth (originally expecting the Second Coming in 1844) and observes the Saturday as Sabbath (Apple, 2011).

Succession planning: The higher education concept of grooming a leadership replacement to always have a leader ready for the eventual departure of a current leader (Stripling, 2011)
Upper-level administrator: Used synonymously with “Senior Administrator” and refers to any person who holds the position of dean, vice president, executive vice president, provost, or president at two-year and four-year colleges and universities (Smith, 2003).
CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review is divided into four parts. The first part reviews the literature related to theories and models of leadership and organizational theories. The second part considers leadership in higher education. The third part explores leadership in Christian higher education. The fourth part reveals the paucity of research in Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) higher education.

While there is much research relative to leadership in business, the government, and the military, leadership in higher education is more complex due to unique characteristics of normative, professional organizations, ambiguous goals, dual control systems, and conflicts between professional and administrative authority (Bensimon et al., 1989; Birnbaum, 1989b). Leadership in Christian higher education is less rounded as it is not a common focus of leadership scholars. Leadership in Seventh-day Adventist institutions is even more limited than Christian higher education because little has been written on the topic and the books that are published within the church community are poorly indexed or hard to find.

Leadership and Organizational Theories

There are six major categories that can classify organizational leadership theories. While the boundaries are ill-defined, these categories can help provide focus to an otherwise overwhelming topic. The categories include *trait theories, power and influence theories, behavioral theories, contingency theories, cognitive theories* and *symbolic theories*.
theories. Trait theories reveal explicit characteristics that can assist a person in becoming a leader or serve in a leadership position. Power and influence theories frame leadership by examining the source and amount of power available to leaders (Northouse, 2007). Behavioral theories dissect activity patterns, managerial roles, and behavior categories of leaders. Contingency theories illustrate the importance of situational factors as the type of task performed or the external environment. Cognitive theories portray leadership as a social attribution enabling individuals to mentally connect events to causes and make sense of a complex environment. Symbolic theories study the influence of leaders in maintaining or interpreting the systems of shared beliefs and values that give meaning to organizational life (Bensimon et al., 1989; Birnbaum, 1989b; Northouse, 2007). For this research, only trait theory, power and influence theory, and behavioral theory will be examined as they are the three implicit leadership theories most recognized by higher education leaders and administrators (Birnbaum, 1989b).

Definitions. There are as many definitions of leadership as there are seminal scholars who have defined it (Bensimon et al., 1989; Birnbaum, 1989a; Pfeffer, 1977; Stogdill, 1974; Yukl, 1989). Over the past half-century, more than 65 different classification systems have emerged to define leadership (Fleishman et al., 1991; Northouse, 2007). While leadership may easily be defined by some, it may perplex others and it means different things to different constituents based on the context. Upon surveying the leadership literature, Bennis (1959) declared

Always, it seems the concept of leadership eludes us or turns up in another form to taunt us again with its slipperiness and complexity. So we have
invented an endless proliferation of terms to deal with it… and still the concept is not sufficiently defined. (p. 259)

Bogardus (1934) and Bass (1990) posited that leadership is the focus of group processes and that the leader facilitates group change and activity from the center. Selznick (1957) contended that leadership is an elusive concept and a slippery phenomenon because what leaders do is not always obvious. He admitted that many leadership failures stem from an inadequate comprehension of its true nature and tasks. Other bodies of literature adopt a humanistic approach intimating that leadership derives from innate special traits and characteristics and enables leaders to induce others to complete tasks (Bargh et al., 2000). Leadership definitions established from the 1950s to the 2000s have been redefined resulting in contemporary definitions suggesting that leadership stems from an act or behavior that elicits change in a group, or that leadership is based on the power relationship existing between the leader and followers (Northouse, 2004; 2007). These definitions will inform the theoretical framework referenced in this research.

**Theoretical Framework.** Leadership is a topic that has sparked much interest over the decades and scholars have examined the many forms of leadership and attempted to answer the question of what causes leaders to lead and what causes others to subvert leaders or subordinate themselves. Theories abound related to leadership, as it is a subject that creates so much interest in scholars but has the most contradiction. In other words, the more one learns about leadership, the less one knows and the more complicated it becomes as some scholars have contradicted their earlier findings (Bennis, 1959; Siddique et al., 2011).
According to Bennis (1959), Frederick Taylor is the leader in traditional organizational theory; his scientific management theory of leadership indicates that the leader should purposefully “study the character, the nature and the performance of each workman with a view to finding out his limitations on the one hand, but even more important, his possibilities for development on the other hand…” (p. 263). Although touted as a leader in scientific management theory, Taylor was often scrutinized because his management philosophy tended to dehumanize workers. He was a pioneer in task allocation, one of the fundamental principles of scientific management, the process of breaking a job down into smaller and smaller components to determine the most cost effective method for completing the task (Blake & Moseley, 2011). Congruent with the theoretical framework, Northouse (2007) devised a working definition.

Northouse (2007) synthesized the components of leadership to the following: “(a) Leadership is a process, (b) leadership involves influence, (c) leadership occurs within a group context, and (d) leadership involves goal attainment” (p. 3). Based on the aforementioned components, Northouse defined leadership as “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (p. 3). Summarily, higher education leaders influence campus constituents (i.e. faculty, administrators, students, donors, legislators, etc.) in the pursuit of accomplishing the institution’s goals and objectives (i.e. strategic plan). Northouse’s definition of leadership is not bereft of controversy as it excludes those scholars who maintain that leadership is a trait or characteristic innate to the leader (Bryman, 1992; Jago, 1982). It appears that in examining Northouse’s assertion that leadership is a process contradicts the literature in support of leadership as an inherent skill based on trait theory.
**Trait Theories.** Trait theories suggest that leaders are born with specific traits that explain their leadership effectiveness and differentiate them from followers. Theorists maintain that leaders are born contradicting the literature supporting the assertion that leaders are developed and nurtured (Adair, 1984; Bargh et al., 2000; Yukl, 1989). The concept of leadership as a trait versus a process is problematic to this researcher because it identifies finite characteristics as befitting leaders (trait approach) compared to the infinite possibilities when leadership is considered as a process (Northouse, 2007) and involves more interaction. Additionally, the trait approach is prejudicial as it excludes those individuals lacking the identified finite characteristics. Some of those finite characteristics are defined as height, intelligence, extroversion, and fluency (Jago, 1982). Somewhat contradictory to the trait approach is the premise that leadership depends on the situation or context.

As there are multiple definitions and conceptions of leadership, it is understandable that leadership can be manifested differently based on contextual factors. Some leaders rise from the collective whole because of the means in which individuals respond to them, termed emergent leadership, and other leaders are afforded leadership status based on their formal position or job title, identified as assigned leadership. An individual who is perceived by peers as the most influential member of the group, regardless of title, exhibits emergent leadership, whereas an individual who occupies a leadership role such as president, provost, dean, department chair, director, or supervisor is in an assigned form of leadership (Northouse, 2004). Fisher (1974) identified the following positive communication behaviors typical of emergent leaders: verbal
involvement, knowledgeable, seeking others’ opinions, initiating new ideas, and being firm, but not rigid.

Other researchers (Smith & Forti, 1998) discovered particular personality traits typical of emergent leaders including greater manifestations of dominance, intelligence, and confidence (self-efficacy). In Smith and Forti’s experimental study, 245 male, undergraduate prospects were classified into one of eight personality patterns based on dominance, self-efficacy, and intelligence. The researchers chose male subjects based on prior research illustrating that female subjects fail to emerge as leaders in mixed-sex situations. Of the 245 prospects, the researchers selected 160 as participants based on their mean scores of the eight personality patterns. The participants worked in groups of four with each group having one individual rated as high in intelligence, dominance, and general self-efficacy and one individual rated as low in intelligence, dominance, and general self-efficacy. The researchers assigned the participants the task of using Lego construction blocks to build jeeps, robots, and boats with the aim of selling the completed models for the greatest profit. The task was associated with leadership style. The results of the study confirmed that dominance, intelligence, and self-efficacy are positively associated with leadership, but with stronger bivariate relationships than previous studies. It should be noted that these results are not generalizable because the study was conducted among a finite sample of male college students.

While there is little consensus in the literature on the specific leadership traits required of college and university leaders, there are more than 250 traits that have been documented (Kouzes & Posner, 2007) that followers admired in their leaders. The top four traits admired in leaders are honesty, competence, strategic prowess, and inspiration.
On the other hand, the skills approach to leadership focuses on skills and abilities (i.e. competencies) that can be learned and developed compared to the trait approach which focuses on personality and innate characteristics (Northouse, 2007).

Katz’s (1955) seminal research is groundbreaking to the study of leadership and leadership theory as it is the precursor to the competency based leadership approaches common in contemporary higher education. Based on Katz’s research, subsequent leadership scholars and researchers adopted his three-skill approach to leadership, which many higher education administrators will recognize as competencies and skillsets. Katz defines the three skills as technical skill, human skill, and conceptual skill. Technical skill relates to competency in a singular activity and is the most recognizable within our society because it is the most concrete and it is the skill required of the greatest number (i.e. think S.T.E.M. education and degrees). For instance, consider the technical skills displayed by a musician, surgeon, or engineer. Human skill is one’s ability to work collaboratively as a team player and develop cohesion (Forsyth, 2010) within the group.

Conceptual skill relates to understanding the global perspective. (The global perspective may be leadership, strategic plan, the vision for a Fortune 500 company, etc.). Conceptual skill encompasses technical skill and human skill (Katz, 1955). In a higher education setting, supervisory management would exhibit more technical and human skills and less conceptual skill; middle management would exhibit more human skill and less technical and conceptual skills; and senior management would exhibit more human and conceptual skills and less technical skill (Northouse, 2007).

In summary, technical skill relates to working with things; human skill relates to working with people, and conceptual skill relates to working with the organization as a
whole (Katz, 1955). Katz’s research discredits the argument on trait leadership and the proponents of “born leaders,” and it laid the foundation for empirical research based on a skills (competency as noted in higher education (Northouse, 2004)) approach to leadership.

**Power and Influence Theories.** Power and influence theories have two themes: the social power approach and the social exchange approach. The social power approach examines how leaders influence followers and the social exchange approach illustrates the reciprocal relationship between leaders and followers (Bensimon et al., 1989). As stipulated earlier, leadership involves influence, and power is part of the influence process. An individual uses power for the capacity or potential to influence. In higher education institutions, the two most relevant forms of power are position power and personal power (Bolman & Deal, 2008). Position power is related to assigned leadership because it refers to the power derived from one’s office or rank in a hierarchical organizational system (i.e. president, provost, or professor). Personal power refers to the power a leader derives from followers (Northouse, 2007). For example, when leaders act in manners pleasing to followers, they are given more power. In another example, higher education leaders may have high personal power because they are considered by followers as good role models.

The most highly cited scholars in the context of social power theories are French and Raven (1959). Social power theories focus on one-way influence compared to social exchange theories, which emphasize two-way mutual influence (Bensimon et al., 1989). Research stemming from French and Raven and other social power theorists led to the identification of the following five common and pivotal types of power: (1) reward, (2)
coercive, (3) legitimate, (4) referent, and (5) expert. Expert, legitimate, and referent power are most common to higher education leadership. (1) Reward power is used when a leader makes a promise to provide resources or access to resources under the leader’s control in exchange for executing a request or performing a task. (2) Coercive power is the use of threats to instigate change. Coercion should be used sparingly as undesirable side effects include anxiety and resentment. The most appropriate use of coercion in an organization is to deter behavior that is detrimental, such as theft, violation of safety rules, illegal activities, and reckless behavior. Used skillfully, coercion can prove quite fruitful. (3) Legitimate power is authority exercised by making a legitimate request, which does not imply a difference in status or subordinate dependence on the leader. (4) Referent power is the extent to which others personally identify with the leader. (5) Expert power is based on the knowledge differential between the leader and the target person. The leader must be careful, though, to maintain a semblance of humility and shun all manifestations of superiority and flaunting superior expertise so as not to elicit resistance. Used correctly, expert power affords the leader credibility to be effectual (Bensimon et al., 1989; Yukl, 1989).

For a deeper understanding of power that affects leadership, a number of scholars (Birnbaum, 1988; Bolman & Deal, 2008; Robbins & Judge, 2011) identified nine sources of power: position power, reward power, coercive power, expert power, reputation power, referent power, network/alliance power, access power, and power to control agendas/meanings. These nine sources of power seem to expand upon French and Raven’s (1959) five types of power. By examining the distribution of power, a leader can identify and navigate politics, power, and assumptions. Alderfer (1979) and Brown
(1983) examined two types of power distribution: overbounded and underbounded systems. An underbounded system has distributed power and is loosely controlled or coupled. An overbounded system has highly centralized, bureaucratic power, and is tightly regulated.

**Behavioral Theories.** The style approach to leadership focuses on the behavior of the leader. It is different from the trait approach which focuses on personality and the skills approach which focuses on capabilities. The style approach solely examines leadership through the lens of what leaders do and how they act (Bargh et al., 2000; Cohen, 2009; Northouse, 2007; Yukl, 1989).

Two bodies of research provide the foundation for the style approach to leadership: the Ohio State studies and the University of Michigan studies. In the Ohio State studies, researchers used the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) to examine style approaches to leadership. The participants were hundreds of individuals from educational, military, and industrial settings who received questionnaires by which they identified their supervisors’ leadership styles. The results showed that certain clusters were typical of leaders. The two styles that emerged were initiating structure and consideration (Stogdill, 1974; Yukl, 1989), which are task behaviors.

The University of Michigan studies revealed the leadership behaviors of employee orientation and production orientation, which are relationship behaviors. These studies began the dialogue on concern for production (task-oriented leadership) versus concern for people (relationship-oriented leadership) (Bensimon et al., 1989; Bowers & Seashore, 1966; Northouse, 2004; Yukl, 1989) and led to the development of Blake and Mouton’s (1964) managerial grid.
Empirical Leadership Models. The empirical research related to leadership did not emerge until 45 years after Katz’s (1955) findings. In the 1990s, researchers funded by the U.S. Army Department of Defense embarked on longitudinal testing to develop a comprehensive leadership theory based on problem-solving skills in organizations. Over the period of the research, more than 1800 army officers representing six grade levels from second lieutenant to colonel were studied with the underlying goal to explain the elements of effective performance. The leaders ranged in age from the mid-twenties to fifties with anywhere from two to twenty years of experience working in Army leadership capacities. The researchers gave participants tests to assess their response rationale to varying scenarios (Mumford et al., 2000a; Northouse, 2007).

Based on the findings of the longitudinal research, Mumford and colleagues (2000b) developed a skill-based model of leadership. Unlike the trait approach to leadership, which stipulates that leadership is only reserved for a gifted few, the skills approach advocates that individuals have the potential for leadership if they are capable of learning from their experiences. Mumford et al. framed leadership as the acquired knowledge and skills that make effective leadership possible. Their model consisted of five components: competencies, individual attributes, leadership outcomes, career experiences, and environmental influences. Competencies, which are integral to higher education leadership (particularly in community colleges), are the heart of Mumford et al.’s skills model. They identified the competencies as problem-solving skills, social judgment skills, and knowledge.

Problem-solving skills relate to a leader’s creative ability to remedy new and unusual organizational problems. The skills include being able to define significant
problems, gather problem information, form new understandings of the problem, and
generate plans for solutions (Mumford et al., 2000b). Problem solving skills require that
the leaders know their capabilities and capacities as applicable to the unique problem and
possible solutions within the organizational context (Mumford et al., 2000a).

Social judgment skills refer to the capacity to understand people and social
systems (Zaccaro et al., 2000). These skills allow leaders to ally themselves with others
to effect change within the organization. They are what popular culture considers people
skills (Northouse, 2007).

Knowledge, the third aspect of the competencies component, influences a leader’s
ability to identify complex organizational problems and seek solutions. Knowledge refers
to the accrual of information and the mental processes used to organize the information.
These mental processes are known as schema, and knowledge is the direct result of an
assortment of schemata for organizing and learning information (Mumford et al., 2000b).

To summarize, Mumford et al. (2000a, 200b) identified the competencies as
problem-solving skills, social judgment skills, and knowledge. Mumford et al.’s (2000b)
skill-based model dovetails with Katz’s (1955) three-skill approach regarding the role of
human skills in management. Based on the subject matter discussed thus far, the
researcher will explicate the similarities and differences in leadership, management, and
administration in the following subsection.

**Leadership, Management, and Administration.** With the increased offerings of
degree programs in higher education leadership, organizational management, and higher
education administration, it is simple to assume that the programs are similar or
synonymous. Leadership and administration are generally used interchangeably or in the
context of each other. In contrast, leadership and management have some marked differences, but they share many similarities. They both involve influence, working with individuals, and effective goal accomplishment. Drucker, the father of modern management, was credited for claiming that “management is leadership” (Cohen, 2009, p. 1). However, according to Cohen, at the end of Drucker’s career, he recanted concluding that leadership can be learned and should be studied apart from management. This aligns with Bennis’ (2009) assertion that leadership is not taught, but learned through experience because standard leadership courses are faulty in that they focus exclusively on taught leadership skills.

This is congruent with Kouzes and Posner’s (2003) five practices of exemplary leaders in that the leaders must have a deep seated passion or drive (called “theme”) in which they base their leadership philosophies. Bennis’ (2009) assertion is also supported in examining the leadership in higher education literature where leaders use experiences to build their proverbial toolbox on which they can pull “tools” in necessary situations. While leadership may be taught or learned, distinctions between leadership, management, and administration may have more shades of grey than black and white.

Birnbaum (2000) stipulated that distinctions among leadership, management, and administration relative to higher education are more of degree than of kind. Leadership was a precursor to management as it emerged during the time of Aristotle, whereas management emerged around the turn of the 20th century with the advent of our industrialized society. Management developed to eliminate chaos and facilitate the effective and efficient operation of organizations (Kotter, 1990; Northouse, 2007; Richman & Farmer, 1974). As early as 1916, Fayol introduced the primary functions of
management as controlling, staffing, planning, and organizing, which are the foundations of contemporary management practices.

Other researchers (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Kotter, 1990; Rost, 1991; Zaleznik, 1977) conjectured that leadership and management are polar opposites. They maintained that management serves to provide order and consistency to an organization, whereas leadership serves to produce change and movement. Therefore, management seeks order and stability, while leadership seeks adaptive and constructive change. Zaleznik (1977) argued that managers and leaders are different types of people. He contended that managers are reactive and prefer to work with individuals to solve problems, but with low emotional involvement. Leaders, he maintained, are emotionally active and involved and seek to shape and expand ideas rather than respond and change the way individuals consider what is possible. It would appear that Zaleznik’s rationale was an impetus for Goleman et al.’s (2002) research on emotional intelligence and primal leadership. (Primal leadership is the concept of leading with emotional intelligence and is too broad to be discussed in this forum). Bennis and Nanus (1985) are often attributed for the following phrase: “Managers are people who do things right and leaders are people who do the right thing” (p. 221). In higher education, individuals typically find that the two work in synchrony.

Ramsden (1998a) considered leadership and management to be synonymous in that leaders are managers and vice versa. As seen in the discussion above, this tends to be an unpopular premise in the literature. Kotter (1990) based his central argument on the notion that leadership and management are different and distinct concepts, but in other parts of his book, he discusses leadership as the process of managing and mobilizing
people. This could be critical to the understanding of leadership because it may dispel any myths that leadership is a difficult and lofty art compared to management as a mundane, useless, bureaucratic process that hampers academic functioning.

Kotter (1990) described management (like the other researchers studying leadership and management) as a means to take charge of large and complex enterprises that bring standardization and conformity to the process (i.e. the delivery of products and services). It is the epitome of rationality and about doing things right, which supports Taylor’s theory described in the theoretical framework as separating the activity of planning work from doing work.

Related to leadership, Kotter (1990) argued for change and movement and doing the right thing. His concept of leadership is visionary in nature and similar to other academic leadership scholars, Birnbaum (1990) in particular. Kotter envisioned a balance between leadership and management in any organization that brings out the best in each individual. In other words, leadership and management are complementary.

**Organizational Theory and Models of Governance.** In understanding how leaders function (and succeed) in organizations, it is necessary to understand organizational models of governance. Bolman and Deal (2008) classify each model as a frame. A frame is defined as a “coherent set of ideas forming a prism or lens that enables you to see and understand more clearly what goes on from day to day” (p. 43). The four frames that factor into organizations and leadership are the structural, human resources, political, and symbolic frames.

The structural frame is the skeleton that provides a foundation for an organization. In higher education, the skeletal frame influences or determines the method of operation
of the organization. Key components of this framework are student service delivery, enrollment strategies, and staffing patterns. The culture within colleges, schools, divisions, and departments is also an operation affected by the structural frame. Deming (1986) stated that 80 percent of all customer dissatisfaction is caused by faulty structural systems, not employee behavior. If this statement were valid, it would be prudent for higher education administrators to devote themselves to the continuous improvement of structural systems.

The human resource frame reveals that the core assumptions dictate that organizations exist to serve human needs; organizations need people and vice versa, i.e. “organizations need ideas, energy, and talent; people need careers, salaries, and opportunities” (Bolman & Deal, 2008, p. 122). The extant research literature indicated that it is evident that employees are more satisfied when they have adequate freedom and authority to do their jobs, and when they feel recognized and appreciated. The rationale is that employees want responsibilities, they want autonomy, and a sense of control over their work and a feeling of accomplishment (Blau, 1999).

The political frame “views organizations as roiling arenas hosting ongoing contests of individual group interests” (Bolman & Deal, 2008, p.194). After reviewing this frame over the two years of doctoral coursework, the researcher realized that politics are inevitable in any organization for a variety of reasons. Coalitions form because of interdependences of members in an organization. One member needs another, despite the fact that their interests may not fully converge. Politics are inevitable due to differences and a lack of homogeneity. When each group member shares cultural background, beliefs, and values, agreement and harmony are easier to secure (Bolman & Deal, 2008).
The symbolic frame “interprets and illuminates the basic issues of meaning and belief that make symbols so powerful. It depicts a world far different from canons of rationality, certainty, and linearity” (Bolman & Deal, 2008, p. 253). The five core suppositions of the symbolic frame include the following:

1. What is most important is not what happens, but what it means.

2. Activity and meaning are loosely coupled; events and actions have multiple interpretations as people experience life differently.

