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PRACTICES FOR DEVELOPING STUDENT LEADERS IN
CALIFORNIA CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS:
A QUALITATIVE EXPLORATORY CASE STUDY

By

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A DISSERTATION IN PRACTICE

Submitted to the faculty of the Graduate School of Creighton University in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in
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Abstract

Student leadership enhances the culture and life of secondary schools, particularly those which identify as Catholic. Student leaders design and implement experiences and initiatives that foster greater identification with a school's mission and charisms. Within the school community, leadership educators determine the attitudes, knowledge, and skills they will form in those students serving a variety of leadership roles. They are also responsible for developing the lessons and activities they will facilitate in the process of formation for student leaders. This qualitative exploratory case study interviewed 15 leadership educators from Catholic secondary schools located in (Arch)dioceses from throughout the state of California to identify the practices they engaged to grow the leadership capacity of their students. Twelve themes emerged from this study revealing 10 practices for student leadership development and two criteria for their effectiveness. These practices and criteria come together to create the student leadership development framework. Consequently, when set to five movements within the student leadership development cycle, they offer Catholic secondary schools a system for developing and forming student leaders on an annual basis. Working in tandem, the framework and cycle equip leadership educators in Catholic secondary schools with specific strategies resulting in the effective development of student leaders.

Keywords: Catholic, practices, secondary school, service, student leadership development

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to three family members who passed away during the process of completing the coursework, proposal, and research on my topic. First to my mother, Remy, whose pursuit of excellence and commitment to education has inspired my desire to keep learning and growing. To my father, Bobby, who taught me the values of faith, hard work, service, and compassion, as he made himself a friend to all he encountered. And to my brother, Dwight, for his love of life and example of seeking out that which brings one satisfaction and joy. Collectively they helped form me into who I am as a person of deep Catholic faith possessing a commitment to seek the good of others. Though their loss weighs heavily on my heart, I would not have been able to begin or complete this journey without them.

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Finally, I wish to recognize the students I have served and continue to serve as a leadership educator. There is nothing more satisfying than witnessing their growth as they navigate the challenges of adolescence, high school, and pursue meaning and purpose in one's life. It is my humble prayer that God blesses each of them greatly, for they are truly gifts of the Lord's grace at work in my life.

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CHAPTER ONE: OVERVIEW OF THE DISSERTATION IN PRACTICE PROBLEM

Introduction and Background

Leadership has become a highly desired field of inquiry over the past two decades (Northouse, 2019). The search to discover the elements that constitute effective leadership has prompted researchers to examine many aspects of leadership, from theoretical understandings to skills for leadership (Alvesson, 2019). As interest in leadership studies has grown, its impact on individuals and organizations continues to be measured. It describes the ways that leaders foster relationships with followers to accomplish shared goals. Moreover, the process by which leadership is passed among individuals and developed within organizational contexts is essential to the exercise of leadership today (Avolio et al., 2009). There are many opportunities for individuals in a variety of fields to develop their capacity for leadership.

Since the 20th century, the educational field has sought to understand how leadership is developed in adolescents. Levi (1930) researched the transfer of leadership from younger grades into secondary school finding that student participation in extracurricular activities offered at the junior high level contributed to leadership involvement in secondary school. However, the study equated leadership with activities whereas more recent research explores leadership from diverse perspectives. A 1944 study of seniors attending a Tulsa, Oklahoma high school explored a need to identify the specific characteristics that make up student leadership (Reynolds, 1944). Additionally, Rosch and Kusel (2010) suggested that there is much work to be done in terms of creating a national standard for defining and practicing leadership among students at the college and university level. In addition to standards, a critical need is integrating the

development of leadership skills with an understanding of the purpose of leadership (Caza & Rosch, 2013). All of this has resulted in an increase in leadership development programs for secondary school students (Rehm, 2014). Though these programs take many forms, at their heart is an intentional effort to teach students about leadership and empower them to utilize what they learn. Schools at the secondary level are encouraged to provide opportunities for young people to assume leadership roles, to learn and practice leadership skills, and to experience growth in their ability to demonstrate leadership (Bowman, 2014). In these cases, school resources are brought to bear on student desires to serve as leaders among their peers.

Redmond and Dolan (2016) advocated for a definition of youth leadership where young people's skills and competencies are empowered to facilitate change. However, Conner and Strobel (2007) suggested that a single definition may not be conducive to addressing the variety of strengths that individual young people bring to leadership. This creates the need for a broader understanding of the place leadership holds in the lives of youth. In other words, how does the practice of leadership empower young people and equip them to make a difference for good?