3. Facing uncertainty and ambiguity, people create symbols to resolve confusion, find direction, and anchor hope and faith.

4. Events and processes are often more important for what is expressed than for what is produced. Their emblematic form weaves a tapestry of secular myths, heroes and heroines, rituals, ceremonies, and stories to help people find purpose and passion.

5. Culture forms the superglue that bonds an organization, unites people, and helps an enterprise accomplish desired ends. (Bolman & Deal, 2008, p. 253)

Symbols are everywhere and whether one acknowledges it or not, they have great importance in one’s daily life. Symbols affirm faith, confirm beliefs, and change the world in the perspectives of some individuals. Organizational symbols are steeped in myths, vision, and values. Most important to any organization is the value that the organization lives. When value permeates from the upper ranks to the employees, it is genuine and authentic and is felt by clients and customers.

**Practices of Successful Leaders based on Behavioral Theory.** In a landmark study of university presidents, Birnbaum (1989b) surveyed their implicit leadership
theory orientations and revealed that the majority of respondents (97 percent) identified with a behavioral approach to leadership compared to 87.5 percent identifying with power and influence theory and 25 percent with trait theory. This is no surprise as the practices of successful leaders discussed in this section are based on behavioral theory.

In a discussion of the practices of successful leaders, different scholars propose different solutions. Kotter (1996) shared an eight-stage process, whereas Kouzes and Posner (2007) outlined a five-stage process (similar to the five-stage process of Peter Drucker (Cohen, 2009)). Kotter’s eight stages are (1) establishing a sense of urgency, (2) creating a guiding coalition, (3) developing a vision and strategy, (4) communicating the change vision, (5) empowering employees for broad-based action, (6) generating short-term wins, (7) consolidating gains and producing more change, and (8) anchoring new approaches in the culture.

Kouzes and Posner (2003, 2007) identified five practices of successful leaders as the following: (1) model the way, (2), inspire a shared vision, (3) challenge the process, (4) enable others to act, and (5) encourage the heart. There are ten components of modeling the way, which include the following: clarify one’s values, explore one’s inner territory, build and affirm shared values, renew shared values, lead by example, spend time and pay attention, turn critical incidents into teachable moments, tell stories to teach virtues, choose words and questions deliberately, and develop competence.

In order to model the way, leaders must understand and submit to the values, beliefs, and assumptions that drive them. They have to believe in what they say and ensure that the message is clear. Leaders model the way by engaging in actions that illustrate their leadership philosophies. For example, Les Cochran bought an abandoned
building on the outskirts of Youngstown State University when he became president and spent his weekends working with construction crews to transform it into a home for his family. The neighborhoods around the school had deteriorated and become overrun with gangs and drug pushers, but President Cochran literally sacrificed his life in order to show that he fully believed. It supported his slogan that “Together we can make a difference” (Kouzes & Posner, 2003, p. 17).

There are twelve components of inspiring a shared vision to include having a vision, discovering a theme, exploring one’s past, immersing one’s self, finding meaning in the ideal, taking pride in being unique, creating images of the future, developing a shared sense of destiny, listening deeply, discovering a common purpose, practicing positive communication, and being expressive. By inspiring a shared vision, leaders must have a vision. They must create a climate of meaningfulness and allow the vision to have meaning for followers. Leaders must discover a theme. They must have aspirations, agendas, and arguments which focus their actions. All other activities stem from this theme. Leaders must explore their past. In other words, past experiences shape leaders’ leadership philosophy and frame the context in which they extract tools from the proverbial tool box. They hone their intuitive sense to discern future events. Only through integration of the twelve components can leaders have an impact on followers (Kouzes & Posner, 2003).

Eight steps comprise challenging the process: seize the initiative, encourage initiative in others, make challenge meaningful, look outward for fresh ideas, initiate incremental steps, make small wins work, learn from mistakes, and promote psychological hardiness. In challenging the process, leaders create opportunities for
people to exceed prior performance levels and continually adjust the bar ensuring that followers can always succeed, but stretching them in each successive opportunity. Leaders ensure that followers are equipped to succeed and know that their feedback, critical or constructive, is valued (Kouzes & Posner, 2003).

Kouzes and Posner (2003) provided 11 components to enable others to act; those components are as follows: create a climate of trust, facilitate positive independence, develop cooperative goals and roles, support norms of reciprocity, promote face-to-face interactions, produce social capital, generate power all around, ensure self-leadership, provide choices, build competence and confidence, and foster ownership. A leader is unable to lead without dedicated followers; enabling others to act serves the greater good as it allows big, hairy, audacious goals (BHAGs) (Collins, 2001) to be broken into manageable pieces. Effectual leaders invest their service in followers because they know competent and confident followers perform at their optimum levels.

The ten components to encourage the heart are the following: focus on clear standards, expect the best, be positive, pay attention, be a friend, personalize recognition, use a creative mix of rewards, create a spirit of community, provide social support, and set the example. Leaders encourage the heart when they share their high expectations with followers and break down the walls and barriers often found in hierarchical and bureaucratic business processes and structures. By being a friend and making personal connection, the leaders create and maintain credibility (Kouzes & Posner, 2003).

In examining Kotter’s (1996) eight stages and Kouzes and Posner’s (2003, 2007) five practices, they can be matched accordingly:
Table 2.1

Practices of Successful Leaders

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<td>1. Establish a sense of urgency</td>
<td>1. Model the way</td>
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<td>2. Create a guiding coalition</td>
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<td>3. Develop a vision and strategy</td>
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<td>5. Generate short-term wins</td>
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<td>6. Consolidate gains and produce more change</td>
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<td>7. Empower employees for broad-based action</td>
<td>4. Enable others to act</td>
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<td>8. Anchoring new approaches in the culture</td>
<td>5. Encourage the heart</td>
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In summary, trait theory, power and influence theory, and behavioral theory were examined as they are the three implicit leadership theories most recognized by higher education leaders and administrators (Birnbaum, 1989b). These three theories informed the empirical research studies (Bensimon et al., 1989; Birnbaum, 1989b; Northouse, 2004; Ramsden, 1998a; and Smith & Forti, 1998) that frame contemporary leadership thought and practice in addition to organizational theory and models of governance, and practices of successful leaders. The next section will hone in on the leadership in higher education literature.
Leadership in Higher Education

Leadership in higher education is a unique construct for three reasons. First, while a plethora of information abounds related to conceptual orientations and interpretations in leadership and organizational theory, their bearing on higher education can be questioned as much of the research is atheoretical based on leadership style and personality traits. While some scholars have neatly classified leadership styles and personality traits into theories, there is a lack of empirical data and models to support them (Bensimon et al., 1989). Second, some of the supposed “followers” are faculty and much has been written about faculty’s disdain for and strong resistance to bureaucracy and top-down management (Birnbaum, 1988, 1989b). Third, there are dual control systems and two separate bodies (faculty and administrative staff), which create conflicts, ambiguous goals, and other issues (Bensimon et al., 1989; Birnbaum, 1989b).

In summary, the lack of empirical research to support higher education leadership theoretical models, the concept of faculty as “followers,” and the dual control systems common in higher education account for the paucity of higher education leadership literature grounded in theoretical frameworks.

In one of the few foundational empirical studies related to leadership in higher education, Bensimon et al. (1989) and Birnbaum (1989a, 1989b) collaborated to identify sitting presidents’ leadership frames and the theories on which they base their actions. In their study, the researchers collected data on site with three-hour semi-structured interviews. For the interviews, the researchers used an open-ended interview questionnaire with forty items. The participants were presidents of 32 colleges and universities participating in the Institutional Leadership Project (ILP), which was a five-
year longitudinal study. The researchers used data from the interviews that aligned with
the extant leadership theories to identify each president’s cognitive frame. The theories
were analyzed from two angles: (1) leadership as a process, and (2) the means in which
presidents prefer to provide direction. Content analysis was then used to code references.
The results revealed that 13 presidents adopted a single frame, 11 adopted two frames,
seven adopted three frames, and one adopted four cognitive frames. The implicit
leadership theories that emerged illustrated that 97 percent of presidents (n=31) operated
from a behavioral theory framework, 87.5 percent (n=28) from a power and influence
framework, and 25 percent (n=8) from a trait theory perspective. Current researchers
(Siddique et al., 2011) attempted to update academic leadership theory research to verify
whether the results still hold true in the 2010s and beyond.

This proposed dissertation research aims to explore leadership and organizational
effectiveness from a Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) college or university president’s
perspective; however, since the current research is limited, other studies that examine
academic leadership from different perspectives will be reviewed. In a study related to
the impact of academic leadership on faculty’s motivation and organizational
effectiveness, Siddique et al. (2011) developed a conceptual framework to encompass
leadership, motivation, and organizational effectiveness. Their model provided evidence
that proper academic leadership is critical to the effective administration of an academic
organization. Among their findings, the researchers discovered that the lack of financial
resources factored into the motivation of faculty, and when unmotivated, faculty
physically or psychologically withdraw from the institution.
Bryman (2007) conducted a literature review of academic leadership from a departmental perspective. He queried four academic databases (ERIC, ERA, BEI, and SSCI) and limited his search to academic leadership articles from 1985-2005 in the U.K., Australia, and the U.S. From his review of the literature, thirteen leadership behaviors emerged, supporting prior research for the implicit leadership model of behavioral theory (Bensimon et al., 1989; Birnbaum, 1989a; 1989b; 1989c; 1989d; 1992). The thirteen behaviors include the following: having a clear sense of direction/strategic vision; preparing department arrangements to facilitate the direction set; being considerate; treating academic staff fairly and with integrity; being trustworthy and having personal integrity; allowing the opportunity to participate in key decision/encouraging open communication; communicating well about the direction in which the department is heading; acting as a role model/having credibility; creating a positive/collegial work atmosphere in the department; advancing the department’s cause with respect to constituencies internal and external to the university and working proactively; providing feedback on performance; providing resources for and adjusting workloads to stimulate scholarship and research; and making academic appointment’s that enhance the department’s reputation. These thirteen behaviors show little to no deviation from prior studies (Kotter, 1996; Kouzes & Posner, 2007) related to behaviors of leaders.

Leadership in higher education today poses daunting challenges to leaders as they seek to [foster] unity and implement a vision while trying to serve as moral exemplars shaping thoughts and patterns throughout society. Their institutions, like society, are inherently decentralized and resistant to authority. In effect, higher education leaders are
constantly maneuvering complex and competing interests—legislators, trustees, donors, faculty, staff, students, and alumni—to further the mission and strategic plans of their institutions (Brown, 2006).

Based on the syntheses in the extant research literature related to leadership, scholars have defined leadership in the context of higher education and the significance of being an academic leader. Ramsden (1998a) summarized academic leadership in six principles: (1) a dynamic process, (2) an outcomes-focused agenda, (3) multi-level in operation (4) relational, (5) about the leader’s learning, and (6) essentially transformative. Effective leaders in higher education use integrity, energy, drive, and spirit and seek to accomplish the following: provide clear goals and objectives; seize new opportunities; manage people and resources; motivate and inspire staff to perform; educate and develop staff; and continually listen to staff in an attempt to refine and improve their leadership abilities (Ramsden, 1998a).

Leadership in higher education is more critical now than it was in the past as scholars outside and within academe agree that most colleges and universities are seriously mismanaged (Birnbaum, 1988; Richman and Farmer, 1974; Selingo, 2013; Stripling, 2011). There is consensus among the reasons for the mismanagement based on the individual autonomy expected and maintained by academicians. Academicians dislike bureaucratic processes and any idea related to management and making them more productive is met with disdain and ridicule (Birnbaum, 1988; Ramsden, 1998a; Richman and Farmer, 1974).

There may be some disagreement as to the distinction between leadership in general and leadership in higher education, but it is evident that a leader in academia
must have the appropriate academic credentials and intellectual training in order to earn the respect of fellow academicians. While this is true, the overlap between leadership and management in universities and organizations is increasing (Ramsden, 1998a). Aspiring higher education leaders must be flexible and cognizant of the changing leadership terrain and be prepared for a leadership experience unlike anything previously imagined.

Leadership in higher education has been based on the aforementioned leadership theories and models, but some scholars (Ramsden, 1998a) contend that academic leadership is based on studying the experiences of academic staff, listening to their experiences, understanding the types of challenges they encounter, and identifying the types of academic work environments in which they are successful. According to Donaldson (1991), leadership develops not by action, but by establishing a toolbox based on one’s experiences in which a leader can retrieve an appropriate response to a situation.


The bureaucratic model relates to Max Weber’s traditional and formal organization and management theories. It is based on hierarchical structure,
predetermined procedures, rules, and regulations and is a closed system that is mechanistic and authoritarian (Richman & Farmer, 1974).

The collegial model is based on the collegium or community of scholars. It is an open system that promotes full participation and is highly favored by faculty discontent with bureaucracy. There is little structure. In this model, the community of scholars administers its own affairs compared to the bureaucratic model where officials are almost powerless (Birnbaum, 1988; Richman & Farmer, 1974).

The political model considers conflict as a natural phenomenon and focuses on problems involving values and goal-setting in place of optimization and maximization relative to the power and influence held by interest groups and power blocs. It is found that subscribers to this model are generally small groups of political elites that dominate major decisions (Baldrige, 1971; Birnbaum, 1988).

In the organized anarchy, ambiguity of purpose and problematic goals, unclear technology, ambiguity of power, success, and the inability to learn from experience are pervasive (Birnbaum, 1988; Cohen & March, 1974). The organized anarchy is not a means for solving well-defined problems but, rather, “a collection of choices looking for problems, issues and feelings looking for decision situations in which they might be aired, solutions looking for issues to which they might be the answers, and decision makers looking for work” (Richman & Farmer, 1974, p. 31).

According to Birnbaum (1988), cybernetics is the science of communication and control theory relative to control systems, so in an institution cybernetics relates to the inputs and outputs and feedback loops that inform the leader and managers of the status of current business processes. The cybernetic institution serves to draw from
components of the bureaucratic, collegial, political, and organized anarchy models through self-correcting mechanisms that monitor organizational functions and provide attention cues, or negative feedback, to participants when things are not going well… Thus, coordination is provided not by one omniscient and rational agent, but by the spontaneous corrective action of the college’s parts. (Birnbaum, 1988, p. 179)

Inputs in the cybernetic system monitor organization subsystems and make adjustments and corrections as necessary. Inputs help to create feedback loops that tell when systems and business processes are in disarray. An ideal institution or organization would employ a cybernetic approach integrating the four general models of governance (Birnbaum, 1988). The cybernetic system also supports an integrated perspective of leadership in higher education (Bensimon et al., 1989).

**Higher Education Empirical Models.** Birnbaum (1992) conducted an empirical study on higher education leadership based on data collected by the Institutional Leadership Project (ILP). The ILP was different from other leadership studies because it was longitudinal in design, included multiple institutional types and leadership roles, examined prominent and obscure institutions, and considered various sources of data. The ILP was the same study Bensimon et al. (1989) and Birnbaum (1989a, 1989b) examined to develop their implicit leadership theories for higher education administrators.

Birnbaum (1992) found data in support of a “strong leader” model and a “weak leader” model for higher education leadership. His research revealed proponents of a
president who as a strong leader left a legacy on the institution compared to opponents who provided data that a president had no impact on the institution. These claims were substantiated by an empirical study by Cameron (1986) where Birnbaum found that the actions of leaders are critical to leadership effectiveness compared to another study (Birnbaum, 1989d) where he found that critical measures of institutional functioning remained unchanged after presidents were replaced. Overall, the empirical findings revealed that effective higher education leaders integrated theories and approaches (i.e. transformational and transactional leadership styles); they possessed diverse heights, ethnicities, levels of experience, and personality, but were all intelligent and articulate. This reveals the tenuous debate regarding academic leadership and how fractious it can be to generalize practices in higher education leadership.

In Cameron’s (1986) research on organizational effectiveness, she assessed 29 colleges and universities, which were all four-year institutions and a mix of private and public and bachelor’s granting to comprehensive institutions. Using a questionnaire as the survey instrument, she probed at nine dimensions of organizational effectiveness (student educational satisfaction, student academic development, student career development, student personal development, faculty and administrator employee satisfaction, professional development and quality of the faculty, system openness and community interaction, ability to acquire resources, and organizational health). The researcher found that managerial strategies were most important in organizational effectiveness, corroborating other research findings (Bensimon et al. (1989); Birnbaum (1989a, 1989b, 1989c, 1989d, 1992)).
Higher Education Leadership Challenges. Many of the leadership challenges affecting academic leaders can be framed in the context of the simple systems model (Ramsden, 1998a). In this model, leaders first encounter presage factors which include external forces on higher education and internal characteristics of universities. Then, they process skills to transform the presage into product to (a) empower an individual to change or (b) focus on change. Finally, the products are the outcomes of higher education and the people who deliver these outcomes.

To test the simple systems model, Ramsden (1998a) conducted survey research of 100 academic leaders from universities in the United Kingdom, Hong Kong, Singapore, New Zealand, and Australia querying respondents on critical challenges affecting academic leadership between 1997 and 2005. He asked participants to rate an individual whom they considered as being an outstanding academic leader. In rating these individuals, participants listed issues of concern regarding academic leadership. The findings reveal that the primary concern was as relevant then as it is today: leaders being expected to do more with fewer resources, but still provide a high quality product. Within this concern, academic leaders mentioned issues including better financial management, survival in a leader environment, strategies for establishing new student markets, balancing teaching and research funds, income generation, gaining more research support, and achieving high quality research with reduced funding. The second area of concern was managing and leading in academia during uncertain times. The issues mentioned relating to this concern included staff selection and recruitment, helping staff through change, developing new skills, setting clear goals, mentoring younger staff, helping staff to cope with increased workloads, maintaining motivation
and morale at a time of declining public respect for the profession, and rewarding performance.

Additional concerns mentioned in Ramsden (1998a) included turbulence and alteration in the higher education community and student numbers and standards. The issues related to these concerns included the need for vision and innovation in teaching and research, technological change, the globalization of higher education, attracting more students, teaching students who were less academically motivated and prepared and responding to the need to develop students’ lifelong learning skills. Although this research was published in 1998, it appears that the concerns are the same in 2013.

Ramsden (1998a) drew a few conclusions from his research related to learning to lead in higher education. For example, he purported that in order for staff to be successful, academic leadership must provide the means, assistance, and resources for staff to perform at their optimum capacity. In this context, leadership refers to creating excellence. In addition, academic leadership must incorporate change and innovation. Moreover, Ramsden argued that much of leadership is managing conflicting priorities and tensions and balances. His ideas are consistent with other research studies related to leadership in higher education. Birnbaum (1988) described this as inputs and outputs.

Sathye (2004) sought to update Ramsden’s research in a qualitative study examining leadership in higher education. He interviewed and analyzed the responses of three college and university leaders in Australia. The interviews were based on Ramsden’s (1998a, 1998b) conceptual framework in his prior research. While three leaders’ responses were closely aligned with Ramsden’s model, there were differences in leadership style. The results support prior research that academic leadership is unlike
leadership in other organizations and that academic leaders must maintain deep connections to teaching, learning, research, and scholarship to be respected by faculty members.

In summary, leadership in higher education is a unique construct for three reasons: (1) a plethora of information abounds related to conceptual orientations and interpretations in leadership and organizational theory (Bensimon et al., 1989; Birnbaum, 1989a; 1989b; 1989c; 1989d; 1992); (2) some of the supposed “followers” are faculty and much has been written about faculty’s disdain for and strong resistance to bureaucracy and top-down management (Birnbaum, 1988, 1989b), and (3), there are dual control systems and two separate bodies (faculty and administrative staff), which create conflicts, ambiguous goals, and other issues (Bensimon et al., 1989; Birnbaum, 1989b). The six empirical and other studies examined (Bensimon et al., 1989; Birnbaum, 1989a; 1989b; 1989c; 1989d; 1992; Cameron, 1986; Ramsden, 1998a; 1998b; Sathye, 2004) and the academic department leadership literature review (Bryman, 2007) are illustrative examples of the lack of empirical research to support higher education leadership theoretical models. The concept of faculty as “followers,” and the dual control systems common in higher education account for the paucity of higher education leadership literature grounded in theoretical frameworks; hence the need for the proposed research regarding presidential leadership in Seventh-day Adventist higher education. The next section examines leadership studies in Christian higher education.

Leadership in Christian Higher Education

Leadership in Christian higher education is different from leadership models in other fields of study and higher education leadership literature due to the unique
challenges administrators encounter. These challenges include identity issues (Childers, 2012, Henck, 2011), dual accountability (Henck, 2011), increasing enrollments and dwindling financial resources (Webb, 2009), secularization, changing curricula and instructional methods, academic freedom, and diversity, pluralism, and community (Meyer, 2009). Much of the leadership literature has examined the effect of institutional culture on the leader and followers, which is even more critically relevant in Christian higher education because each church-related institution has its own identity (Childers, 2012; Henck, 2011).

Christian higher education administrators are faced with dual accountability—to accreditation bodies and to their faith communities—and vacillate in the pursuit of pleasing two masters (Henck, 2011). Like presidents of secular institutions, presidents of Christian colleges and universities are battling with burgeoning enrollments and decimated resources. Thus, they must exude more than administrative prowess and management ability to be successful leaders (Webb, 2009); they must be the spiritual leaders and the academic leaders, as well as fundraisers and recruiters among many other roles.

Leadership is a critical issue for private colleges and universities as some have limited financial and academic resources and may want to remain financially solvent and academically competitive (Webb, 2009). Other issues that Christian higher education leaders encounter include secularization, changing curricula and instructional methods, academic freedom, diversity, pluralism, and community (Meyer, 2009). Following is a review of two empirical studies examining the leadership characteristics of presidents of
the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU). The CCCU is the equivalent of the Association of American Universities (AAU).

Smith et al. (2005) pioneered an empirical study to identify differences between profiles of 44 presidents of the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU) and 55 Lilly Fellows (LF), and 2,594 American college presidents based on data from the American Council on Education’s (ACE) annual profile of presidents in 2002. The researchers acquired the responses of the CCCU member presidents LFs and compared to the responses of the 2,594 American college presidents. To analyze the data, the researchers calculated the percentage of mean responses and compared them to the 2,594 presidents in the ACE report.

Differences revealed that Christian colleges in comparison to ACE colleges had very few women and minority presidents; the average years in office as president were far greater; more presidents had degrees in areas other than the field of education; faculty were seen as the greatest challenge, and more time was spent fundraising. In contrast, ACE reported an increasing proportion of all college/university presidents as female or minorities. The study amplified the need for greater research relative to women and minority in presidential positions as growing student populations at CCCU schools (and nationwide) are becoming more diverse. ACE’s (Selingo, 2013) report listed fundraising and fiscal matters as consuming most of American college presidents’ time, which is consistent with Smith et al.’s (2005) study that revealed similar findings.

Webb (2009) conducted a study of the leadership behaviors of CCCU presidents in North America. She collected data from the chief academic officer, the chief student affairs officer, and the chief financial officer of 105 CCCU institutions (n=315). The
independent variables of the study were transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership and the dependent variable was the followers’ job satisfaction. Using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, she retrieved data of five transformational leadership factors, three transactional leadership factors, and a single laissez-faire leadership factor. Webb found that followers were most satisfied and motivated by leaders with boundless energy, high self-confidence, strong beliefs and ideals, assertiveness, the ability to inspire self-confidence in followers and the ability to use positive reward systems to affirm preferred behavior. The study’s findings had important implications as the prediction of specific leadership behaviors that predict followers’ satisfaction can stem employee turnover and reduce absenteeism (Webb, 2009).

It is interesting to note that some of the findings from leadership studies in Christian higher education suggest that presidents at Catholic institutions are being appointed with a significant lack of formal, theological, and spiritual training and women are disappearing from the presidency of Catholic colleges and universities (Smith et al., 2005). This is not the case in all Christian higher education.

In summary, leadership in Christian higher education is different from leadership in other fields of study and higher education leadership literature due to the unique challenges administrators encounter. These challenges include identity issues (Childers, 2012, Henck, 2011), dual accountability (Henck, 2011), increasing enrollments and dwindling financial resources (Webb, 2009), secularization, changing curricula and instructional methods, academic freedom, diversity, pluralism, and community (Meyer, 2009). Much of the leadership literature examined the effect of institutional culture on the leader and followers, which is even more critically relevant in Christian higher
education as each institution has its own identity (Childers, 2012; Henck, 2011). The studies identified in Christian higher education leadership are congruent with the leadership literature in other fields of study as well as higher education. The next section hones in on the literature related to leadership in Seventh-day Adventist higher education.

**Leadership in Seventh-day Adventist Higher Education**

Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) higher education is infrequently mentioned in traditional education literature and is most visible within the SDA community or on the internet. Education is a common and important topic among Adventists with most of the theories and knowledge coming from the prophet Ellen G. White who penned principles from God given to her in visions. Leadership in SDA higher education is a much sought after topic (Tutsch, 2008) as many seminarians and other students seek to empower their congregants and other leaders engaged in mission work. According to Tutsch, White, wrote extensively on the subject of leadership. Based on Tutsch’s examination of White’s unpublished writings and other works, White developed a theory of servant leadership in which the leader always espouses the values of Jesus Christ, specifically humility and the ability of the leader to shepherd others rather than subjectively “rule.” Tutsch expands on White’s leadership principles in her book and affirms that the concepts and theories are still relevant after 150 years.

According to Thorman (1996), leadership in SDA higher education is different from traditional higher education in mission, culture, and understanding of contemporary challenges. While some challenges are similar, the institutional culture
and identity change the nature of the challenges and may prove traditional practices untenable (Thorman, 1996).

Thorman (1996) conducted an empirical, qualitative study partly on a view of leadership in SDA higher education (i.e. how leaders are selected, how leaders related to higher education leadership literature, and what types of literature-based higher education leadership solutions apply). Findings from the study revealed that some of the best leadership practices in higher education would never be accepted or even considered by SDA institutions because the cultural differences of the SDA church make mainstream practices impractical. For example, there is no leadership track for future presidents and the concept of humility prevents parishioners from admitting that they can lead without being “called” by God. Thorman interviewed 10 potential SDA college and university presidents. To identify potential presidents, she sent a letter to experts within the SDA Board of Higher Education and the academic community seeking names that would be likely to appear on a presidential search in 2001. Of the 78 names received, she narrowed them down to 10 participants.

Thorman (1996) used “elaborated, semi-structured interviewing” (p. 15) to probe at and discuss 21st century challenges and leadership issues in the SDA higher education. She analyzed the data for themes, trends, and assertions. Thorman found three things: (1) challenges included finances, quality, mission, the church/college relationship, and diversity; (2) most of the presidents did not know how to connect leadership theories/types/styles with future challenges; (3) there was no system in place to groom the pipeline for future leaders. Thorman was very surprised at the incongruence between what she read in the literature and what she found. She proffered that trans-vigorational
leadership identified by the esteemed academic leadership scholar Estela Bensimon (1989, 1990) is more relevant to the unique circumstances of SDA higher education.

**Leadership of SDA College and University Presidents.** Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) college and university presidents face unusual leadership challenges. These challenges stem from the fact that the institutions they lead are small, Christian, and contain a distinct Seventh-day Adventist culture. In a study of future presidents of Seventh-day Adventist colleges and universities, Thorman (1996) was surprised to learn that very few of the presidents were familiar with the relevant literature related to leadership theory and when asked how they would use appropriate leadership theory to face 21st century challenges, many were unable to answer. Thorman suggested that the unspoken requirement for SDA presidents to be members of the clergy and to accept “the call” (Bolman, 1965; Thorman, 1996) to serve as president could factor into the lack of awareness of higher education leadership theory and best practices.

In summary, SDA higher education is infrequently mentioned in traditional education literature and is most visible within the SDA community or on the internet. According to Tutsch (2008), leadership research in SDA higher education is greatly needed in the SDA community. Thorman (1996) purported that in the SDA community greater emphasis is placed on being “called” to lead and one’s spiritual preparation rather than academic preparation and knowledge of leadership theory.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was three-fold. (1) It identified the perceptions of presidential leadership in Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) higher education. The first sub component of perceptions of presidential leadership included the identification of the leadership competencies of SDA college and university presidents that prepared them to accede to the presidency. The second sub component examined the extent to which leadership style promotes the mission of the SDA church in higher education. (2) It identified the personal experiences that contributed to the successful accession to the presidency. (3) It identified the professional experiences that contributed to the successful accession to the presidency.

Research Design

This qualitative study explored the leadership experiences of sitting presidents at Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) colleges and universities in North America. The exploration of their experiences served to enlighten and provide clarity on the phenomenon of SDA leadership that is not common in the SDA culture and community. To probe and understand this phenomenon, the research method of elaborated, semi-structured interviewing (Devers & Frankel, 2000; Merriam, 2002; Yin, 2009) was used. The purpose of this method was to allow the participants to (1) share their experiences, (2) identify personal and professional factors, and (3) identify their leadership styles that prepared them to accede to the presidency.
Charmaz (2008) identified five characteristics of qualitative research, which included the following: One, qualitative research operates from the participants’ perspective allowing them to obtain meaning from their understanding of the world and their experiences. Two, the researcher collects and analyzes data through an interactive process. Three, participants are observed in their natural settings. Four, a qualitative study centers on the building of theories, hypotheses, and concepts rather than testing existing theories, hypotheses, and concepts—inductive strategy. Hypotheses are formed after the researcher has begun the study. Five, qualitative research is richly descriptive.

The need to study leadership with qualitative methods was identified by Bass (1990). Other leadership theorists (Bryman et al., 1988; McCall & Lombardo, 1978; Charmaz, 2008) agreed that qualitative research can reveal a greater assortment of variables grounded in the participants’ experiences and are more accessible to leaders and researchers. A qualitative study is grounded in data and is developed and tested in interaction with the data, rather than being proper ideas tested against data—grounded theory. Additionally, qualitative methods are preferred because they shed insight on the subconscious motives that influence the perspectives of leaders and followers (Charmaz, 2008).

To further support and enhance the findings from this research, a pilot study was conducted with a past president of an institution to be included in this study. The pilot study served to evaluate the efficacy of the methodology (i.e. data collection, instrumentation, and analysis) and ensure that the interview questions and probes were specific to provide direction, but also broad to provide for breadth of responses. Based on
the findings of the pilot study, the researcher adjusted the interview methodology to be more open-ended and broad to allow the participants greater latitude in responding.

**Population, Sample, and Sample Selection**

In qualitative research, several authors (Creswell, 2007; Devers & Frankel, 2000; Merriam, 2009; Yin, 2009) have identified and described the process in which individuals can be included in a study. The most appropriate sampling method used in qualitative research has been identified as purposive (Chien, 1981), purposeful (Patton, 2002), or nonprobability (Merriam, 2009). This sampling approach signifies that the qualitative researcher intends to identify and include those persons who are most able to yield significant data relative to the purpose of the study (Devers & Frankel, 2000; Patton, 2002). In the context of this research study, only university or college presidents would meet the criteria for inclusion based on the purpose of the study and the scope of the research questions.

In the context of this study, the researcher chose leaders within the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) higher education system in North America because he is deeply interested in the unique circumstances in which these institutions operate. His background as a SDA church member, student, and administrative professional within the system provides him with unique insight into the system’s academic culture. His background also provides him access (access to potential participants and access to the subculture). Marshall and Rossman (1989) affirm that a characteristic of the ideal research site is that entry is possible. The researcher’s background, in this context, grants him insider access into the SDA subculture.
Rationale for population selection. The population for this study included sitting presidents at the 12 non-medical Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) colleges and universities in North America. There are fifteen SDA colleges and universities in North America. Of the fifteen, three (Loma Linda University, Kettering College, and Adventist University of Health Sciences) are medical and health education schools. As a different body of literature informs medical education and the distinct leadership circumstances surrounding these institutions, the inclusion of those schools would only have served to confound the data and emerging themes. The presidents were from colleges and universities in Michigan, Massachusetts, California, Canada, Maryland, Alabama, Tennessee, Texas, Nebraska, and Washington. The researcher obtained the listing of schools from the Department of Education online listing at the SDA World Church website (GC, 2013). The Department of Education identified the schools by region with links to the web page of each college/university. Potential participants were contacted through telephone and email, provided with a cover letter to explain the study (Appendix C), provided with the participant consent form (Appendix B), and asked to complete a demographic questionnaire (Appendix D).

Instrumentation

Prior studies very similar to this research have used an interview instrument called an “Interview Protocol” (Smith, 2003; Carter, 2009) in which each interview is semi-structured, using open-ended questions. Research methodologists (Merriam, 2002; Patton, 2002) have cited qualitative interviewing as an increasingly popular and relevant data collection method that is best used when the answers sought are not directly observable. This research incorporated the use of a similar instrument to that used in prior
research in addition to a demographic questionnaire (Appendix D). The “Interview Protocol” (Appendix A) consisted of the three research questions, which were categorized into sub-questions with probes. The concept of an interview script with probes has been described by Patton (2002) as a means to allow the interviewer to explore, probe, and ask questions, which will allow for the greatest recollection and an abundance of data. The demographic questionnaire was sent to the participants with the informed consent form and was returned with the consent form of the participants who chose to participate.

**Data Collection Procedures**

Before commencing this research, a request for review of research involving human subjects was filed with the University of South Florida’s (USF) Institutional Review Board (IRB), as this is the body that reviews all research involving human subjects. USF requires all researchers to complete a mandatory training module outlining the procedures, rules, and regulations associated with ethical and responsible research at USF and stipulates that researchers complete the Human Subjects Committee Research Proposal Form.

Within qualitative research, there are three main sources for data: interviews, observations, and documents (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 2009; Muyzka, 2004; Thomas, 2004). Merriam (2002) commented that the data collection method used is dependent on the research questions and which source(s) of data will reveal the best information to answer the question. There is frequently a primary method of data collection which is enhanced by another method, but “sometimes only one method is used” (p. 12). Merriam
affirmed that interviews provide the greatest abundance of data when the intent is to explore the experiences, perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs of individuals.

Researchers (Charmaz, 2008; Patton, 2002) identified the process of culling information from multiple sources as data triangulation, which aids in providing a deep comprehension of the topic being examined. Patton revealed four types of triangulation: (1) data triangulation, (2) investigator triangulation, (3) theory triangulation, and (4) methodological triangulation.

The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with the participants for at least one hour (some were more than an hour) via telephone or Skype. Five were conducted via telephone and one was conducted via Skype. The ideal method for conducting interviews would be in-person, but due to the expense, the researcher attempted to use Skype to conduct the interviews to allow for face-to-face interaction between the participants and the researchers, but it was not a convenient medium for many of the participants. Telephone was useful, but did not allow for as thorough an observation with the lack of visual communication.

Semi-structured interviews have been cited by several research methodologists (Devers & Frankel, 2000; Merriam, 2002; Yin, 2009) as an appropriate qualitative data collection method. To maintain confidentiality, pseudonyms were given to all participants and were used to describe their experiences in this study. The names of the states where the institutions are located were redacted from this manuscript following completion of the data collection and the institution names were not used. The interviews were digitally recorded using an Olympus USB digital voice recorder (Model WS-802) and Olympus noise-canceling microphone (Model ME52W).
In the interview methodology, the researcher structured the conversation and questions to enable the participants to select aspects of their experiences from their streams of consciousness. This allowed the participants to talk about the sensemaking and sensegiving (Bogue, 1994; Smerek, 2009) they attributed to their experiences.

**Data Management**

After receipt of the demographic questionnaire and informed consent form, the researcher tabulated the data from the questionnaire in aggregate form and de-identified the electronic records with pseudonyms. After transcription, the electronic transcripts of each participant were coded with the corresponding pseudonyms of the questionnaire and consent form. Any physical records were assigned the same pseudonyms as the electronic records. The document linking the participant to the pseudonym will be kept in a password protected file on the researcher's private computer. The digital audio files were destroyed by the transcription company upon conclusion of the contract and all copies of transcripts were be turned over.

Upon completion of the semi-structured interviews, the digital recordings were transcribed using word processing software (Microsoft WORD) by Landmark Associates, a third party transcription service. The third party signed a Transcriber Confidentiality Agreement Form (Appendix E) in addition to the strict confidentiality agreement executed at the corporate level. The transcription company was vetted for quality by current clients and currently serves other professors and the USF Health system with transcription services. After the transcription, the transcripts were sent back to the participants for accuracy checks and to notify the researcher of any inconsistencies or discrepancies. The participants were given a two-week turnaround for accuracy checks. If
the participants did not respond, the transcription was assumed to be accurate and approved. After sending the transcriptions to the participants for accuracy checks, personal names were omitted and transcripts were read multiple times for accuracy. Again, the presidents interviewed in the sample were not identified by name or college or state identified, only the pseudonym for the participant. Following the semi-structured interviews, the qualitative data obtained was used to update the original definition of terms in chapter one.

Only the researcher had access to the Informed Consent Forms, demographic questionnaires, digital recordings, notes, and transcriptions. All physical data was locked in a file room in the personal library of the researcher and will be maintained for five years from the date of defense. Digital recordings will be maintained for five years following the researcher's successful defense on an external hard drive. No data will be stored on a public server. The digital audio files were destroyed by the transcription company upon conclusion of the contract and all copies of transcripts were turned over.

The third party transcription service transcribed the interview digital recordings. After transcription, the files of each participant were coded with pseudonyms and any identifiable information was changed. The researcher used manual and electronic methods to code and sort the data. The high volume of data was shrunken by identifying sections related to perceptions of presidential leadership, personal factors, and professional factors.

**Data Analysis**

In qualitative research, data analysis is the process of making sense out of the scores of data collected by truncating and interpreting what participants have revealed
and what the researcher has observed (Merriam, 2002). Simply, the aim of data analysis is to mine the data for answers to the research questions. The researcher used a three-step process to prepare the data for analysis. Step 1, the researcher retrieved data from the internet (GC, 2013) to develop a table of Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) college and university presidents currently presiding over accredited colleges and universities in North America. From that list, the researcher selected the 12 non-medical colleges and universities (step one completed). Step 2, the researcher digitally recorded interviews of the consenting SDA college and university presidents and used a third party that transcribed interviews verbatim. From the digital recordings, the third party created verbatim transcripts in Microsoft WORD. The transcripts were sent to the participants for accuracy checks and to notify the researcher of any inconsistencies, discrepancies, or missing information. The participants were given a two-week turnaround for accuracy checks. If the participants did not respond, the transcription was assumed to be accurate and approved. Step 3, the researcher read and re-read the transcripts of the verbatim interviews to identify recurring patterns and themes. Any recurring patterns or themes identified from the interviews were evaluated and the researcher formulated categories and themes (coding) that explained the succession experiences of SDA college and university presidents currently presiding. The themes were checked against each other and common patterns were categorized (coded) using Atlas.ti qualitative software and methods devised by the researcher. A constant comparative method was used in reviewing various documents, including the interview transcript and demographic questionnaires.
A three-step process for data analysis has been suggested by several authors (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 2002; Patton, 2002; Rubin & Rubin, 2005) in qualitative data analysis: 1) organizing or preparing the data for analysis, 2) reducing the data into themes through the process of coding, and 3) representing the data in figures, tables or discussion. Yin (2009) proffered that using theory to guide the interpretation and presentation of data is a suggested strategy.

Once the verbatim interview transcripts have been verified, the researcher will condense the data into manageable units of analysis. A line-by-line review of the verbatim interview transcripts comprised the open coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) process of identifying the smallest meaningful units of data that will be relevant to the research questions. Gubrium and Holstein (2002) describe open coding as an analytic strategy consisting of an expansive and exhaustive review of qualitative data without the use of preconceived themes. Simply, open coding allows the researcher to consider any meaningful segment of data that may apply to the research questions that are critical to the purpose of the study.

After identifying and labeling the open codes revealed in the verbatim interview transcripts, axial coding (Corbin & Strauss, 2007; Creswell, 2007) or analytical coding (Merriam, 2002) was used to categorize the initial group of open codes into larger units or categories that may reflect more abstract concepts. At this stage, in vivo codes (descriptors extracted from the language of the participants from the verbatim interview transcripts) were used to maintain the integrity of the participants’ responses and to reveal cultural nuances related to the participants’ identification as Seventh-day Adventist college and university presidents and spiritual leaders of their campuses. This process
was repeated for each of the interview transcripts and was used to sort recurring or novel codes that burgeon into broader categories.

Creswell (2007) stipulated that it is not recommended to develop more than 25-30 categories irrespective of the database’s size, so that data may be reduced into a meaningful and manageable number of themes. Merriam (2002) added that categories should be illustrative of the purpose of the study and the research questions, comprehensive, sensitive to the data, and conceptually congruent. These criteria will guide the creation of categories that will be truncated into themes relative to the purpose of the study and the research questions.

Finally, Glaser and Strauss’ (1967) constant-comparative method aided the researcher in the identification of larger themes that materialized from the data. The constant-comparative method involves the following four steps: 1) the organization of the data; 2) the use of the data to create categories, themes, and/or patterns; 3) the testing of the generated categories, themes, and/or patterns against the data; and 4) the searching for contrary evidence of alternative explanations of the data. This procedure aided the researcher in condensing the number of categories into a manageable number of themes relevant to the purpose of the study and the research questions.

Ethical Considerations

Qualitative interviewing unveils the thoughts, feelings, knowledge, and experience of the interviewee as well as the interviewer. Patton (2002) affirms that “the researcher needs to have an ethical framework for dealing with such issues” (p. 406). USF’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) guidelines were followed in their entirety. Additionally, Patton’s (2002) Ethical Issues Checklist (p. 408) served as a model for
addressing ethical issues that may present during the research process. Five domains were shared with participants:

1. **Explaining purpose.** The researcher reminded all participants of the purpose of the research prior to the interview and the potential use of the findings.

2. **Informed consent.** All participants received and signed an Informed Consent Form (see Appendix B) prior to the interview process. All participants were asked for permission to digitally record their responses.

3. **Confidentiality.** All participants were assigned pseudonyms. No data was stored on a public server.

4. **Data collection boundaries.** All participants were advised that they could terminate the interview, if they wish, at any time, for any reason.

5. **Data access and ownership.** All materials related to this research are being secured in a locked filing cabinet in the researcher’s home library, accessible only to him, and will be destroyed after three years of completion of this research. (Patton, 2002, p. 409).

**Trustworthiness**

According to Guba and Lincoln (1989), the following terms, different from quantitative research, are used to describe trustworthiness in qualitative research. The terms are credibility (parallels internal validity), transferability (parallels external validity), dependability (parallels reliability), and confirmability (parallels objectivity). The application of the terms relevant to the research is described below. To further enhance the trustworthiness of this study, a pilot study was conducted with the former
president of one of the institutions in this study to enhance the findings and applicability of the research questions to this study.

**Credibility and Transferability.** This study employed a means of multiple methods of data collection (i.e. semi-structured interviews and demographic questionnaires) known as data triangulation. The process of data triangulation according to Charmaz (2008) included the following steps: (1) Interviews were conducted using a semi-structured interview protocol, which was used in the past and tested for validity. (2) After transcription, the typed interview transcripts were sent to the participants to review the transcripts for accuracy and completeness of their responses. This was considered “member checking” which further enhanced trustworthiness. (3) The participants provided their demographic information on a questionnaire, which was cross checked against the information provided in the semi-structured interviews. Credibility and transferability were further enhanced by the researcher’s providing detailed descriptions of the participants’ experiences, and data analysis.

**Dependability.** The researcher’s goal was to ensure that the research findings are consistent with the data collected. Dependability is supported by triangulation. As aforementioned, triangulation (Charmaz, 2008) includes the following: (1) Interviews conducted using a semi-structured interview protocol, which has been tried and tested in the past for reliability. (2) Allowing the participants the opportunity to review the transcripts for accuracy and completeness of responses, contributing to dependability. (3) Obtaining demographic information from the questionnaire should be consistent and dependable since the participants are self-disclosing.
Merriam (2009) identified a strategy to enhance dependability of qualitative research by conducting peer reviews. A peer review was conducted during the data analysis process by a colleague of the researcher who earned a doctorate from the University of South Florida and completed a qualitative dissertation related to the lived experiences of professionals working within the academy. This verifies that the peer reviewer will understand this research design and methodology. This proposed peer review should aid credibility, transferability, and dependability for this study.