There are efforts being made to address the lack of a model for youth leadership development. A conceptual model, proposed by Redmond and Dolan (2016), considered the skills, actions, and environmental conditions necessary for youth to lead. Seemiller (2018) purported that a competency-based approach is useful as youth engage their abilities intrapersonally, interpersonally, societally, and strategically. Hastings et al. (2011) studied youth leadership within the context of community engagement in a rural setting, suggesting a paradigm model that is initiated by invitation and nurtured within

community. And, after surveying various models of adolescent leadership development, Rehm (2014) believed that a practitioner's model relying on the interface between identity/personality, self-efficacy, and best practices of leadership is conducive to effective leadership development in the school setting. Because of the emergence of student leadership development in various settings, identifying its practices has become a point of emphasis for research.

Given that secondary schools are a specific setting for leadership development and there is a particular lack of study in this area, an opportunity for research presents itself. Secondary school students are assuming a variety of leadership roles, from team captains on athletic fields to representation in student government. They are also participating in creative initiatives designed to nurture their growth as leaders. As this prioritization of student leadership development increases, programmatic responses abound. However, there remains a critical need to deepen understanding about student leadership, to broaden its influence, and to identify the ways in which leadership development is effective and successful in the lives of young people.

Statement of the Problem

Secondary school educators are vested in developing student leaders (Hoedel & Lee, 2018; Rehm, 2014). This reality is not lost on Catholic education (Hine, 2014; Lavery & Hine, 2013). Yet it is not known how educators in Catholic secondary schools describe the process of engaging students in leadership formation. Across our nation, leadership has become an emerging characteristic of Catholic education and can be found in numerous Catholic school mission statements and student learning outcomes. Heft (2011) stated that Catholic secondary schools provide more leadership opportunities for

students when compared to public schools. Even as Catholic secondary schools pursue leadership as a core value or emphasis of their institutional mission, existing research does not articulate how student leaders should be developed (Hine, 2017). Therefore, this study will explore the practices educators use to effectively form student leaders in Catholic secondary schools.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative exploratory case study is to identify the practices used by educators in Catholic secondary schools to develop student leaders. Specifically, this study will identify the practices by which the leadership capacity of student leaders in Catholic secondary schools is increased.

Research Question(s)

This research study will attempt to identify how the development of student leaders in Catholic secondary schools occurs. As such, it will explore the student leadership development practices employed by Catholic secondary schools. Identifying the ways Catholic educators grow the leadership capacity of students can lead to a process by which such development takes place. Therefore, this study will answer questions surrounding the phenomenon of student leadership development in Catholic secondary schools.

The following overarching research question guides this qualitative Dissertation in Practice study: What practices are used by educators in Catholic secondary schools to develop student leaders? Research sub-questions include: How are practices for student leadership development implemented by educators in Catholic secondary schools? What

are the criteria for determining the effectiveness of practices used by educators in Catholic secondary schools to develop student leaders?

Aim of the Study

The aim of this study is to propose a framework for student leadership development based on practices used by educators in Catholic secondary schools. By conducting this study in the context of Catholic education, it can be shared with Catholic secondary schools located throughout the United States, taking a step towards greater understanding of what constitutes effective student leadership development in that setting.

Proposed Methodology

The methodology of this study will be qualitative with an exploratory case study research design. Miles (2015) described case study as a method to identify practices that exist before and after research is conducted. Case studies focus on real-life settings to explore a problem or issue (Creswell & Poth, 2018). It is useful for research that delves into a specific experience (White & Cooper, 2022). As such, personal interviews are at the heart of gathering data for the proposed methodology. Analysis will follow from a process of coding and describing emergent themes from the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The emphasis of the case study method is to seek understanding of a particular process (Richards & Morse, 2013). For this research effort, practices for developing student leaders in California Catholic secondary schools is the phenomenon to be explored in this case study.

Participants in the study will include leadership educators from Catholic secondary schools located in (Arch)dioceses throughout California who form student

leaders. Participants will be drawn from student activities and campus ministry as the primary areas of student leadership development in Catholic secondary schools. Though all Catholic educators contribute to the leadership development of students, the general population for this study will be all personnel in student activities and campus ministry responsible for student leadership development in Catholic secondary schools within the United States. The target population is student activities and campus ministry educators in Catholic secondary schools who develop leadership in students.

A purposive sampling of Catholic secondary schools from around the State of California will be used to identify the participants for the interviews. The sample will seek to provide maximum variation among the included schools based on school size, demographic make-up of the student body, geographic location, and sponsorship by a diocese or religious order. The sample will consist of participants representing 12 of 110 Catholic secondary schools affiliated with (Arch)dioceses in the state.