**Confirmability.** According to Creswell (2007), an audit trail serves to link raw data with other documents collected during the research process. The researcher will use member checking, notes, thematic analysis, research instruments, and other documents to corroborate the raw data from the participants. This audit trail will enhance confirmability.

**Researcher Bias**

Within qualitative research, it is impossible to eliminate bias or expect that any individual can be fully removed from the research (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Thus, there are a few limitations regarding data collection and data analysis that need to be addressed in this research. In order to collect the data through the semi-structured, elaborated interviewing, the researcher absorbed himself in the life experiences of the participants (Jones et al., 2006). The role of researcher-as-instrument is an asset to qualitative methodology, but may also be regarded as a limitation or bias (Jones et al., 2006; Patton, 2002). Throughout the research process, the researcher implemented the process of “bracketing” where he purposefully attempted to segment his prejudgments and
beliefs to understand the participants’ experiences (Creswell, 1998). The researcher segmented these prejudgments and ideas in a journal.

Summary

The purpose of this study is four-fold. (1) It identified the leadership competencies of Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) college and university presidents that prepared them to accede to the presidency. (2) It examined the extent to which leadership style promotes the mission of the SDA church in higher education. (3) It identified the personal experiences that contributed to the successful accession to the presidency. (4) It identified the professional experiences that contributed to the successful accession to the presidency.

Review of Research Questions

As mentioned previously, the research questions that were presented in this study are the following:

1. What are your perceptions of presidential leadership in SDA higher education?
2. What are the personal experiences that helped you to accede to the presidency of a SDA college or university?
3. What are the professional experiences that helped you to accede to the presidency of a SDA college or university?
CHAPTER IV
FINDINGS

This chapter presents findings from in-depth interviews with six Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) college and university presidents in North America. An exploration of their experiences is used to offer insight into their perceptions of SDA presidential leadership in higher education, the personal experiences that helped them to accede to the presidency, and the professional experiences that helped them to accede to the presidency. The findings in this chapter are presented based on their relevance to the three research questions that framed this study:

1. What are your perceptions of presidential leadership in SDA higher education?
2. What are the personal experiences that helped you to accede to the presidency of a SDA college or university?
3. What are the professional experiences that helped you to accede to the presidency of a SDA college or university?

In order to provide context for the findings of this study, a brief description of the academic and professional backgrounds of each of the six study participants is shared.

Participant Profiles

All of the participants in this study were men who participated in digitally recorded Skype or phone interviews. All of the participants were married with children. Three had ages ranging between 50 and 59, two had age ranges between 60 and 69, and
one had an age range of 70 or greater. Five were born into the Seventh-day Adventist church and one was converted (i.e. became a Seventh-day Adventist through baptism via immersion). Four participants identified as European-American, one as West-Indian American, and one as African-American. Four were ordained clergymen. Five of the participants acceded to the presidency within academia as either a dean or provost/vice president for academic affairs. One participant acceded as a church union conference president. Each participant interviewed was assigned a pseudonym, as indicated below, in an attempt to protect the confidentiality and anonymity of the participant to the greatest extent possible.

Dr. Malachi Matthew is president of a mid-sized, rural comprehensive institution with more than 3000 students. He has served as a mid-sized college/university president for 24 years, of which 19 have been at his current institution. He served as president of another institution within the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) system prior to his current appointment. He has the Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Divinity, Master of Arts, and Doctor of Philosophy degrees. He is ordained as a clergyman, but has never worked as one. His background is purely in higher education and he began teaching at a young age.

Dr. Zechariah Mark is president of a small, rural undergraduate institution with less than 1000 students. He has served as president for four years, all of which have been at his current institution. He served as dean at another institution prior to his current appointment. He also served as superintendent of schools. He has the baccalaureate, the Master of Arts in School Administration, the Educational Specialist in Leadership, and the Doctor of Education in Leadership. Dr. Mark does not have a background as a clergyman, but he has served as a church administrator (i.e. superintendent of schools).
Dr. Haggai Luke is president of a small, rural comprehensive institution with less than 3000 students. He has served as president for three years, all of which have been at his current institution. He served as a non-academic vice president prior to this current appointment. He has the Bachelor of Arts in Theology, the Master of Divinity, the Master of Business Administration in Organizational Management, the Doctor of Ministry in Preaching and Worship, and the Doctor of Philosophy in New Testament Language and Literature degrees.

Dr. Zephaniah John is president of a mid-sized, rural comprehensive institution with more than 3000 students. He has served as president for 17 years, all of which have been at his current institution. He served as president of a church union conference prior to his current appointment. He also served as the campus pastor of his current institution for 16 years. He has the Bachelor of Arts, the Master of Divinity, and the Doctor of Ministry degrees. He is the sole participant whose pathway of accession to the presidency was outside academia.

Dr. Habakkuk Acts is president of a small, rural post-baccalaureate institution with less than 2000 students. He has served as president for seven years, all of which have been at his current institution. He served as dean for eight years (two years as associate dean and six years as dean) prior to his current appointment. He has the Bachelor of Arts in Theology, the Master of Divinity, and the Doctor of Philosophy in Biblical Studies degrees. While he is an ordained clergyman, he, like Dr. Matthew, has had a journey solely in academia and has never served as a pastor.

Dr. Nahum Romans is president of a small, rural post-baccalaureate institution with less than 2000 students. He has served as president for six years, all of which have
been at his current institution. He served as Vice President for Academic Administration prior to his current appointment. He has also served as dean. He has the Associate of Science in Radiologic Technology, the Bachelor of Science in Biology, the Master of Science in Education (Curriculum, Research, and Administration), and the Doctor of Education in Vocational, Technical, and Occupational Education degrees.

Table 4.1 summarizes the biographical data of the six participants in this study.

Table 4.1 Participants’ Biographical Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Institutional Size</th>
<th>Degrees (terminal degrees in bold font)</th>
<th>Total Years as President</th>
<th>Pathway to Accession</th>
<th>Prior Job Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Matthew</td>
<td>&lt;3000</td>
<td>B.A., B.D., M.A., Ph.D.</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Within academia</td>
<td>President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Mark</td>
<td>&gt;1000</td>
<td>B.A., M.A., Ed.S., Ed.D.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Within academia</td>
<td>Superintendent of Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Luke</td>
<td>&gt;3000</td>
<td>B.A., M.Div., MBA, D.Min, Ph.D.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Within academia</td>
<td>Vice President for Community Partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. John</td>
<td>&lt;3000</td>
<td>B.A., M.Div., D.Min.</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Outside academia</td>
<td>Conference president</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Acts</td>
<td>&gt;2000</td>
<td>B.A., M.Div., Ph.D.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Within academia</td>
<td>Dean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Romans</td>
<td>&gt;2000</td>
<td>A.S., B.S., M.S., Ed.D.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Within academia</td>
<td>Vice President for Academic Affairs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Question One: Perceptions of Presidential Leadership in Seventh-day Adventist Higher Education

This study sought to identify the experiences of Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) college and university presidents that contributed to their successful accession to the presidency. The perceptions of presidential leadership in SDA higher education were profound and mixed. The first research question asked, What are your perceptions of presidential leadership in SDA higher education? The three themes that emerged are:

1. Succession planning
2. Increased professionalization of the presidency
3. Increased presidential tenure
The first two themes mirror those found in the secular higher education literature; however, the third theme is unique to the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) system.

Adventist presidential leadership is unlike its secular counterparts and those differences will be more pronounced in the future according to the participants in this study. Below is what the participants revealed regarding their perceptions of presidential leadership in Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) higher education:

Dr. Matthew covered increased presidential tenure and professionalization of the presidency in his response:

I think, without being specific and critical of anything, I think it is not as good as it ought to be or could be. Not because the people in leadership positions are not smart enough or skilled enough to do it. But because of some conditions that are not always conducive to developing good leadership, and let me mention a few conditions.

Number one, over the years, Adventist educational leaders have, in many cases, served for short periods of time. That's also true outside the church. The average tenure is six years. That's an obstacle to good leadership, whether inside or outside the church. Early on, years ago, that was even more true in our church. Educational leaders were often appointed for a few years from some other job and then returned to that job. That prevents our universities from developing resources and building up support for many, many decades. We've had to do that in a rushed way in recent decades. That was not good. Leadership must be sustained in order to be effective.

Another problem I think is governance… [it] is the key principle of supporting leadership; [it] has not been as effective as it should have been. Board members have also been ex officio, short-term, multiple interests in their head when they came to board. That is not helping leadership. It makes it fickle and not steady. That's been an obstacle, I think, in our church. It's being helped a little bit now by appoint—not appointed, but elected lay members on the board of trustees. They tend to be more effective and more committed to the institution. I think also there has been a difficult time in our church and in other Christian churches, not only ours, to understand the difference between educational work and passed on ministerial work. These are two different tasks, and they're equally important. But the two have sometimes been confused, both by administrators and by corporate members and by trustees, thinking of the institution as a parent church and thinking of the church as though it was established in a service of the institution. Neither is true.
They exist parallel to each other, with interrelated, but very distinct responsibilities. If these responsibilities are not kept separate, one institution or the other will suffer. So there have been obstacles to good leadership in our church, I think. I think there are some improvements in recent years, and that's good. But they are not unique to our system.

Dr. Mark’s perception related to the great need of SDA presidents with unique skills:

There’s going to be a great need for them, and I think there’s going—I think that the church needs to find people who are effective fundraisers and understand financial management more than ever, and also are willing to innovate. We have to develop new products that are more cost effective. For example, we’re working on a project with the nearby community college, which [Dr. Acts’ institution] already has something like this going, where you live in on campus, so you get the Adventist Christian campus experience, but you’re taking your classes at community college.

Dr. Luke took a more philosophical approach addressing the increased professionalization of the presidency:

Okay. First of all, I think what the church doesn’t get is that like Seventh Day Adventist healthcare, higher education is its own unique industry. The reason I think that’s important—this is kind of at the meta-level—it’s its own unique industry. Often church leaders, many of whom are clergy trained, but have never led academic institutions, they have a sense that medicine, that healthcare, is a heavily regulated environment and therefore is a peculiar industry, peculiar in the positive sense, a peculiar unto itself industry expression of the healthcare industry, within the healthcare industry. I don’t think they grasp that the same is true for higher education. The fact that we are accountable externally to accrediting associations pushes us into an industry that is not simply mom and pop, but that there are very definite legal and fiscal ramifications to whether or not we comply with the U.S. Department of Education’s Accreditation Agencies.

At the meta-level, I think part of—as we look at this higher education is on a journey, and that journey is actually the same journey that Adventist Health was on 20, 25 years ago, to be identified as its own industry. Therefore, because it’s its own industry it requires a level of expertise that’s simply not available in kind of an off-the-shelf form. It has to be cultivated internally in order to be effective just as we know—and I spent 14 years working at [Name of Adventist Medical] Health Sciences Center. You really have to have an internal pipeline to cultivate the leadership that you need to keep the operation healthy. It’s not on the shelf. It’s just not on the shelf. We can’t just go pick a pastor and say let’s make this pastor [president] because we like them [sic]. Because they [sic] can pastor a big church, let’s make them president of a university. The president has to manage
faculty. The president is individually responsible for the accreditation of the institution. The president is responsible for compliance with U.S. federal and governmental regulatory mandates around education. I tell people all the time you’ve got to do all these things right in financial aid because I’m the one who gets the privilege of going to jail if you mess up.

They laugh. It’s a heavily regulated industry. I don’t know if the church recognizes that. Okay, so it’s on a journey. Presidential leadership then, effective presidential leadership with Seventh-day Adventist institutions is not easy to identify. It operates on a variety of levels, tier one, tier two, tier three, tier one being a person who has done it, has experience and a track record of being effective. Tier two is your best athlete in the draft. This might be a talented person and it looks like they can do it. They probably delivered on some of the skills sets needed to lead an institution. That’s a tier two. A tier three is a person who has never done the job, hasn’t delivered on any of the requirements of the job, but at least you think that a tier three might have promise. The problem with the tier three is that there’s an unspecific learning curve. Leadership for higher education is very, very urgent. The church has to figure out ways to help institutions of higher education produce a pool of leaders who can be ready to step in at any moment. It’s not sitting on the shelf somewhere waiting in a conference office, or out at a local church. It’s very unique. I’ve had ministers that I’ve hired come in and they cannot function because first of all, they didn’t anticipate that faculty is like—working with faculty is like herding cats.

They had no idea that it’d be so difficult. Remember, we pay these people to think critically and that’s what they do for a living. They’re not going to be people who just sign on because we are good cheerleaders. They’re not. That’s not who they are. We don’t want them to work like that. We want them to bring their best cognition to our processes. They’re like independent contractors.

Okay. At the meso-level, I don’t know how to frame a response to that part of it. I know how it looks at the macro-level. We need to find people and cultivate them within higher education just as Adventist Health does. At the meso-level I don’t know where to put that. I’m guessing maybe presidential leadership at the meso-level, if there’s a middlelevel, that’s where the president will work with the board of trustees and especially the chairman of the board. It seems like that would be that middle level, and that they share a vision. They support the vision of the institution and they’re in communication about that vision.

Then at the micro-level, which is the level of application, that’s what I do on a day to day basis, working with groups, and vice presidents, and president’s councils, and university management councils, and all of those things. It’s all of that. How does leadership look at that level? That’s the day to day working relationships, keeping everyone in alignment, hearing the problems, trying to solve them, coming alongside the people who are leading the divisions of the institution, those are your vice presidents, and helping them, as Ellen White said,
not being an exacting ruler but being a wise counselor. I love that statement by Ellen White, not an exacting ruler, but a wise counselor, someone that people want to seek out. What I strive for is to lead in such a way that my vice presidents want to seek my counsel and don’t feel like, well, you know we’ve got to hear what the president has to say—to lead in such a way as a servant leader that before these big decisions come up they want to seek my counsel. That tells me that the servant leadership piece is being—it’s having its effect.

Dr. John’s perception related to succession planning and distance education:

Well, it’s interesting people that get close to retirement as I am stand to commiserate at meetings, “Oh, there’s no one that can fill our shoes.” “There’s no one coming along that really—we can’t see anybody out there that can do the job.” I tend to believe that there are people out there who can do the job. I think there’s a good number of them in the faculty of our institutions that have not, maybe, been given the opportunity, but I have a number of people, I think, on my campus that could step into a presidential role at one of our institutions.

I’m optimistic about the future. I’m not pessimistic like some of those people who think that there’s nobody that can do what they’re doing. I guess my fundamental approach to the future is to be optimistic. In terms of where we’re going, that brings up a lot of contemporary issues relative to distance education and the existence of the residential facility going forward. There are people who believe that the future of education is like this, sitting in front of an internet screen and learning all I need to learn.

I’m absolutely of the belief that there is a place for the residential living/learning environment for the 18 to 22 year old that will never go away because you don’t sing in the choir on the internet. You don’t play intramurals on the internet. You don’t live in a dorm on the internet. You don’t have the residential experience and the connection with faculty, and staff, and other students like you do in a residential environment. I think it’s a very high-quality environment.

We need to figure out how to make it cheaper, but we need to figure out how to do it more inexpensively by using MOOCs or by using whatever we can in terms of distance education to make our efforts more efficient. At the end of the day, this kind of higher education is not going away, nor should it go away.

I had a sabbatical when I was a pastor at the [name of town] church where I spent a semester at Harvard. I think just the experience of being on the campus, and rubbing shoulders in that environment, and attending classes, and doing things in that academic environment was an experience that you don’t trade by sitting and talking to a professor online.
Dr. Acts’ perception was more global in nature relating to the increased professionalization of the presidency and succession planning:

I think once you get outside of the Western world, and here I would be thinking of the United States, Canada, Australia—Europe becomes a bit of a different environment. The environment is different enough, even Newbold, Collonges, and those, that you're not really talking about quite the same enterprise and certainly not the same set of dynamics.

Let me think internationally for a moment and think of the corpus of Adventist higher education as a whole. I would hope that as a whole, we're becoming more professional.

I think that it is a different world with those of us in the Western world who have regional accrediting associations and larger institutions with a lot of Ph.D. faculty and all of the dynamics of our societies and so on at play. It's a different world.

Internationally, I think I see us still grappling with some real challenges in terms of just basic leadership skills and stance on the parts of presidents. Nepotism is too strong a dynamic on international campuses. Just some of these basic issues that emerge in those settings and those contexts. Overbearing, hierarchical, dictatorial styles of leadership—all of those sorts of things are—I'm tempted to say rife, but all too common in international settings.

By and large, I don't see that sort of thing operative [in the United States]. If somebody acts that way, they get booted out, and we could probably point to an incident or two.

At any rate, to come back to the Western world and particularly North America, I think we're on a path of increased sophistication. I am pretty worried at this current moment about the next generation of presidents and where we're going to find them.

Having advised some search processes that are going on right now and having thought of our campus in the not too distant past in this regard, identifying that next generation of presidents is a tough business for us. That's partly because the talent pool is limited and partly because we haven't had an intentional mentoring strategy. We haven't built those trajectories for younger people, and so a presidency gets vacated, as has happened at [name of college] and [name of a second college]—just became public yesterday, I think.

As those presidencies become available, we then start from ground zero to say, "Oh, well, who's around?" I don't know that that's going to serve us well. In spite of that, I hope we're on a trajectory to attract evermore capable presidents and
people with even broader experience than some of us have had in higher education.

I would hope that we would be able to attract some talent from outside—people like [president of a SDA system institution], who had great experience in higher education outside the system. I think being able to identify and attract people like that is extremely beneficial to the biodiversity of the system. Yeah… Some way, we have to position the role of president as something that people aspire to, unapologetically.

Dr. Romans was optimistic in his perceptions and referred to the increased professionalization of the presidency:

I think we’re in a good position going forward. I think the NAD [North American Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church]—the new leadership of the NAD has recognized the value of Seventh-day Adventist Christian education. The presidents are organized, and many of them—the meetings I just listed, the national meetings, many of them are attending. We’re dialoging on how to address some issues. Some of the colleges, they are collaborating on back-office issues. It’s a slow process, in my estimation. I think we need to have one system, but that’s radical for the folks. I don’t think they are quite there yet. They are taking slow steps towards that. I think in my lifetime we’ll have one system, a one-system school.

In addition to unveiling the perceptions of presidential leadership in Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) higher education, the first research question sought to identify relevant competencies and applicable leadership theories and styles. A compelling interest was to identify competencies and skill sets that are important to lead SDA colleges and universities.

The two themes that emerged from the findings are:

1. Competencies are not isomorphic

2. Leadership theories and styles are often disparate among similar institutional types

**Competencies are not isomorphic.** Results revealed in this study provided evidence that competencies are not identical or similar between varying institutional
types. While there may be some overlap, competencies within the bounds of this research illustrated that their associated skill sets vary from institution to institution. Based on the competencies stated by each participant, the researcher developed a list of six competencies that encompass the somewhat disparate views shared by each participant. The competencies listed by each participant appear in Table 4.2. The researcher’s list appears at the end of this section.

**Table 4.2 Competencies for SDA Higher Education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Matthew</th>
<th>Mark</th>
<th>Luke</th>
<th>John</th>
<th>Acts</th>
<th>Romans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fiscal Prowess</td>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>Technical abilities</td>
<td>Core connection to faith orientation</td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Student-centric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Relationships</td>
<td>Politicking</td>
<td>Interpersonal abilities</td>
<td>Consensual decision-making</td>
<td>Missional Focus</td>
<td>Fiscal Prowess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successful teaching and learning</td>
<td>Missional Focus</td>
<td>Conceptive abilities</td>
<td>Fiscal prowess</td>
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Dr. Matthew did not prioritize his competencies in any order in sharing the following:

A number of them at random and in no particular order: A successful college president needs to understand budgets, finance, money and how to manage the financial resources of the university. Now he will have experts, financial officers of various kinds who do the day to day work, but at the end of the day, someone has to decide where resources go, what departments close and what departments open. Many of these decisions are really decisions requiring board action, and the president has to take them to the board. No one else can do that. The president needs to understand what it is he or she takes to the board in the area of finance.

Secondly, the president needs to understand the relationship between the university or college and the community or communities it serves. That's where graduates are sent to work. They have to function well. That's where resources, additional resources may come to the university. You have to establish connections with the university and draw them together into a joint effort. The community, understanding the communities, that's church and other communities that we serve, is important.
I think it's important to understand how the educational process takes place and what it takes for educators to be effective and for learning to be efficient. Some basic understanding of education and the processes of teaching and learning, I think is important. Many presidents have acquired that by starting their careers as teachers, which is what I did. I know what happens or can happen in the classroom and what resources are needed to make that successful.

I think these three areas, finance and successful teaching and learning and relating to the external community, are important things for the president.

Dr. Mark shared these:

Well, the ability to raise money is the one competency that haunts me that I have had to work the most on, to get to know people, to develop a network, to know how to schmooze, to develop those relationships and to bring them to the point of being able to effectively ask for money, is the one competency that I have had to work on the most because it was not required of me in all the other jobs that I did. That’s the one competency that I have had to work on the most.

You also have to have—you also have to negotiate the tightrope between traditional conservative Adventists, who are the bulk of your alumni and supporters, and the new generation of Adventists, who are the bulk of your customers. This is a difficult tightrope to walk at times, because universities must be places of investigation and asking questions, asking all questions. Young men and women have to ask all questions. You have to discuss all possible answers to questions; traditional answers, the new answers, the developing answers. Some people are uncomfortable with having that discussion, but I think you must have that discussion.

You have to negotiate that type, so there’s a certain amount of political savvy. I think you have to have a very clear mind understanding of the purpose of post-secondary Adventist education. You have to be able to articulate that very clearly and compellingly to various groups of your constituents. You have to be able to get up front and articulate the goal, the purpose, the vision for your institution. You have to simply be able to listen, receive as a good listener. Then you have to be a consensus builder because post-secondary institutions are not places where somebody gets to pose their will. They are places where you build consensus and then pursue it.

Dr. Luke acknowledged that the core competencies relate to three overarching domains:

Probably technical abilities, interpersonal abilities, and then conceptive abilities. Those will be the three domains. Within all of those you can see a lump of skills such would come into play. Technical abilities having to do with the ability to effectively read spreadsheets, to cast vision, to do all those things, to plan, to organize. Interpersonal abilities is the ability to work with groups and
constituencies. I think at one point I counted about 36 different stakeholder groups for every Seventh-day Adventist institution. That’s a—because it’s church based—that’s a broad, broad, broad constituency place of stakeholders. Then of course conceptive have to do with those strategic skills. Those skills have to do with how we move the organization, the institution strategically across a particular time span. There’s a lot that I could say, but my MBA is in org leadership. There’s a whole lot that I could say about this. I think those are the three broad domains. Then within each of those there are particular skill sets that are needed that help the presidency contribute to the advancement of the institution.

Dr. John’s assessment of competencies included this:

Well, I think the same competencies that would be needed to lead any faith-based institutions, which is a strong core connection to the faith orientation of the institution that you’re leading, so that the constituencies of your institution identify you favorably in a strong way with a commitment to that faith, to that church. I don’t know that that’s a competency, but I think it’s certainly a character quality.

I guess that would be one. I don’t know…I think consensual decision making is a very important piece when you are deemed with a variety of diverse constituencies and believe very strongly in servant leadership that I am here to make the vice presidents and the other faculty members successful rather than to strive to place my impression alone on the institution.

Dr. Acts statement included these:

I don't think they're very hard to identify. You have to have reasonably good people skills. That is, you don't want to offend people around every corner. You need to be a good listener and connect with people and take seriously what they say, and that goes, of course, with connecting with donors, and stakeholders, and accrediting agency folk, and colleagues in other institutions, and on and on.

You've got to be affable, likeable, intelligent, a good conversationalist, a live person who's interested in other people's business who knows your own really well. I'm putting all of that set of competencies under the heading "people skills." That's a big deal.

Of course, there's a sliding scale in terms of competency, but you have to be—you have to have a competency in that stuff. It would, of course, be very beneficial if you just could knock that out of the room and you were just fabulous in that regard because that ability to communicate and connect is pretty important. Being able to communicate—being a good communicator in public settings. Speeches before small groups, reports to alumni groups, speeches on campus, sermons if you're so inclined. You've got to be able to represent yourself,
represent the institution, the mission of the institution, vigorously, clearly, and articulate.

You need experience in managing budgets, understanding how budgets work, and I'm not so much talking about the technical accounting stuff. You don't have to be an Excel whiz here, but you've got to be able to look at a spreadsheet, you've got to be able to understand how budgets reflect the priorities of an institution, and you've got to be able to bring your influence and people skills to bear upon adjusting that in a missional direction. You've got to have some experience in moving an organization.

If I were shopping for a new president or advising somebody who is, I'd say, "Hey, you need somebody who has a proven track record of being able to move an organization from where it is right now to where the board of the trustees and the administration believe it needs to be or should be." That involves, these days, certainly, strategic planning skills, and being able to pull an organization together around a vision, and provide enough kinetic energy and motivation to get it moving in that direction, and to accomplish at least significant elements in a strategic plan over a period of time.

I think in higher education, some academic experience is helpful. Again, maybe you can outsource that. I'm not saying that every president needs to be an academic [sic]. You certainly need to be able to—if you're not an academic [sic], you need to be able to demonstrate your personal and emotional investment in the mission of higher education, and your appreciation for what it means to educate young adults and nontraditional students, and that you're deeply invested in that mission.

Ideally, I think you do have some experience. Preferably, you've been in the classroom. You've taught some classes. You've proved your worth as a teacher, department chair, dean of a school. That kind of a thing is valuable.

I see people perhaps on the other side in the Independent Colleges of [my state] and my colleagues of other campuses that are outside our system as perhaps doing a little better job of that. Some of them fairly early on self-identified as being interested in presidencies, and they move through the—they moved through the different levels and gather up the experience on those different levels, and then are able to offer that to an institution as a candidate for a presidency.

That goes with relationships with students and so on. I would put that somewhere near the top of the list. Certainly, from a faith-based context—and, of course, there are many, many faith-based schools in the United States—dedication to and focus on mission and being able to struggle with relating that to our current times and realities is important.

Dr. Romans presented this ordered explanation:
The competencies I would think must be on being student-centric, just one. Two, be able to develop strategic planning. I think the president of an institution needs to set the direction. Next, being able to put the team together of competent, qualified individuals to help the president implement that strategic plan that is aligned with the board objectives. Next, being able to hold people accountable for performance, for desired outcomes.

I believe the structure should be based on six competent qualities, or what I refer to as pillars of excellence. One is quality. The institution must be able to be in alignment or even exceed regulatory requirements, whether it’s accreditation or state requirements or federal requirements. It must be able to exceed those standards. The mission of the institution must be accounted for in a quality way, not just people, being able to nurture, hire, evaluate, assess, and promote people to the proper positions.

The next competency that I think needs to be in place is finance, an understanding of cost effectiveness, budgeting, how to read a financial statement. The next quality is growth, not being comfortable with the status quo, but how to grow an institution to grow deeper, grow an institution, how to engage minds and transform lives of the students that are dependent on that. Nowadays, it’s a blending of the liberal arts, how to demonstrate the moral leadership, but also how to prepare students for the workplace.

Another competency that I think must be in place is service. The type of service that is rendered to students and to the community must be able to measured: overall graduate satisfaction, employee satisfaction, board satisfaction.

The last competency I think that is important is community, being able to connect with its local regional communities, the entire constituency. Being able to partner with government and other local nonprofit entities and businesses so that the institution is not isolated, but is a part of the community, not just the church community, but the community that it is in. A key aspect of the Seventh-day Adventist message is to be of service to others, not necessarily to ourselves. If we were all saints, Jesus wouldn’t come, but we all need to be of service to others. Overall, I think those are the competencies that I think should be demonstrated.

Based on the presidential leadership expertise of the participants, six competencies emerged, which appear to be the most relevant to presidential leadership in Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) higher education may be:

1. Missional focus
2. Student-centrism
3. Strategic planning/visionary
4. Fiscal prowess
5. Constituent Relations
6. Service

**Leadership theories and styles are often disparate among similar institutional types.** While the emergent themes seem to suggest that there are competencies relevant to Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) presidential leadership in higher education, the line is less distinct in relation to specific leadership theories and styles. The findings revealed one overarching theme related to leadership theory and style: servant leadership.

Dr. John shared this:

> Well, I do servant leadership, as I already mentioned. [It] is one that I rely on the most. I’m trying to think of the author of the original book other than Price [chuckles] that really popularized servant leadership. I attended a workshop of theirs in Washington—

Dr. Acts added this:

> Obviously, operative in my head and for me, based upon being a New Testament student, is what usually comes under the label of servant leadership and the sense of a Christ-shaped leading that isn't about—that hopes to be not about acquiring influence and reputation for one's self but serving the mission of, in this case, the institution, and doing that in a way that really focuses on that as the job that needs to get done and applies the principles that Christ offers us with regard to servant leadership in that kind of a setting.

Dr. Romans reflected with this:

> It’s a key factor just about in every leadership aspect. I think servant leadership is significant. You have to use your power to benefit others. Use your power to benefit others. It’s not about the leader, it’s about how effective the leader is in implementing the mission and the vision for the benefit of others. I think that servant leadership becomes critical.
As a matter of fact, for the entire Adventist Church, I think one of the doctrines should be service. That is not one of the doctrines, the service. When I got here…, I established the core values, and the very first core value is follow the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. That’s the whole existence of man. That’s the whole purpose Jesus came to Earth. I think that’s what we ought to be doing is reaching out to others. That’s a greater satisfaction in life is to help others.

Dr. Luke weighed in with this:

In my case I think in faith based leadership, having a very definite connection with God is crucial. I am convinced now that I’m 57. If you had asked me this when I was 27, I probably would’ve had a different answer.

Dr. Matthew’s insight was less aimed at one leadership style in general, but more of leadership from a holistic view:

I’m not sure I have a theory, but I have thought a little bit about it. Some years ago a book was written using the concept and experience of education as a leadership concept. That is to say leadership is a learning process that one is into all the time. I have thought that there is some merit in thinking about the educational processes which we know from what happens to us in school, that these processes also describe and enable the formation of leadership. That leadership do not start with an end point, but start with a process towards an end point. The steps towards that is one of learning and discovery, backtracking if a mistake has been made. But being that flexible in moving forward as one would be in coming to understanding a problem in an educational experience.

That is one way I have looked at it. I have also thought about leadership as being akin to the arts or to human imagination. Because of that, it’s very important that leaders listen up and down and back and forth in the employment ladder in any organization. Creativity often happens at the entry level of employment, and one needs to listen to those people very much as one formulates the best ideas forward for the institution, which requires a leadership initiative.

Dr. Mark mixed leadership theory and governance in his response:

Well, it was a steep learning curve here because I had only heard about the Carver Model of governance in passing. When I got here, I had to read up on it, and now it informs how I prepare for every board meeting, inform how we progress through the agenda at board meetings, and informs how I interact with our chair because I am lucky in that my union president has bought into the Carver Model of governance. There are times when we have to have conversations where I say, “Well, is this a board issue or is this a management issue?” We have to clarify between the two of us what it is.
Now, again, I say I’m very, very fortunate in that I’ve worked here, has confidence in me still to let everything—just about everything be a management issue. Well, I’m going to—I’m wrestling with how this institution is going to respond to overt displays of homosexual affection on our campus… The freedom that faith based institutions have to respect and adhere to their faith based cultural missions in that area are not as clearly defined in a legal sense [here] as they are [elsewhere].

I have spent a lot of time thinking about him. Then there’s one other chap that I really was fond of when I was in graduate school, and his name escapes me here. Maybe I’ll dig it out here as we keep talking… All right. This guy that I was very fond of is Thomas Srgiovanni.

Dr. Romans brought in situational and bold leadership.

A shared governance technique is what I rely on. I also rely on situational leadership. Sometimes you can afford to step by and let others lead. Sometimes you have to hold them by the hand or what have you, depending on the situation. I really am supportive of the participatory shared governance concept, primarily again because I don’t know all the answers. A key thing for me to do is to bring others into the team, on the team, that then fill in the gaps, and being able to recommend and provide leadership in other areas, because it takes a team. It takes a dedicated, committed team to really provide institutional higher educational leadership.

If you have bold leadership, bold leadership, maybe there’s a difference. Oftentimes what I find in the church is that bold leadership is lacking because they lead in anticipation of the next constituency meeting. If you take a bold move, you may not be replaced—you may be replaced. We have that threat with union leadership and conference leadership, so it becomes very difficult to actually make such a bold move.

Summary

Research question one sought to identify the perceptions of presidential leadership of Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) college and university presidents that contributed to their successful accession to the presidency. The three themes that emerged related to succession planning, the increased professionalization of the presidency, and the increased tenure of SDA presidents. Additionally, a compelling interest relative to perceptions of past presidential leadership was to identify the competencies/skillsets and
leadership theories/styles that are necessary to lead SDA colleges and universities. The two themes that emerged from the findings are competencies are not isomorphic and leadership theories and styles are often disparate among similar institutional types.

**Research Question Two: Personal Experiences that Contributed to the Successful Accession to the Presidency**

The second research question asked, *What are the personal experiences that contributed to the successful accession to the presidency?* This question explored the extent and ways in which participants believed their personal experiences contributed to their successful accession to the presidency. One theme emerged and was classified as: Significant impact of spousal and familial support on career trajectory.

**Significant impact of spousal and familial support on career trajectory.** Each of the participants agreed that the personal experiences that had the greatest bearing on their career trajectory included their spouses and children. Many of the participants sacrificed their careers or put advancement on hold in order to allow their children to reach college or high school age.

Dr. Matthew, like many other participants, placed climbing the career ladder on hold until his children were college-age.

Well, I did not accept a leadership role while we had a son living with us at home. I was a teacher all those years. I didn't have that precise question to ask. I did decide not to accept certain positions while our son was with us, so that he could finish his school while staying at home, which was an important thing for us. I did make that decision, but it was not specifically a sacrifice to give up leadership roles.

I did give up something else, which I didn't like to give up and I thought maybe I didn't have to, but the truth is I had to. My academic work. I was not only teaching, but writing and publishing before getting into this line of work. That all stopped. If you look at my publications, they ended about at the time when I got
into administration in the late '80s, and not much has happened since that time. An odd piece, but not much.

That is not easy to do. I don't know many who can. Those people who will not give it up tend to cut short their administrative task or leadership role and return to what they did before. That's not easy to do either. This academic work runs away from you very, very quickly because there are smart people around who are pushing the discipline forward while you are waiting behind raising money and doing other things.

That I had to give up. And I have been advising other people who became deans and presidents, don't even try to do that [publish]. It will just frustrate you. It is not possible.

Dr. Mark accepted ambitious plans based on the insistence of his wife.

Well, I almost turned this job down, but my wife insisted that I go give it a shot.

Dr. Luke likened his experience to the biblical story of Joseph:

My favorite bible character is Joseph. In Joseph’s life you can see the setbacks. You can see the setups. You can see all of those things. Watching his life, my life it feels like at each step I can see where God was preparing me to do what I’m now doing.

Dr. Luke added:

Yeah. I definitely believe that I was called to what I am doing for this season. Moses was called to be the leader of Israel, but not forever. Joshua was called, but not forever. I do see that. I do have that sense. By calling, I think what we mean is we can look back across the graph and we can connect all the dots of God’s providence. We can see where God gave us certain experiences.

Dr. John’s family had a major influence in his personal experience.

I knew because my dad was a conference president when I was born that I would someday be a conference president. I got a call to be conference president in Montana, and that was after I’d been at [current city] a fairly short period of time. Flew up there, and my family wasn’t interested in going so I didn’t accept the position.

Got a call to be president in Idaho, and that was the nicer conference. It was closer to where my father lived and where my brother lived. My father actually paid to bring my family up there and convince them to go. My kids were in high school and they said, “We’re not going up there,” so I didn’t go there.
I got a call to be president of the Illinois conference, Illinois or Indiana, no Illinois, and turned that down because family didn’t want to move. I got a call to be president of the [this] conference, and my family was willing because we didn’t have to move. That headquarters is only 45 minutes away from where we lived.

I took that job and then realized that, in light of my family's desire to stay in one location, if I came to be college president then I could stay in one location. My wife, of course, worked at the university already. As you can see, if it would’ve been just me living alone I would’ve bounced around the various administrative positions and I’d probably be in Washington, but I’m very happy with the career choice that I’ve made. It was to a significant extent influenced by my children and my family, which has been very important to me.

Dr. Acts shared that his family was integral to his success.

Having a strong family that you have good relationships with is imperative—at least helpful and probably imperative. Having a spouse who's willing to accept the rough and tumble that comes with those kinds of positions. In my case, [my wife] has urged me on and has probably wanted me to do these kinds of things more than I've wanted to do them even.

My children have—my kids grew up at Dr. Matthew’s institution in many respects. It was a job where I did a fair bit of travel and had responsibilities but not quite as much as being president [here]. By the time I got here, my daughter was in high school, my son was ready to start college, so it comported a little better with their age group.

I think you do have to attend to family responsibilities. Particularly those institutions where we don't pay our presidents much above a faculty level, we have to be aware that they can't hire bookkeepers, and people to mow the lawn and repair the house, and so on. They're doing all of that just like everybody else.

We have to have human-level expectations of them, and one ought to be that they need time with their family. That has to be very important to them, and you want it to be. I did have the advantage of a family who were with me every step of the way, and excited about what I was doing, and proud of me, and all of that sort of thing.

Dr. Romans concurred with the other participants that his family played a critical role.

They’ve had a great deal in influencing it. I oftentimes will consult them and see how it impacts them because the Lord has given me a family. It’s important that their lives and their wellbeing is even more important than the call itself, because he has also given me that responsibility. In discussion with them and with prayer, oftentimes they have advised and supported just whatever move I have made.
Looking back, I can see how it was all aligned and all worked out in a positive way when I consulted with them and prayed about it. They’re essential to the decision. As a matter of fact, they’re essential to the daily implications of the job.

Dr. Matthew added that his character orientation also factored into his personal experiences.

What I can say about my own preparation for that would be, number one, I have had a longstanding strong commitment to the very high value of good education and good teaching. That's why I became a teacher and taught for close to 20 years. That I think—you have to believe in it to want to do this work. It doesn't—and the Adventist church doesn't pay hardly anything compared to elsewhere.

You really have to believe in it, and you cannot believe the job or the—what shall I say, the nice things about the job. It's hard work. It requires commitment and belief. I have had that for a long time. I think also you have to like people to do that work. People on campus and off campus and enjoy their company. You have to enjoy talking with people, students and faculty and not be bothered by them. I've always had an open door policy. People can walk into my office to talk. They don't abuse the privilege, but they can. Anybody in this university can make an appointment to see me, from the janitor to the provost. Makes no difference. It can be done. I have kept it that way, and I think that's a contributing factor to my work.

I think intellectual strength, some intellectual strength. You have to be able to argue a point, give a speech, make something clear. This is a place committed to the light of the mind, and I think a good president has to be committed to that. There are other kinds of commitments of a religious nature around, but the president must not let slip recent and clearly argued positions and points in leading the institution.

I was a bit of a researcher before getting into this work. I was a teacher, and I came to an open office and an open door like people and wanted to relate to them.

Summary

The second research question asked, What are the personal experiences that contributed to the successful accession to the presidency? This question explored the extent and ways in which participants believed their personal experiences contributed to their successful accession to the presidency. One theme emerged and was classified as:
Significant impact of spousal and familial support on career trajectory. Many of the participants revealed that the impact of their wives and children affected their decisions to advance on the career ladder. In a few limited cases, the participants shared that their wives were the impetus that encouraged them to accept or interview for their current or prior positions.

**Research Question Three: Professional Experiences that Contributed to the Successful Accession to the Presidency**

The third research question asked, *What are the professional experiences that contributed to the successful accession to the presidency?* This question explored the extent and ways in which participants believed their professional experiences contributed to their successful accession to the presidency. One theme emerged and was classified as: Progressively more challenging job experiences.

Dr. Matthew revealed that it was less professional experiences and more progressive, work experience that contributed to his accession.

I don't think I had any particular professional experiences other than the fact that I had been a dean of a faculty. That got me into the center of the university activities a bit at [a SDA medical school], and some of the important functions of development and accreditation and those sorts of things.

Coming to [current institution], added another component. I had earlier on in my life been involved in international education. I'd spent time in Australia where I was responsible for an affiliation between two institutions and all the complexities of working that out. Subsequent to that, I got involved in international education in Asia a bit, between [the same SDA medical school] and some of our schools in Asia.

I had that in the back of my head when thinking about [current institution], which was extremely international, with international extensions and affiliations and points of collaboration in many parts of the world. I had worked with that and felt a very—I felt it was important to do that. It has since been borne out to be more important than I thought at the time. International education is very important
now. When I came here it was important, but not viewed quite the same way as it is now. That was a contributing factor to my coming here.

Dr. Mark commented that his successive, professional experiences (principal, dean, superintendent of schools) after his doctoral education were most significant.

What has helped me the most has been my post-secondary experience. Being dean of the School of Education and Psychology and being a part of the whole committee system and hear how professors think and function and all that sort of thing, that was very, very helpful.

Also being a school superintendent was very helpful in dealing with personnel issues, because I am the resources person here. I don’t have a separate vice president for human resources. That was most helpful here dealing with personnel issues. Just being a superintendent and the opportunity to go in and speak multiple times and develop that skill was very useful.

Dr. Luke admitted that his 14 years as vice president prepared him well:

Well, it gave me exposure to the inner operations of an academic institution at the highest level… [That specific institution] is the most complex institution of higher education we have in the church. Complex because it’s a hybrid organization. On the one hand, you’re running academic education. On the other hand you’re actually running a healthcare business.

Dr. John’s successive experiences factored in his professional experiences as well.

Well, having been here for 13 years as pastor, and getting well connected in the community, and well connected with the faculty and staff. As well as having the three-year stint at conference leadership, which gave me more administrative—I had a lot of administration at a very large college church, but gave me more of a picture of some of the administrative issues.

I think those all were helpful in developing my skills to handle this job. Well, as I said before, coming in, if I would have known everything about the job and had an answer for everything, I don’t think I would’ve done as good a job. That’s where I depended on people that are around me. I think that’s an important thing to learn about working in this environment, and that is to be dependent on others.

Dr. John offered the following in response to professional experiences preparing him for the position of university president.

Well, it prepared me in a strong way because I had a Cabinet there at the conference, working with the Secretary, the Treasurer, working with the other
leaders in the conference. It helped me understand how to work with vice presidents in reality because I had a number of vice presidents there in the HR, and education, and so forth. We worked together as a small cavalry, a team to operate the conference.

I learned, I think, a lot in that timeframe that helped prepare me for this environment. Of course, working with a large pastoral staff also helped prepare me, but in a more administrative way, it helped me by being an administrator at the conference office.

Dr. Acts shared that his tenure as dean was the professional experience that prepared him the most for the presidency.

I've had some great opportunities and experiences along the way, including as dean of the [college]. The [college] at that time had a dozen international campuses, and so I was doing a fair bit of international travel.

I think that sort of travel and watching our church function in different cultures and societies has a way of broadening you. That, of course, was part of the deanship, but it's an aspect of that that I think was perhaps more important than I had thought about.

Mentors are important, and [the president] at [a particular college] was a friend and a mentor. He took me under his wing. He was also a pastor and a New Testament scholar, an academic.

He cared about me and drew me into his circle more than I deserved, based on my youth and inexperience, and fairly early on said to me—I hadn't earned my doctoral degree or anything—said to me, "[Habakkuk], I think you're going to be the dean of the [college] someday." I just laughed at him, in that moment.

I think that the people who believe in you more than you do yourself and really care about your future are pretty important. I didn't really step back in my 13 years at [the particular college] and say, "You know, I've gotta watch [the president]. He knows how to do this job, and I've gotta learn from him," but, of course, inevitably, as you watch a person up close and personal like that for 13 years, it does build patterns in your mind of how things are supposed to work and be. He was a great mentor even if I didn't understand that that's exactly what he was doing for me.

Then those two years of associate deanship at [Dr. Matthew’s institution] under [the current dean], who was then the dean, were valuable. When they did that search for an associate dean, they did it knowing that he was gonna retire in a couple of years, and so the possibility of dean was in the mix from the get-go.
From day one he made me work really hard, and made me do things that probably were outside of the usual portfolio for an associate dean, and drew me into all of the decisions and the governance of the institution. He's a very quiet, retiring kind of a person, not hugely charismatic, but very able and efficient.

His mentoring during those two years were crucial, too. Yeah, I would say that apart from the on-the-job training and the rough and tumble of all of that, those two mentors were pretty crucial.

Dr. Romans drew from his spiritual relationship with God to illustrate how his professional experiences contributed to his successful accession to the presidency.

I think a key factor, apart from all the experiences I’ve acquired, there is one thing that happened that I couldn’t understand. It’s not until I accepted this position that I saw how the Lord worked that out. It’s just about seven years that I’ve been working within the church. All my other jobs have been outside the church. My very last position before [another SDA college], where I served as the dean of academic affairs, I decided, “Oh, this corporate world is getting too hectic. I was fairly successful. My kids are done with school. Let me at least go and try and do a couple years with the church, do some return service to the church.” It’s a fact that the position at [the other SDA college] reduced my salary by about 75 percent. But I went ahead. I took it. It’s because of that position why I’m here today. If I didn’t accept that position, I wouldn’t be here today because no one knew of me. It was while serving there that they actually gave me a call, that they recognized the good work that was happening there that they gave me a call and said, “How would you like to be president here?” It’s because I was in that position, I think. Again, I never worked for the church. That is not who I was. It was the leadership. I never really thought of—I didn’t even expect that they would have done that.

Because of how it happened, I could see how the Lord led that all the way. It’s putting others first again, students and education. That becomes very important that the Lord has led. I still believe he is leading right now because when I got here in 2007, my friend, I didn’t know what to do with this place. I didn’t know if I should close it, merge it. They were just going south. When I got here, people would call me and say, “Well, we are not sure if I should send condolences to you or congratulations. I don’t know.”

It is in connecting with the Lord that during this serious time they’ve experienced the highest enrollment ever. We have built a brand-new music building, the first building on the campus in 40 years. We rebranded the institution [to a new name]. We’ve been through a regional accreditation process. We got the maximum accreditation that we can. You can just see how the Lord leads, how the Lord is leading. It brings about a certain amount of satisfaction because of the help in getting the institution forward, not for my glory but for His glory.

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Summary

The third research question asked, *What are the professional experiences that contributed to the successful accession to the presidency?* This question explored the extent and ways in which participants believed their professional experiences contributed to their successful accession to the presidency. One theme emerged and was classified as: Progressively more challenging job experiences. The participants shared how each successive job provided them opportunities to demonstrate their skills while constantly learning and/or honing in on strengths and weaknesses.
CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this study was three-fold. (1) It identified the perceptions of presidential leadership in Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) higher education. The first sub component of perceptions of presidential leadership included the identification of the leadership competencies of SDA college and university presidents that prepared them to accede to the presidency. The second sub component examined the extent to which leadership style promotes the mission of the SDA church in higher education. (2) This study also identified the personal experiences that contributed to the successful accession to the presidency. (3) Further, it identified the professional experiences that contributed to the successful accession to the presidency.

Method

This qualitative study explored the leadership experiences of sitting presidents at Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) colleges and universities in North America. The exploration of their experiences served to enlighten and provide clarity regarding the phenomenon of SDA leadership that is not common in the SDA culture and community. To probe and understand this phenomenon, the research method of elaborated, semi-structured interviewing (Devers & Frankel, 2000; Merriam, 2002; Yin, 2009) was used. The purpose of this method was to allow the presidents to (1) share their perceptions,
competencies, and leadership styles, (2) identify personal factors, and (3) identify and professional factors that prepared them to accede to the presidency.

**Population**

The population for this study included sitting presidents at the 12 non-medical Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) colleges and universities in North America at the time this study commenced. There are fifteen SDA colleges and universities in North America. Of the fifteen, three (Loma Linda University, Kettering College, and Adventist University of Health Sciences) are medical and health education schools. As a different body of literature informs medical education and the distinct leadership circumstances surrounding these institutions, the inclusion of those schools would have only served to confound the data and emerging themes. The presidents came from colleges and universities in Michigan, Massachusetts, California, Canada, Maryland, Alabama, Tennessee, Texas, Nebraska, and Washington. Potential participants were contacted through telephone and email, provided a cover letter to explain the study (Appendix C), provided the participant consent form (Appendix B), and asked to complete a demographic questionnaire (Appendix D).

Of the 12 presidents invited to participate in the study, two did not respond after four email and phone contacts, three withdrew (one institution was on academic suspension due to an accreditation lapse with no students and a leader with a non-academic background (i.e. medical doctor), one did not provide a reason, and the third indicated that he was an interim president and that the researcher should wait until April when a permanent president was appointed). Of the seven remaining, six completed consent forms, questionnaires, and interviews. The seventh indicated that he would
participate and advised the researcher to wait until after he returned the forms to schedule with his executive assistant. After calls and emails, the seventh president did not respond. In summary, of the 12 presidents invited, six presidents completed the study (response rate of 50%).

**Research Questions**

The reflections from the presidents’ experiences addressed the following research questions:

1. What are your perceptions of presidential leadership in SDA higher education?
2. What are the personal experiences that helped you to accede to the presidency of a SDA college or university?
3. What are the professional experiences that helped you to accede to the presidency of a SDA college or university?

**Discussion and Conclusion**

The following discussion is intended to summarize and provide conclusions related to the findings of the study within the context of the literature reviewed in Chapter II. Additionally, implications for practice relative to Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) doctoral students, and Seventh-day Adventist faculty and senior administrators are presented. Recommendations for future research are also suggested.

**Research question one.** This study sought to identify the experiences of Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) college and university presidents that contributed to their successful accession to the presidency. The perceptions of presidential leadership in SDA higher education were profound and mixed. The first research question asked, *What are your*
perceptions of presidential leadership in SDA higher education? The three themes that emerged are:

1. Succession planning
2. Increased professionalization of the presidency
3. Increased presidential tenure

The first two themes mirror those found in the secular higher education literature (Birnbaum, 1989c; Stripling, 2011); however, the third theme is unique to the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) system according to the accounts shared by some of the presidents in this study. These presidents suggested that SDA presidential leadership is unlike its secular counterparts and those differences will be more pronounced in the future.

Succession planning. Succession planning, the idea of preparing for a loss of knowledge or leadership by training individuals in the ranks with the aspects of leadership (Stripling, 2011), seemed to be a primary concern of the presidents. As the average age of many secular college and university presidents is increasing (ACE, 2007a, 2007b, 2008; Cowen, 2008; Selingo, 2013; Stripling, 2011), the same appears to be true within the presidential ranks of Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) higher education.

The Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) leaders, too, have an average age of 60 and appear to be remaining at their institutions longer either due to a lack of qualified individuals in the pipeline or simply because they love the work and do not see themselves doing anything else. Dr. Acts was the most explicit in stating the dearth of qualified individuals in the pipeline.

Having advised some search processes that are going on right now and having thought of our campus in the not too distant past in this regard, identifying that next generation of presidents is a tough business for us. That's partly because the talent pool is limited and partly because we haven't had an intentional mentoring
strategy. We haven't built those trajectories for younger people, and so a presidency gets vacated, as has happened at [name of college] and [name of a second college]—just became public yesterday, I think.

As those presidencies become available, we then start from ground zero to say, "Oh, well, who's around?" I don't know that that's going to serve us well. In spite of that, I hope we're on a trajectory to attract evermore capable presidents and people with even broader experience than some of us have had in higher education.

This statement provides us with much to consider. Why is identifying the next generation of presidents so challenging? With the increased offerings of leadership courses within the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) higher education system (i.e. Andrews University), an outsider looking in might gather that leadership is a priority within the SDA higher education system. It is a priority, but there could be several factors at work here. (1) These programs may be newer (i.e. implemented within the past 10-15 years according to Dr. Luke), thus preventing them from influencing the applicants that may appear in a SDA presidential search or short list. (2) The SDA higher education system has a history of looking toward its pastors to lead. (3) There could be an unknown reason.

One president explicitly stated the need for succession planning to increase the otherwise dismal pool that might make a Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) college and university presidential shortlist. His statement connected succession planning, but also provided support for the increased tenure of SDA college and university presidents. He said that the absence of qualified individuals may be causing those incumbents to remain at their posts. Here are Dr. Matthew’s words:

We don't have a big pool from which to choose presidents, and so there are not that many floating around we can pick up. That means we tend to stay around longer or maybe to be kept around longer. I'm not sure. My own reason is very different from all of that stuff. My own reason for staying around is that it's not possible to lead an institution forward in a short period of time. It takes years to figure out what the institution is like. It takes more years to figure out what it can
become or ought to become. It takes years and contacts to begin to develop these possibilities for an institution. You cannot do that fast.

It is a common fact that pastors are trained through the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Theological Seminary and other seminaries. In investigating the leadership offerings of the SDA Theological Seminary, the only listed leadership program offered there (according to its website) is a Master of Arts in Church Administration. It might be that the focus on men and women that are trained as spiritual leaders is causing the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and the respective Boards of Trustees of the SDA colleges and universities to overlook other qualified candidates outside the system. Dr. Acts suggested as much when he said:

I would hope that we would be able to attract some talent from outside—people like [president of a SDA system institution], who had great experience in higher education outside the system. I think being able to identify and attract people like that is extremely beneficial to the biodiversity of the system. Yeah… Some way, we have to position the role of president as something that people aspire to, unapologetically.

This statement is even more intriguing because the president to whom he referred is one of the few presidents within the system that is not an ordained minister. That president was highly successful in the secular higher education system (i.e. public higher education) and transferred to the SDA higher education system later on in his career. The other two exceptions include Dr. Mark and Dr. Romans, who both have formal education in higher education and leadership.

Findings relative to succession planning with implementation of a mentorship track were a recurring theme in this study. A majority of the participants indicated that implementation of a mentorship track to groom future leaders and expand the limited pool of presidential candidates was critical and overdue. Most telling was one president’s...
revelation of his involvement with a leadership development program at the General Conference level. Dr. Luke attributes this interest in leadership to the “burgeoning consciousness of leadership maximization.” He said that…

The purpose is to actually help to equip leaders—there are a number of purposes, but a few of them are to equip leaders around the world with the skills necessary to execute SDA mission in their various divisions. That’s one. Another is to serve as a collection point for best in practice activities that are taking place around the world. As you and I speak now, I’m missing the meeting in Sydney. There’s a meeting going on right now as we speak in Sydney, Australia which all of the 13 division leadership personnel, or leadership development directors are meeting now and talking about making reports and sharing best practices. Then a third is to develop materials and resources that leaders can appropriate for leadership enrichment, first of all, and then of course greater effectiveness.

With such a leadership program in existence led by an academician (the director is also a vice president for the General Conference, and holds a doctorate in education), it seems odd that the leadership program and associated opportunities have not been made available to faculty and individuals at the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) higher education institutional level. Dr. Luke confirmed that the General Conference organized a Department of Leadership Development in 2005 and the Leadership program at Andrews University was a result. He asserted that this program does not have any specific leadership or mentorship tracks within, but there will be mentorship opportunities at the divisional level of the SDA church structure.

There is some consensus among the participants that a mentorship track does not have to be formal. While formal tracks appear to be beneficial, informal tracks may be equally as effective. An informal track may be as simple as providing an environment to mentor and nurture. Dr. John found such an environment nurturing when he said:

However, providing a growing environment and mentoring others is a positive thing. I wouldn’t find the possibility of actually building a track or “Yes, you’re on the college president track,” but we do need to do more in choosing people—I
can’t say I’ve done this very well—that we think would make good presidents and spend some time with them, and see if there would be a mentorship.

I think that would be the best, if there could be a mentorship relationship with some experienced president, and spend some quality time. I mean, if a faculty member on my campus had that interest in mind and would spend half a day with me twice a year, and then have conversations at other occasions, I mean, that would be something. I don’t envision a track to college or university presidents. Maybe that’s just a lack of vision, but it’s hard to see that.

It appears that both Drs. John and Acts believe that the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) higher education system needs to do a better job at encouraging individuals to aspire to the SDA presidency unapologetically. Interestingly, Birnbaum (1989c) stipulated that there are no empirical data to measure the efficacy of succession planning, so there is no tangible way to measure the effects of leaders on organizational performance. Based on the literature (Stripling, 2011) and the presidents participating in this study, it appears that succession planning and mentorship tracks are crucial to the success of higher education, sectarian and secular alike.

**Increased professionalization of the presidency.** The increased professionalization of the presidency is a theme that appears in the general higher education literature. One example is the American Association of Community College’s (AACC, 2004) statement of competencies that are relevant to lead community and state colleges. Within the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) system, several participants provided examples illustrating the burgeoning need for SDA college and university presidents to be increasingly more astute in their trade and understanding of leadership theory. Dr. Luke provided the most insight in his analysis of the church and the SDA system as organizations. He said:

> Therefore, because it’s [higher education] its own industry, it requires a level of expertise that’s simply not available in kind of an off-the-shelf form. It has to be
cultivated internally in order to be effective just as we know—and I spent 14 years working at [Name of Adventist Medical Health Sciences Center]. You really have to have an internal pipeline to cultivate the leadership that you need to keep the operation healthy. It’s not on the shelf. It’s just not on the shelf. We can’t just go pick a pastor and say let’s make this pastor [president] because we like them [sic]. Because they [sic] can pastor a big church, let’s make them president of a university. The president has to manage faculty. The president is individually responsible for the accreditation of the institution. The president is responsible for compliance with U.S. federal and governmental regulatory mandates around education. I tell people all the time you’ve got to do all these things right in financial aid because I’m the one who gets the privilege of going to jail if you mess up.

This statement confirms the need for the increased professionalization of the presidency. In the not too distant past, according to Drs. Matthew and John, any church conference president or pastor could be tapped to serve as a Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) college or university president. However, with the changing landscape of higher education and the increasing complexity of organizations, SDA colleges and universities are not immune to influences from the outside (Childers, 2012, Henck, 2011). SDA colleges and universities, like their secular counterparts, seem to be forced slowly to respond to the changing nature of higher education leadership. Dr. Luke clarified that he is not claiming that pastors do not have the necessary skills, he is only emphasizing the fact that SDA college and university presidents need to better understand the contexts in which their institutions function, and the unique leadership that is needed as a result.

Dr. Luke, as illustrated in Table 4.1, is the only president with an MBA degree and the only participant with a major or concentration in Organizational Management. Dr. Mark’s Educational Leadership doctorate and Dr. Romans’ M.S.Ed. in Curriculum, Research, and Administration provide them with some leadership and administration insight, but in speaking with Dr. Luke, his comprehension of leadership was at a deeper and more profound level. Dr. Luke spoke of leadership from different vantage points and
described leadership in terms of the metanarrative. His explanation of this provided clarity in the uniqueness of SDA institutions and to the emphasis on the missional focus of SDA colleges and universities. Dr. Luke shared that...

The overarching frame, we call it the metanarrative today, is very different. For me, the president of Ohio State—the former president of Ohio State is speaking on campus next week—How he thinks about education contributing to the common good, creating citizens who make a contribution to the advancement of society, all those things are certainly true. As Adventists we certainly would embrace those, as well. Our metanarrative says that a part of the way these skill sets are used will be to prepare students not simply for life here, but also for the life to come, or as Ellen G. White said, that Christian education has to address the entire period of existence possible to man. That’s a very interesting statement.

This was an interesting statement because it revealed another way in which Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) colleges and universities are unique. For instance, there is no mention of an afterlife in the strategic plan of a public institution, yet because it permeates the strategic plans of SDA higher education institutions, it may sometimes be taken for granted. The metanarrative of SDA colleges and universities suggests increased professionalization of the presidency. It further identifies and emphasizes the need for SDA presidents to understand their institutions in terms of organizational theory and systems (Birnbaum, 1988; Bolman and Deal, 2008).

Dr. Acts was also specific in revealing the increasing professionalization of the SDA presidency. His statement provided evidence for the need for succession planning, mentorship tracks, and why the General Conference and the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) higher education institutions may consider more calculated measures to create a pipeline of younger individuals to serve. He shared:

At any rate, to come back to the Western world and particularly North America, I think we're on a path of increased sophistication. I am pretty worried at this current moment about the next generation of presidents and where we're going to find them. I would hope that we would be able to attract some talent from
outside—people like [president of a SDA system institution], who had great experience in higher education outside the system. I think being able to identify and attract people like that is extremely beneficial to the biodiversity of the system. Yeah… Some way, we have to position the role of president as something that people aspire to, unapologetically.

As Thorman (1996) mentioned, leadership in Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) higher education is different from traditional higher education in mission, culture, and understanding of contemporary challenges. While some challenges are similar, the institutional culture and identity change the nature of the challenges and may prove traditional practices untenable. The increasing need for SDA college and university presidents to understand and implement organizational theory and maneuver leadership styles may pose a problem to pastors tapped in the future to serve as presidents of these unique institutions, unless they, too, pick up on the trends and become conversant with matters related to increased professionalization of the SDA presidency.

**Increased presidential tenure.** The third theme (and the only one not consistent with the non-sectarian higher education literature) that emerged relative to perceptions of Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) presidential leadership is the idea of increased presidential tenure. It is unique because the contemporary literature informs that the average tenure of public college or university president is five to six years (ACE, 2007a, 2007b, 2008; Cowen, 2008; Selingo, 2013; Stripling, 2011). Findings within this study concerning increased presidential tenure within SDA colleges and universities suggest that a longer presidential tenure might provide the institutions with means to shape and execute the strategic plan, and it may also provide greater longitudinal stability.

A couple presidents commented on the need for the increased tenure of Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) college and university presidents. Dr. Matthew felt that short
Number one, over the years, Adventist educational leaders have, in many cases, served for short periods of time. That's also true outside the church. The average tenure is six years. That's an obstacle to good leadership, whether inside or outside the church. Early on, years ago, that was even more true in our church. Educational leaders were often appointed for a few years from some other job and then returned to that job. That prevents our universities from developing resources and building up support for many, many decades. We've had to do that in a rushed way in recent decades. That was not good. Leadership must be sustained in order to be effective.

Thinking about the need for an increased presidential tenure in SDA higher education and related contextual information shared by the participant, it causes one to ponder why presidents only serve SDA institutions for short periods of time. It is understood that public higher education is highly political and inculcates political machinations by legislators and other gubernatorial officials, so it is only rational that the tenures are shorter, but SDA colleges and universities, on the other hand, are somewhat immune to these influences, so it would seem to be less of a problem for a SDA college or university president to remain at the helm for a longer period of time.

Understanding the need for Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) college and university presidents to remain in their positions for longer periods, Dr. Matthew provided an illustrative example. He shared about the four years he spent as president of Dr. Acts’ institution and how four years was an inadequate time to implement goals and objectives based on his strategic plan. He said:

I think two, three, four, five years are wasteful, unless there are special circumstances, interim presidents and so on. But for developing an institution, what in the world can you do in three years? At [Dr. Acts’ institution], I had two or three projects going when I left. One I more or less got finished in four years. The other one was half finished, and the third one I hadn't even started. Then four
years ran and I came [here]. This was not the best way of serving that college. I had some guilt feelings about it.

The sentiment shared by Dr. Matthew that a SDA college and university president cannot accomplish much in a short tenure (i.e. five years or less) is unique and not something that is well documented in the literature. A short tenure poses some interesting questions: Do presidents who serve short tenures complete only projects that can be accomplished in a short period of time? Do they forgo elephantine projects because such projects take years and decades to come to fruition? It could be that the scope of the project is dependent on the incumbent’s time as a sitting president.

Connected to the idea of increased presidential tenure, findings suggest the need for younger presidents. Dr. Acts commented that the system may be undermining itself by having older presidents serve longer and longer, but that the system has not been able to have a high incidence of presidents serving for long tenures. He reflected with this:

I think part of our challenge as a system going forward is we need to identify younger presidents, and our current trend is to have older presidents serve longer and longer. What we need to be doing is we really need to be able to attract people in their mid-40s because ideally you would have the opportunity for a president to develop with an institution and serve that institution for 20 years. Some of the studies that are coming out recently—some of them reviewed recently at CIC Presidents Institute—the Council of Independent Colleges' Presidents Institute—demonstrate the effectiveness of long-tenure presidents. They're effective in terms of attracting donors and in a lot of other ways.

We have not had a strong history, system-wide, of lengthy presidencies, with a couple of notable exceptions: Dr. Matthew… Dr. John…and my mentoring friend…was at [name of his] college for many years. I don't know. We tend to be in this mode now of looking for people in their late 50s, 60s, and that's too late, from my point of view. You need somebody earlier so that that person has the opportunity to serve an institution for a good while. Now, that doesn't mean they will, but that opportunity exists.

Several presidents lamented that many Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) college and university presidents are sixty years of age or older and that being at that age or older
does not support an increased presidential tenure of about 20 years, as these individuals may be looking beyond—to retirement. The literature corroborates that the average age of a president is 60 (ACE, 2007a, 2007b, 2008; Cowen, 2008; Selingo, 2013; Stripling, 2011), but says little about the impact and incidence of younger presidents serving longer terms.

In addition to unveiling the perceptions of presidential leadership in Seventh-day Adventist higher education, the first research question sought to identify relevant competencies and applicable leadership theories and styles. A compelling interest was to identify competencies and skill sets that are important to lead SDA colleges and universities.

The two themes that emerged from the findings are:

1. Competencies are not isomorphic
2. Leadership theories and styles are often disparate among similar institutional types

**Competencies are not isomorphic.** The competencies revealed in this study suggest that competencies are not identical or similar between varying institutional types. Based on the research findings relative to perceptions of presidential leadership, six competencies were extrapolated that encompass the global themes from the data. These six competencies most relevant, in this study, to Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) presidential leadership in higher education are the following:

1. Missional focus
2. Student-centrism
3. Strategic planning/visionary
4. Fiscal prowess

5. Constituent Relations

6. Service

**Missional focus.** It is not surprising that the missional focus competency is unique to Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) higher education institutions. Throughout many, if not all, of the institutions included in this research, the missions relate to service—service to others and service for God. It is a foundational element that unites the institutions in this study.

As may be expected, the missional focus includes a core connection to a faith orientation. The faith orientation (i.e. Seventh-day Adventism) unites the constituents to the mission. The missional focus resonates in the Christian higher education literature and the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) higher education literature (Childers, 2012; Henck, 2011; Thorman, 1996). In sharing thoughts about the missional focus, Dr. Acts disclosed the following:

> Of course, the piece—and the one I was struggling to remember—perhaps, was the missional focus isn't there. Of course, that would be near the top of the list for us. No matter how good a person is in people skills, or public communication, or managing budgets, or moving an organization, or their level of academic experience, if they don't have a dedication to the mission of the institution and a love for that—and in our context, of course, that includes a commitment to the Seventh-day Adventist Church and its beliefs and so on—then you're not going to be very interested in that person.

The specificity of Dr. Acts’ revelation regarding the missional focus appears to not have been documented in the extant literature, but is understandable given the faith orientation of Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) higher education institutions.

The missions of SDA colleges and universities are their *raison d’être*. They are the BHAGS (big, hairy, audacious goals) borrowing from Jim Collins’ (2001) vernacular.
Within the SDA higher education system, the missions are all encompassing of the goals and strategic plan(s) of the institution (Thorman, 1996).

**Student-centrism.** Another competency that emerged from the research findings is student-centrism. It encompasses multiple aspects of the student experience in colleges and universities including academic experience, successful teaching and learning, academic advising and student success (Hyun, 2009). Looking outside the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) higher education system, student-centrism, similar to student success, is a concept that is becoming more and more prevalent in the literature. One connection in the literature to student-centrism is the need for presidents, deans, and department chairs to hire well-qualified faculty and the collaboration of those individuals with department chairs to enhance academic advising and “promote a high-quality curriculum for the global knowledge economy” (Hyun, 2009, p. 89).

Dr. Romans shared this vignette about student-centrism:

Certainly. I recognized very early on, even in my undergraduate education, that I demonstrated the skills of wanting others to succeed. I remember clearly at [a prior institution] where I did my undergraduate in biology, my experience of being introduced to the institution was poor in that there was poor advising. Students just came in, and depending on who you are, you just got a bulletin, got registered, and oftentimes the wrong courses at the wrong time or too heavy a load or old career guidance.

In doing that, I got elected to [a student organization] and then developed a program of how we can actually mentor and advise and support freshmen coming to the institution. It’s from that that I developed the skills for being able to help students meet their objectives. I have a passion for student success. I have a passion for engaging minds, transforming lives. Over the years of these various positions, I have picked up and acquired skills that can help students go through the pathway of higher education, especially these days where we are being asked to be more accountable. With the high cost of private education, it’s important that students are advised appropriately and the institution’s mission is focused around student outcomes.
I think a great asset to me while going through my career pathway was that I came up through the allied—through the health professions. Programs that are managed oftentimes have external accrediting bodies, programmatic accrediting bodies who are specific in assessing how programs are achieving their nationally stated objectives. Very early in the process I was able to do assessment and have demonstrated success, and I think that has prepared me a great deal. I’m still in the growing mode. I’m still in the growing mode, recognizing that I still don’t know it all. Every day I learn something new, and being able to apply that to make a difference to students becomes important.

The research is limited related to the number of college and university presidents that have such first-hand experiences with student-centrism, as recounted by Dr. Romans above. Although the research is limited, the exponential growth of literature related to student success may soon tap into the need to understand the driving forces of presidents and why the emphasis on students energizes them to function on a daily basis. Several presidents acknowledged that in the midst of the organizational structure and the board governance, they have to constantly remember that the students are the reasons why the institutions exist. A statement shared with the researcher during the pilot study was “simplify, simplify, simplify.” The president interviewed in the pilot study said that she had to find ways to make back office processes simpler because it all impacted the student. The convoluted back office processes lend themselves to a poor and dismal student experience.

The literature (Carter, 2009; Smith, 2003) mentions factors and pathways that lead to increasingly more challenging job experiences. According to Carter and Smith, the concept of increasingly more challenging job experiences is the process of professors teaching, securing tenure, obtaining promotions, and stepping into department chair positions, then deanships, and eventually academic vice presidencies and presidencies. Dr. Acts made a statement that relates to this literature relative to academic experience:
I think that that academic experience is pretty good stuff. If I see a failing that we have, we probably do need to think about identifying people relatively early and steering them toward that set of growing experiences where they have a chance over some period of time, but not too stretched a period of time, to gain the breadth of experience that they can step into a presidency without too much trauma to their system.

In this statement, Dr. Acts connected student-centrism (emphasis on the academic experience and teaching) with professional factors leading to the successful accession to the presidency. It seems that student-centrism is a critical topic, particularly related to SDA college and university presidents.

Strategic planning/visionary. It is very interesting that strategic planning and being of a visionary nature are one of the few competencies that related to the American Association of Community College’s (2004) published competencies and are also widely documented in the research literature (Kotter, 1996; Kouzes and Posner, 2007; Northouse, 2007). Although strategic planning and being of a visionary nature may not have been explicitly stated by each president, it was either understood or implied. There was overall consensus that having a strategic plan and being of a visionary nature were critical to each president regardless of institutional type (i.e. sectarian vs. secular). Dr. Acts mentioned the great import of strategic planning and being of a visionary nature on leadership:

If I were shopping for a new president or advising somebody who is, I’d say, "Hey, you need somebody who has a proven track record of being able to move an organization from where it is right now to where the board of the trustees and the administration believe it needs to be or should be." That involves, these days, certainly, strategic planning skills, and being able to pull an organization together around a vision, and provide enough kinetic energy and motivation to get it moving in that direction, and to accomplish at least significant elements in a strategic plan over a period of time.
As one president affirmed, a Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) college and university president must understand the SDA church and its related systems as organizations in a leadership context and apply the necessary frames. Many of the presidents revealed the importance of having an open-door policy and allowing even the most junior employee to have an audience with the president to help shape vision and enact change. This also supports the tenets of servant leadership (Tutsch, 2008).

Fiscal prowess. It is no revelation that fiscal prowess was listed as a competency by the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) college and university presidents participating in this study. The ability to understand budgets, finance, and money, permeates all organizations (Barr, 2002; Barr & McClellan, 2011; Karsh & Fox, 2009) and is no different for SDA higher education institutions.

Fiscal prowess encompasses the aspects of creating and understanding budgets, financial management, money, and fundraising. While a president will have financial officers who are experts in these domains, s/he has the ultimate authority to decide where funds go and the direction of the university. Dr. Matthew summarized it as follows:

A successful college president needs to understand budgets, finance, money and how to manage the financial resources of the university. Now he will have experts, financial officers of various kinds who do the day to day work, but at the end of the day, someone has to decide where resources go, what departments close and what departments open.

It is no surprise that in addition to fiscal prowess, fundraising was mentioned as taking up increasing time of the presidents’ schedules. This is consistent with the extant literature. Findings from the annual survey conducted by the Chronicle of Higher Education (CHE) of what college and university presidents think in 2013 divulged that the American presidency has changed dramatically (Selingo, 2013). Presidents are
yielding the academic functions of the institution to the provost/chief academic
officer/executive or academic vice president. Of the presidents polled in the CHE study,
the number one issue commanding their attention was fundraising. This is supported by
findings in this research study, which revealed that about 30 percent of the presidents’
time is engaged in fundraising.

Constituent relations. Another competency that surfaced from the findings was
that of constituent relations, which includes external relationships with community and
civic leaders, politicians, government leaders, alumni/donors, as well as internal
relationships with faculty, staff, and students. Constituent relations also includes
communication and moral leadership. Communication is how the president frames
messages for/to stakeholders. Moral leadership is the process whereby the president sets a
Christlike example for constituents. Some authors contend that constituent relations may
vary depending on the institutional context (AACC, 2004; Birnbaum, 1988; Bolman &
Deal, 2008). Dr. Romans summarized constituent relations in the following manner:

   The last competency I think that is important is community, being able to connect
with its local regional communities, the entire constituency. Being able to partner
with government and other local nonprofit entities and businesses so that the
institution is not isolated, but is a part of the community, not just the church
community, but the community that it is in.

Constituent relations also leans heavily on the political frame of organizational
theory (Bolman and Deal, 2008). As Bolman and Deal affirm, the political frame heavily
involves relationships. In the political frame, individuals have to learn how to ally
themselves with other entities for the good of the organization. Constituent relations is
similar to the political frame of organizational theory because it, too, is about the
relationships—maintaining, nurturing, and creating relationships that may lead to lifelong partnerships.

Service. The competency of service seems to cohere with servant leadership. While this is in contrast to several of the theories discussed in the literature reviewed in this study, servant leadership is a widely-used theory (Hannigan, 2008; Thorman, 1996). Dr. Romans concluded that:

A key aspect of the Seventh-day Adventist message is to be of service to others, not necessarily to ourselves. If we were all saints, Jesus wouldn’t come, but we all need to be of service to others.

Moreover, the competency of service emphasizes, too, the missional focus that Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) institutions exist to serve others, much like Jesus Christ served the church during his earthly ministry.

Leadership theories and styles are often disparate among similar institutional types. While the emergent themes contribute to the competencies that are relevant to presidential views of leadership in Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) higher education, the line is less distinct in relation to leadership theories and styles. The findings unveiled one overarching theme related to leadership theory and style: servant leadership. The emergence of servant leadership as a prevailing leadership theory/style in SDA higher education is consistent with other research regarding servant leadership as a leadership theory/style (Hannigan, 2008; Tutsch, 2008).

According to Tutsch (2008), the prophet Ellen G. White wrote extensively on the subject of leadership. Based on Tutsch’s examination of White’s unpublished writings and other works, Tutsch developed a theory of servant leadership in which the leader always espouses the values of Jesus Christ, specifically humility and the ability of the
leader to shepherd others rather than subjectively “rule.” Tutsch’s research expands on White’s leadership principles and affirms that the concepts and theories are still relevant after 150 years.

Two participants articulated the significant impact of servant leadership within the system. Dr. Acts concluded:

Obviously, operative in my head and for me, based upon being a New Testament student, is what usually comes under the label of servant leadership and the sense of a Christ-shaped leading that isn’t about—that hopes to be not about acquiring influence and reputation for one’s self but serving the mission of, in this case, the institution, and doing that in a way that really focuses on that as the job that needs to get done and applies the principles that Christ offers us with regard to servant leadership in that kind of a setting.

Dr. Romans mused with this:

I think servant leadership is significant. You have to use your power to benefit others. Use your power to benefit others. It’s not about the leader, it’s about how effective the leader is in implementing the mission and the vision for the benefit of others. I think that servant leadership becomes critical.

As a matter of fact, for the entire Adventist Church, I think one of the doctrines should be service. That is not one of the doctrines, the service. When I got here…, I established the core values, and the very first core value is follow the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. That’s the whole existence of man. That’s the whole purpose Jesus came to Earth. I think that’s what we ought to be doing is reaching out to others. That’s a greater satisfaction in life is to help others.

Other leadership theories and styles emerged including situational and bold leadership, transformational leadership, the leadership of Thomas Srigiovanni, and others. Dr.

Romans shared this:

My style, the way the Lord has blessed me, I’m not the maintainer. I’m a transformer. My leadership is transformative. If you want me to maintain what you have, you’ve got to find somebody else. I’m constantly looking at continuous quality improvement. How can we improve this? What next can we do to improve this? That’s my series of transformation. When the board has come, “Just maintain this,” or, “Let’s not go there,” then they need somebody else to maintain. I need to find out where the next place is, where the Lord leads next, to be transformative.
It could be that Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) college and university presidents rely on an eclectic approach in relying on leadership theory and probably draw on experience first.

Dr. John added this:

I’m the director [president] of AACU, the Adventist Association of Colleges and Universities. We get together with all those presidents, and, in our conversations, there’s a lot—what I learn about what to read and about what the other guys are doing. I’m very eclectic.

Leadership in SDA higher education is different from traditional higher education in mission, culture, and understanding of contemporary challenges (Thorman, 1996). While some challenges are similar, the institutional culture and identity change the nature of the challenges and may prove traditional practices untenable.

**Summary.** Research question one sought to identify the perceptions of presidential leadership of Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) college and university presidents that contributed to their successful accession to the presidency. The three themes that materialized related to succession planning, the increased professionalization of the presidency, and the increased tenure of SDA presidents. Moreover, a compelling interest was to identify the competencies/skillsets and leadership theories/styles that are necessary to lead SDA colleges and universities. The two themes that surfaced from the findings are competencies are not isomorphic, and leadership theories and styles are often disparate among similar institutional types.

**Research question two.** The second research question asked, *What are the personal experiences that contributed to your successful accession to the presidency?* This question explored the extent and ways in which the presidents believed their personal experiences contributed to their successful accession to the presidency. One
theme arose and was classified as: Significant impact of spousal and familial support on career trajectory.

*Significant impact of spousal and familial support on career trajectory.* Each of the participants agreed that the personal experiences that had the greatest bearing on their career trajectory included their spouses and children. Many of the participants sacrificed their careers or put advancement on hold in order to allow their children to reach college or high school age. In addition to spousal and familial support, the personal relations with God were prominent. Dr. Acts provided this:

> I think I have a—I have a strong inner spiritual life. I don't mean that to sound pietistic. I think I work hard to try to understand myself in the light of God's grace and his word…

Dr. Romans shared this:

> When I accepted the presidency here, I had as my theme connections. First of all, I must be connected vertically with the Lord Jesus Christ before I can reach out and connect horizontally with others. Oftentimes, when I hear a call, I try in the best way possible to interface with the Lord as far as to see how it benefits family and others.

Through the insights of the participants, the notion of being called was illuminated. The notion of being called (Bolman, 1965; Thorman, 1996) is the idea that an individual only serves in a position based on selfless adoration and devotion to God. It is never for the title, power, prestige, or money (if any). Being called (Bolman, 1965; Thorman, 1996) has been a theme within the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) literature for eons (White, 1903), but has evolved over time and seems to have a weakened influence than in times past. Interestingly, while the presidents acknowledged the presence of a call from God, a majority of the presidents said too much value was placed on a divine call. Dr. Mark did not feel it a significant factor in affecting personal experiences:
I don’t believe in that. I do believe there are occasional times when God specifically tells a specific man or woman go do this, but I think that Seventh-day Adventists in particular and many Christians over-estimate the number of times that happens, and particularly overestimate when it’s happening to them personally. I believe God calls you to be of service.

In contrast, Dr. Matthew felt differently:

Well, there are many things one can say about calls. Somebody has to issue it, and somebody has to hear it. Without both of these, there is no call. I think we should talk about what it means to use that word, and then one should talk about calling. When it speaks about what it means to get into the work through a call, I think they use that in the church a lot and it used to be used a lot more. There was a time when a call meant a decision by the president of the union or the conference. You got a call. Your president decides to move you in a certain place, and you just did it.

That was a call I suppose, and some would say it was a call from God, if the president prayed about it in his committee before issuing the call. That was that kind of stuff. I think nowadays calls in our church are more like invitations that have come about because some people, committees and others felt that there was a good match. That's really how it happens. A search committee in the case of the president, looks at maybe 10, 15, 20 candidates. They select some they think might create a good match. They interview. You interview people on campus and that whole process in the end could be described as a call into that position.

We use that word to describe the process of getting into the position. I think there is another way we can talk about it, which is maybe in some sense more important. That is call in the sense of calling. Does one feel invited into that? Does one feel passionate about that? Does one feel fulfilled? Does one feel living a purposeful life? Is that something one can talk about and think about in the presence of one's faith and God? Something that's part of one's prayer life?

That would describe what I call a calling, but a calling is not the same as getting a call. Getting a call is a process of getting a position in the church. They call it that way. Calling is much more personal, and that is what I think equips a person to do this work or makes it possible to bring one's skills to bear on the successful execution of that work.

Dr. Matthew’s insight also helped to differentiate a “call” from a “calling” as it is easy for the terms to be misunderstood and misused. The notion of being called is not a new topic within SDA higher education circles, but it is a topic that is little documented.
There is very little research apart from the aged writings of the prophet Ellen White that discuss the idea of being called (Thorman, 1996).

Other personal experiences mentioned included education through pursuit of a terminal degree. Professional development activities included leadership training at Harvard. A couple of presidents specifically mentioned time spent at Harvard University to hone and refine leadership skills.

**Summary.** The second research question asked, *What are the personal experiences that contributed to the successful accession to the presidency?* This question explored the extent and ways in which participants believed their personal experiences contributed to their successful accession to the presidency. One theme surfaced and was classified as: Significant impact of spousal and familial support on career trajectory. Additionally, participants discussed their relationships with God and shed insight onto the notion of being called. A wonderful analogy about connections was used by a president who stated that he first had to have a vertical connection with God before he could have a horizontal relationship with internal and external constituents.

The findings suggest that the personal experiences of the participants played varying roles on their successful accession to the presidency. While some were unable to distinguish the blurred lines between personal and professional experiences, the findings suggest that the wives and children of the presidents were monumental in helping their successful accession to the presidency.

**Research question three.** The third research question asked, *What are the professional experiences that contributed to the successful accession to the presidency?* This question explored the extent and ways in which participants believed their
professional experiences contributed to their successful accession to the presidency. One theme emerged and was classified as: Progressively more challenging job experiences.

**Progressively more challenging job experiences.** The extant literature (Carter, 2009; Smith, 2003) supports the notion that progressively more challenging job experiences are stepping stones to the office of the president. The literature (Carter, 2009; Smith, 2003) has revealed that a presidency, a deanship, or an academic vice presidency were the most recurring prior job title for current sitting presidents.

Smith’s (2003) research examined female presidents in community colleges in North Carolina and the steps they took to successfully accede to the presidency. He found that the pathways of female leaders were no different from that of males. He did find that the presidents relied on a leadership style described as feminine.

Carter’s (2009) research was similar to that of Smith’s. Carter examined the accession to the presidency of female presidents of public universities and community colleges in select southern states. She found that the primary career pathway to becoming a college or university president was the traditional academic route. The majority of the participants had held the title of Chief Academic Officer or Provost immediately prior to their appointment as president.

The findings by Carter (2009) and Smith (2003) proved to be no different in this study. The presidents in this study served as either a president, academic vice president, other vice president, superintendent of schools, dean, or church conference president immediately prior to their appointment as president. The findings from this research affirm the findings in the extant literature. Interestingly, the underlying theme was not the prior job title, but more in the accumulation of those leadership experiences on the job.
Prior research, such as Carter (2009) and Smith (2003), has placed much weight on the prior job title (i.e. Chief Academic Officer/Provost); however, the findings in this study suggest that the prior job title is not as significant as the leadership experience acquired on the job. In other words, there seems to be nothing that can rival on the job training and the amount of time (i.e. years) spent on the job. This is how Dr. Matthew weighed in:

One learns, I mean, from working in institutions of higher learning and taking an interest in this kind of work. There are a few college presidents who have actually taken management degrees or studies or law degrees or business degrees to handle more efficiently those parts of a presidency. However, at the end of the day, most college presidents are educationally more than managers, and leadership is something one learns to do I think through life, more than specific training grounds.

Summary. The third research question asked, What are the professional experiences that contributed to the successful accession to the presidency? This question explored the extent and ways in which participants believed their professional experiences contributed to their successful accession to the presidency. One theme emerged and was classified as: Progressively more challenging job experiences. This theme supports and extends what has been stated in the extant literature (Carter, 2009; Smith, 2003), but it is revealed in this research that (on the job) experience is the best teacher. For example, progressively more challenging job experiences may include full professor, to department chair, to dean, to vice president, to president. This is the linear career trajectory, which Carter and Smith outline, that was corroborated by the presidents in this study.
Implications for Practice

As institutions of Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) higher education, their associated governing boards, and church policymakers continue to address the lack of qualified presidential aspirants in the pipeline, graduate schools and program coordinators, senior executives, and church education officials are strongly encouraged to devise and implement strategies in addressing the dismal pipeline of SDA presidential aspirants. Drawing from this current study, these stakeholders may consider the following recommendations when implementing succession plans and devising means to prepare and train younger individuals to serve.

For doctoral students. Results of this study suggest that doctoral students aspiring to serve in a leadership capacity would do well to seek out varied leadership experiences (Harvard Leadership, ACE Fellows, etc.) as early as they can to help them to begin to identify and sharpen their competencies and skillsets. Doctoral education provides a launching pad and academic credibility, but it is maximized when doctoral degree recipients seek progressively more challenging job responsibilities and mentorship opportunities (Carter, 2009; Smith, 2003). The education is critical, but the acquired work experience is the most significant.

As an increasing number of higher education presidents and other senior administrators postpone retirement in hopes of improved economic situations, academic forecasters are predicting catastrophic conditions when these senior leaders eventually retire. This mass exodus of seasoned, veteran administrators will create a severe shortage of qualified individuals and has aptly been coined the leadership crisis (Appadurai, 2009; Bensimon, Neumann, & Birnbaum, 1989; Stripling, 2011). Like secular colleges and
universities, the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) higher education institutions share strikingly similar demographic data and will also be impacted by this leadership crisis (Appadurai, 2009). Thus, the leadership crisis provides a unique vantage point for doctoral students and recent graduates to segue into mentorship opportunities.

Progressively more challenging job responsibilities include teaching (i.e. tenure-track positions), department chair positions, deanships, and academic vice presidencies for those on the traditional track (Carter, 2009; Smith, 2003). For those not on the traditional track, it seems that those progressively more challenging job responsibilities may be non-academic vice presidencies or work outside of academia based on findings of this study. Based on the responses of the presidents in this study, the diversity of experiences seems to lend itself best to the work required of these different positions as it provides the best means for Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) college and university sitting presidents to draw on past experiences to address current dilemmas. Doctoral students should seek out mentors and voice their interest in the office of president early on in order to stem the current practice of appointing more seasoned college and university presidents that are anticipating retirement. As some presidents mentioned, a younger president who is able to serve for 20 years or more does a greater service for the institution and him/herself than an older president who serves for six or seven years. It could be that the longer tenure allows for the president to shape and see strategic plans and vision to fruition, and allows her/him to best manage the resources of the institution.

For church administrators and senior executives. Church administrators, Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) college and university presidents, and other leaders should consider formal implementation of a leadership track and succession planning within the
SDA system. A leadership track does not have to be as formal as the Harvard leadership program or the ACE Fellows. The future of presidential leadership in SDA higher education is promising, but the SDA higher education system will need young leaders in the pipeline who articulate a desire to be mentored, and are willing to break the status quo. One president mentioned the idea of a one system school in the future. As radical as it may seem, it is understandable if one were to reflect on the associated ramifications. If the SDA higher education system were to consider a one system model in the future, it might be beneficial to have a mentorship track that may ensure that the future leaders have the training and knowledge of organizations to be successful.

Leadership is an engaging topic that inspires and motivates higher education administrators, as well as evoke great interest. Leadership helps to shape visions and strategic plans (Northouse, 2007). As the study of leadership in higher education informs professional practice, SDA college presidents, vice presidents, deans, directors, and other administrators might consider creating mentorship opportunities based on applicable leadership theories and frameworks that guide their leadership mettle.

**Recommendations for Further Research**

Despite the importance of presidential views of leadership in Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) higher education, there is limited research on the topic. Therefore, it is important for researchers and church policymakers to continue to explore both the qualitative and quantitative aspects between presidential views of leadership and the objective and subjective successes of an incumbent’s presidency. As one president shared, presidents should be held accountable to their stakeholders and should seek goals that are observable, measurable, and attainable. Dr. Romans believes that:
At the seventh year, an assessment needs to be made of the individual and the board to determine what the next five to seven years ought to be. I really believe in accountability... I want to know what are the objectives you’d like to obtain. I want to know when I’m winning or when I’m losing… It must be demonstrated. It must be measured in a timeframe.

This research only examined perceptions and views of 50 percent of the non-medical Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) higher education presidents, future research may consider including all 12 SDA college and university presidents in order to make sense of their richly descriptive lived experiences. Future research could also juxtapose SDA medical education with non-medical education in North America and identify similarities and differences. Moreover, the different body of literature that informs medical education may be quite revelatory compared to non-medical higher education.

The idea that the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (SDA) and Boards of Trustees typically select individuals trained in the ministry to lead SDA colleges and universities might suggest that other qualified candidates outside the system are overlooked. The perceived success of a president selected from outside the system, who is now leading his second SDA institution, suggests that there may be some untapped potential. Further research is needed to examine this claim.

Based on findings from this research, it became known that the leadership development program developed by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (SDA) does not have any specific leadership or mentorship tracks within. Future plans are to provide mentorship opportunities at the divisional level of the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) church structure (i.e. this study is based on the North American Division). This begs the question as to why such a program has not been implemented at
the SDA higher education institutional level. This would be something that could be examined in further research.

The length of time (i.e. presidential tenure) a Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) college or university president spends in office was another finding revealed in this research. Results suggest that length of time is unique and not well documented in the literature. It poses some interesting questions: do presidents who serve short tenures complete only projects that can be accomplished in a short period of time? Do they forgo monumental projects because such projects take years and/or decades to come to fruition? It is unknown, but does suggest the need for future research.

The research literature corroborates that the average age of a president is 60 (ACE, 2007a, 2007b, 2008; Cowen, 2008; Selingo, 2013; Stripling, 2011), but says little about the impact and incidence of younger presidents serving longer terms. What might research reveal examining the tenure of younger presidents? This also begs the need for inquiry and additional research.

Student-centrism is a critical topic and one that will benefit from further research, particularly related to SDA college and university presidents. Findings suggest that student-centrism may be something that resonated with a leader and instilled a passion within to champion student success and strive for student-centrism in all university processes. Future research may provide additional insight.

Finally, prior studies (Carter, 2009; Smith, 2003) examined the impact of personal experiences on the successful accession to the presidency in participants with spouses and children. It would be very interesting for a future study to examine the impact of personal
experiences on presidents with no spouses or children. What might the results look like? Only future research will tell.

**Reflections**

As I reflect on the experience of engaging in this research, it is a monumental feeling. The insights shared by the participants have influenced me and my thinking in ways that I could not have thought possible in December 2013 and before. Speaking with and probing Presidents Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, and Romans has enabled me to view ideas from multiple vantage points, as well as heighten my critical thinking and mental acuity relative to presidential views of leadership in Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) higher education, and leadership as a whole. At the beginning of this project, I thought my God-given purpose may have been to serve as a professor on a SDA campus and eventually as an academic leader, but based on the knowledge gained through this study, it is still very much an “old boys network” even though surface appearances may suggest otherwise because the SDA higher education system still largely favors pastors and those with a liturgical background. Corroborated by participants in the study, the SDA system prefers to appoint/select presidents that have a liturgical background even though there are a handful of presidents who may have experience outside the church system or outside education.

When I began this research, I was excited and ready to be taken under the wings of these Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) presidents. I yearned to learn from their experiences and their wisdom. It was a great joy that this project served not only as a means to add to the body of knowledge of SDA presidential leadership, but also served as a venue for the presidents to reflect on their current journeys and experiences. They
allowed me to give voice to their insights and they trusted me to frame it in the most meaningful manner. For that, I am humbled and grateful.

A significant aspect of this study was constant self-reflection and awareness as a researcher, a scholar, an administrator, and a future contributor to higher education. Through these lenses, the process has tested my mettle and has challenged me, as it should. The pervasive feeling of being incompetent was grueling; however, the guidance, the mentorship, the concern, and the care of my major professor, committee members, and peer reviewer bolstered me when I was dragging, and challenged me to increase the quality of this research. As a future scholar, professor, and administrator, I yearn to pass on what I have learned and share my insights with a future generation.

**Conclusion**

The presidential views of Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) leadership in this study shed insight into the unique issues and circumstances surrounding presidential leadership in SDA higher education. The views expressed illustrate pathways relative to the future of SDA higher education based on the perceptions of the presidents’ journeys in leadership that prepared them for their successful accession to the presidency.

Findings in the study suggest an increased need for succession planning, an increased professionalization of the presidency, and an increased presidential tenure in Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) higher education. The notion that there is an inadequate pipeline for SDA college and university presidents in the ranks, comprised largely of liturgical candidates, has created doubt concerning the future of SDA higher education among the sitting presidents. There seemed to be little optimism about the future and the SDA higher education system’s ability to attract the best and the brightest unless current
practices are amended for reasons such as the inability to compensate presidents at the rate of their independent college counterparts, the practice of recruiting pastors and conference presidents as SDA college and university presidents, and the lack of formal mentorship opportunities. Therefore, future SDA presidential aspirants will need to possess a solid understanding of organizational and leadership theory in order to best understand their institutions as organizational units and how best to draw on the different types of leadership theory to be effectual as leaders.

The understanding of organizational and leadership theory by future aspirants may not only serve to help them in their leadership and administration, but may also help them to pinpoint the specific competencies that are relevant to their unique institutions. The idea of the need for the increased professionalization of the presidency is that the type of leadership required is not the type of leadership that is available in a candidate with only a pastoral background. It seems that current and future Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) presidential aspirants will need to grasp the changing landscape of higher education and use theory and experience to manage and lead based on the increasing complexity of their organizations. Moreover, current and future SDA presidential aspirants might help their institutions and themselves over a period of time if they are younger and able to commit to serving their institutions for a period longer than six years (i.e. about 20 years) in order to facilitate capital development and see strategic plans to fruition.

By current and future presidential aspirants serving their respective institutions for a longer tenure, the institutions will not be undermined due to consistent leadership, and it may foster an environment in which there is a greater buy-in to the campus master plan
(i.e. strategic plan) by all constituents (internal and external). Installation of younger presidents may also allow the institutions to recruit presidents in their mid-forties and have those individuals serve the institution for at least 20 years. This could serve as a win-win for both the institution and the president, as the institution may follow a consistent course (i.e. strategic plan), and the president is able to see her/his children through K-12 education, and provide stability to the spouse’s career, as well.

The personal experiences of the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) presidents in this research reflect a deep spiritual connection to God, and how critical support systems are to an individual’s success. Without many of the spouses and children, these presidents may not have attained the level of professional success that they currently enjoy. Many of the presidents only considered their current or prior position based on the prodding and encouragement of their spouses and children. Historically, it has been a requirement for SDA college and university presidents to be ordained ministers, so it is expected that they would have a connection to God. Even though SDA presidents of the past have been ordained ministers, they have not all served in a ministerial capacity (i.e. some have been teachers their entire careers). Nevertheless, those who have been called to be SDA presidents have also received their calling from God. It appears that in spite of the divine calling, the strength of the familial connection had a very strong pull, at least for some of the SDA presidents who may not have pursued the lofty office of president without the encouragement of spouses and children.

In a different vein, the professional development experiences, such as the Harvard Leaders, ACE Fellows, and others, which are known in the non-sectarian literature for aiding in the successful accession to the presidency may be as important to Seventh-day
Adventist (SDA) college and university presidents. Additionally, the progressively more challenging job experiences, such as department chair, dean, school superintendent, or vice president (academic or other), which are common in the higher education literature for acceding to the office of president, appear to be similar career trajectories for successful accession to the SDA college and university presidency as each position challenges the incumbent with the new skills and competencies that are needed for that individual to advance.

This research only begins to fill the gap in the literature by providing insight into the experiences of current Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) college and university presidents. It will also serve as an introduction to the dialogue regarding SDA college and university presidents whose focus is unique in that these institutions, unlike non-sectarian higher education, have a spiritual and service component built in to their missions, strategic plans, and other governing documents. SDA institutions educate and cater to the body, mind, and spirit as reflected in the motto of Andrews University—corpus, mens, spiritus. The belief among Seventh-day Adventists is that God has given us tremendous gifts and talents and He has empowered us to serve. Through the missional foci of SDA colleges and universities, we are encouraged to typify the ideals and values of Jesus Christ through servant leadership.
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APPENDIX A
INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. Perceptions of Presidential leadership in SDA higher education:
   a. How do you think competencies of SDA presidents differ from presidents at non-sectarian institutions? (Probes: organizational strategy, resource management, communication, collaboration, college/university advocacy, professionalism, qualifications, skill sets, insights)
   b. How has the need for competencies changed the role of the presidency? (Probes: SDA church mission of clergy as presidents)
   c. What did you do to prepare yourself to be a leader? (Probes: what skills did you refine/develop; how do you address feelings of inadequacy; how do you see yourself as a leader?)
   d. What do you do to keep abreast of the literature in the field of higher education?
   e. What types of leadership theory do you rely on to lead? (Probes: trait theory, power and influence theory, behavioral theory, contingency theory, cognitive theory, symbolic theory)
   f. How do organizational theory and models of governance inform your work? (Probes: structural, human resources, political, and symbolic frames; bureaucratic, collegial, political, and organized anarchy models of governance)
   g. What are your perceptions of presidential leadership in SDA higher education?

2. Personal experiences contributing to the successful accession to the presidency:
   What personal experiences contributed to your accession to the presidency? (Probes: religious beliefs, spouse, children, family)

3. Professional experiences contributing to the successful accession to the presidency:
   a. What professional experiences contributed to your successful accession to the presidency? (Probes: prior job titles, graduate education, academic credentials)
   b. How did you become president of this institution? (Probes: educational background, career path, relationship to the church)
   c. What was your job title prior to accepting the call for this post? (Probes: Academic Vice President/Provost, Dean, Clergy, Church administrator)
   d. How did your prior job prepare you for this role?
APPENDIX B
PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Informed Consent to Participate in Research
Information to Consider Before Taking Part in this Research Study

IRB Study #00015401

Introduction
I, Christopher C. Combie, M.M., MT-BC., a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Adult, Career, and Higher Education at the University of South Florida, am inviting you to participate in a research study, which I am completing in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree. The research will be conducted under the direction of Dr. Wilma J. Henry, an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychological and Social Foundations in the College of Education at the University of South Florida. Your participation in the study is completely voluntary. We are asking you to take part in a research study called:

Presidential Views of Leadership in Seventh-day Adventist Higher Education

Why is this study being done?
I am conducting a study that examines presidential views of leadership in Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) higher education to provide understanding as to the unique skillsets and competencies needed to lead SDA colleges and universities.

Purpose of the study
The purpose of this study is to:
1) Identify the perceptions of presidential leadership in SDA higher education; 2) identify the personal factors that contributed to the successful accession to the presidency; and 3) identify the professional factors that contributed to the successful accession to the presidency.

Why are you being asked to take part?
I am asking you to take part in this study because you are a president of a non-medical Seventh-day Adventist college or university in North America.
What will happen during this study?

Prior to participation in the study, you will be contacted through email, provided with a cover letter to explain the study, provided with this participant consent form, and asked to complete a demographic questionnaire. Upon receipt of the consent form and demographic questionnaire, I will schedule an interview time through your Executive Assistant.

You will spend about one hour in this study engaged in a telephone or Skype interview that will be digitally recorded to answer questions related to your perceptions of leadership in Seventh-day Adventist higher education and personal and professional experiences that allowed you to accede to the presidency. Shortly after the interview, the researcher will send you a verbatim transcript to review for accuracy. The verbatim transcript will be prepared by the researcher or a third party transcription service. If a third party is used, the third party will sign a transcriber confidentiality agreement in addition to the strict confidentiality agreement executed at the corporate level. You will have two weeks to review and comment. If no response is received during that time, your verbatim transcript will be considered accurate.

Only the researcher (and transcription company, if used) will have access to the digital audio records of the interviews. They will be kept in a locked cabinet in the researcher’s home library. The digital audio files will be destroyed by the transcription company upon conclusion of the contract and all copies of transcripts will be turned over. The researcher will maintain the digital audio files for five years from the date of the final defense.

Total Number of Participants

About 12 individuals will take part in this study.

Alternatives

You do not have to participate in this research study.

Benefits

You may personally benefit from the opportunity to reflect on and share your beliefs and experiences. Additionally, your participation will enhance the limited body of knowledge regarding the experiences of SDA college/university presidents. Besides these potential benefits, which are minimal, there are no other physical, financial, or psychological benefits anticipated.
APPENDIX B (continued)

Risks or Discomfort
This research is considered to be minimal risk. That means that the risks associated with this study are the same as what you face every day. There are no known additional risks to those who take part in this study.

Compensation
You will receive no payment or other compensation for taking part in this study.

Cost
There will be no additional costs to you as a result of being in this study.

Privacy and Confidentiality
All the information I receive from you, including your name and any other identifying information will be strictly confidential and will be kept under lock and key. I will not identify you or use any information that would make it possible for anyone to identify you in any presentation or written reports about this study.

Voluntary Participation / Withdrawal
You should only take part in this study if you want to volunteer. You should not feel that there is any pressure to take part in the study. You are free to participate in this research or withdraw at any time. There will be no penalty or loss of benefits you are entitled to receive if you stop taking part in this study.

What happens if you decide not to take part in this study?
You should only take part in this study if you want to volunteer. If you decide not to take part in the study you will not be in trouble or lose any rights you normally have.

You can decide after signing this informed consent document that you no longer want to take part in this study for any reason at any time. If you decide you want to stop taking part in the study, tell me as soon as you can.

You can get the answers to your questions, concerns, or complaints.
If you have questions, you are may ask them now. If you have questions later, you may contact me at Christopher C. Combie, M.M., MT-BC, 4202 E. Fowler Ave., EDU 105, Tampa, FL 33620, via telephone at (813) 666-7369, or via email at combie@usf.edu.
If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research, you may contact the University of South Florida's Division of Research Integrity and Compliance at (813) 974-5638 or my dissertation chairperson, Dr. Wilma J. Henry, at (813) 974-2430 or via email at whenry@usf.edu.
APPENDIX B (continued)

Consent to Take Part in Research

It is up to you to decide whether you want to take part in this study. If you want to take part, please read the statements below and sign the form if the statements are true. I freely give my consent to take part in this study and authorize that my information as agreed above, be collected/disclosed in this study. I understand that by signing this form I am agreeing to take part in research. I have received a copy of this form to take with me.

Signature of Person Taking Part in Study       Date

Printed Name of Person Taking Part in Study

Statement of Person Obtaining Informed Consent and Research Authorization

I have carefully explained to the person taking part in the study what he or she can expect from their participation. I hereby certify that when this person signs this form, to the best of my knowledge, he/she understands:

- What the study is about;
- What procedures will be used;
- What the potential benefits might be; and
- What the known risks might be.

I can confirm that this research subject speaks the language that was used to explain this research and is receiving an informed consent form in the appropriate language. Additionally, this subject reads well enough to understand this document or, if not, this person is able to hear and understand when the form is read to him or her. This subject does not have a medical/psychological problem that would compromise comprehension and therefore makes it hard to understand what is being explained and can, therefore, give legally effective informed consent. This subject is not under any type of anesthesia or analgesic that may cloud their judgment or make it hard to understand what is being explained and, therefore, can be considered competent to give informed consent.

Signature of Person Obtaining Informed Consent       Date

Christopher C. Combie
Printed Name of Person Obtaining Informed Consent
APPENDIX C
COVER LETTER TO EXPLAIN THE STUDY

DATE:

Dear NAME OF PARTICIPANT:

I would like to invite you to participate in a study of presidential leadership practices and experiences in Seventh-day Adventist higher education. This study is the dissertation portion of the degree requirements of my Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree in Curriculum and Instruction: Higher Education Administration, Leadership and Management at the University of South Florida. I am exploring the experiences of Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) college and university presidents to determine the following: 1) identify the leadership competencies necessary of SDA college and university presidents that prepared them to accede to the presidency; 2) examine the extent to which leadership style promotes the mission of the SDA church in higher education; 3) determine and identify the experiences SDA college and university presidents followed to successfully accede to the presidency; and 4) identify the personal and professional factors that contributed to the successful accession to the presidency.

My selection of the Seventh-day Adventist higher education system stems from my profound commitment to Seventh-day Adventist education. I am a graduate of Andrews University and spent three years working there in Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management. Since then, I have served in teaching capacities at Western Michigan University and the University of South Florida. It is my hope that the results of the study will enhance the body of knowledge which we may use to meet the goals of Seventh-day Adventist education. Data and findings from this research will be reported in the aggregate. Your name, state, institutional information, and other identifying factors will be assigned pseudonyms for confidentiality.

The first part of the study involves a demographic questionnaire. You will return it and your consent form to me via email to combie@usf.edu. This should just take a few minutes of your time. The second part involves a semi-structured interview over the phone or electronic media (i.e. Skype, etc.) for an hour.

If you have any questions about participating, please feel free to contact me to discuss the study further. I also invite you to contact my dissertation committee chair at the University of South Florida, Dr. Wilma Henry (813/974-2430 or whenry@usf.edu), who will answer any questions you may have about the study or about me.

I am sure that when you reflect on your graduate experience, you can remember the relief in addition to the apprehension you felt at this point. You will also remember how important it was to obtain responses to any questionnaires you may have sent out. Please take the time right now to fill out this questionnaire. Your response is needed by December 18, 2013.

Thank you for your willingness to share your opinions.

Sincerely,

Christopher C. Combie, M.Mus., MT-BC, Ph.D. Candidate, Higher Education Administration & Org. Leadership/Mgmt.
Graduate Teaching Associate, Psychological & Social Foundations
University of South Florida, 813/666-7369
combie@usf.edu

Enclosures: 1. Demographic Questionnaire
2. Informed Consent Form
APPENDIX D
DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARTICIPANTS

PRESIDENTIAL VIEWS OF LEADERSHIP IN SDA HIGHER EDUCATION

Personal Background

What is your age range? __39 and under __40-49 __50-59 __60-69 __ 70 or over

What is your marital status? __ Single __ Married __ Other (please specify__________)

Do you have children? __ Yes __ No

Were you born into a Seventh-day Adventist family or were you converted? __________

______________________________________________________________________________

With which ethnicity do you identify? __ European American __ African American __

West Indian American __ Hispanic American __ Asian American __ American Indian

__ East Indian American __ Pacific Islander __ Other (please specify_________________)  

Educational Background

Please indicate all degrees earned and write in the major and concentration (if applicable):

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX D (continued)

Professional Background

Number of years as president at current institution: __________________________________________________________________________

Total number of years as college president: __________________________________________________________________________________

Student enrollment of current institution: ____________________________________________________________________________________

My job title prior to my current post was: ____________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

My pathway to ascending to the presidency has been:

___ Within academia (greater than 50%)    ___ Outside academia (greater than 50%)

___ Other ______________________________________________________________________________________________________________

I have a background as a member of the clergy (i.e. pastor, minister, chaplain, other spiritual leader): ___ No    ___ Yes  If yes, please describe post: ________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

I have a background as a church administrator (i.e. president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, or other post): ___ No    ___ Yes  If yes, please describe post: ________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX E
TRANSCRIBER CONFIDENTIALITY FORM

_____________________________________ agrees to transcribe interviews for the
(Insert Transcription Company’s Name)
doctoral research project of Christopher C. Combie, which is entitled Presidential Views
of Leadership in Seventh-day Adventist Higher Education. We will maintain strict
confidentiality of the data files and the transcripts. This includes, but is not limited to, the
following:

- We will not discuss the transcripts with anyone but the researcher.
- We will not share copies with anyone except the researcher.
- We agree to turn over all copies of the transcripts to the researcher at the
  conclusion of the contract.
- We will destroy the audio files we receive upon conclusion of the contract.

We have read and understand the information provided above.

_____________________________________  __________________________
Representative’s signature                  Date

_____________________________________  __________________________
Researcher’s signature                      Date
12/2/2013

Christopher Combie, M.M., MT-BC
Adult, Career and Higher Education
4202 East Fowler Ave.
Tampa, FL 33620

RE: Exempt Certification
IRB#: Pro00015401
Title: PRESIDENTIAL VIEWS OF LEADERSHIP IN SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST HIGHER EDUCATION

Study Approval Period: 12/2/2013 to 12/2/2018

Approved Items:
Protocol Document: Presidential Views of Leadership in Seventh-day Adventist Higher Education

Consent Document*: Informed Consent Form

Dear Mr. Combie:

On 12/2/2013, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) determined that your research meets USF requirements and Federal Exemption criteria as outlined in the federal regulations at 45CFR46 101(b):

(2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless:
(i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

*Please use only the official IRB stamped informed consent/assent document(s) found under the "Attachments" tab. Please note, these consent/assent document(s) are only valid during the approval period indicated at the top of the form(s).