Interviews will be used as the data-gathering tool. Participants will be invited to interview via email. Should attrition occur, the researcher will generate a list of replacement schools and additional participants will be invited. The researcher will gather and examine data from 12 participants, or until saturation is reached. Interviews will be conducted and recorded using online Zoom meetings. Recordings will be transcribed and analyzed using the online research tool, MAXQDA. Based on the data gathered, the researcher will identify the practices used by educators in Catholic secondary schools to develop student leaders.

Definition of Relevant Terms

Given that this study focuses on a specific group of schools sharing a particular heritage and mission, it is important to note the use of various terms describing its organizational context. The terms defined here help to articulate the religious affiliation Catholic schools identify with and practice as part of their normal activity. The following terms are used operationally throughout this qualitative study:

Campus ministry: Refers to the ministerial effort on a secondary school campus that fosters the faith growth of students by complementing theological learning and formation gained in the classroom, through participation in parish programs, and from their parents and families (Masterton & White, 2020).

Catholic: Refers to an official affiliation with the Roman Catholic Church.

Catholic education: Refers to institutions of learning affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church.

(Arch)diocese: The local expression of the Catholic Church as a geographic region led by a Bishop or Archbishop.

Educators: Adults employed by schools who work to deliver the educational outcomes desired by their respective institution.

Practice: An action or exercise performed regularly to increase proficiency in understanding or skill.

Religious order: A community of members who take solemn vows, committing them to a particular rule of life that is officially recognized by the Catholic Church.

Secondary education: Refers to institutions of learning that serve students in grades 6-12.

Secondary school: An educational institution serving students in grades 9-12.

Sponsorship: Defines the relationship between a Catholic school and the entity bearing responsibility for its operation.

Student activities: The secondary school department responsible for co-curricular events and student government.

Student leaders: Adolescents that attend secondary school and participate in leadership roles as designated by their respective institution.

Student leadership development/formation: Activities that contribute to the growth of leadership capacity in students.

Student ministry: Refers to the work of students who participate in youth ministry or campus ministry settings (Hackett & Lavery, 2010).

Limitations, Delimitations, and Personal Biases

The limitations of this study include those factors of the study outside the sphere of influence of the researcher and inherent weaknesses found in the researcher's methodology (Roberts, 2010). Therefore, one limitation of this study is its sample size as there are a limited number of Catholic secondary schools and leadership educators included in the sample. Additionally, though the sample is purposive, it is not exhaustive, and this creates the potential for difference outside of the purposive sample. Another limitation is the lack of existing research specifically in terms of Catholic secondary schools within the United States. The results of studying Catholic secondary schools within the State of California may not necessarily be generalizable to all Catholic secondary schools. The human element can affect research by creating limitations in self-reported data as participants may neglect relevant information or embellish it. Also,

the expectations of research participants can serve as a limitation by affecting what is shared in a qualitative inquiry. Finally, as the research takes place within the 2023-2024 academic year, any change that occurs as the study takes place will not be reflected in the data.

The delimitations of this study describe the parameters by which it will be conducted (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019; Roberts, 2010). The study will be focused on Catholic secondary schools located in California. The schools in the sample will be sought from the (Arch)dioceses of Fresno, Los Angeles, Monterey, Oakland, Orange, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco, San Jose, Santa Rosa, and Stockton. Schools selected for this study will be representative of the diversity found throughout the region, including geographic location, size of student body, ethnic and socio-economic make-up, gender, and educational model. The sample will be derived from educators responsible for student leadership from Catholic secondary schools. Interviews will take place from March 2023 to May 2024. The study will examine the various elements that constitute each school's efforts to develop student leaders.

Beyond limitations and delimitations, bias is inherent given the researcher's role as a Catholic educator and leadership teacher. These affiliations must be acknowledged from the outset and addressed through the practice of reflexivity. Use of the qualitative exploratory case study approach will help in limiting bias, especially if a lack of assumptions is practiced throughout the research process. Allowing the data to speak independently will foster validity when identifying the practices Catholic secondary schools use to form student leaders. Finally, the potential for bias will be reduced by not

including those Catholic secondary schools in the sample with which the researcher has had a past affiliation.

The Role of Leadership in this Study

Robbins and Judge (2016) defined leadership in terms of an ability to exercise influence with others and to realize a set of goals or a specific vision. This ability is not confined to a particular role or stage in life. Adolescents possess the capacity to exercise leadership and hold potential for expanding their knowledge of and skills for leadership. This is the premise held by a variety of organizations including schools and non-profits (Monkman & Proweller, 2016; Shera & Murray, 2016). In response, these organizations have launched a variety of initiatives aimed at developing youth leadership.

Critical to such development is the role of adults who serve as advocates and protagonists for youth leadership (Bowers et al., 2016). Their efforts determine what constitutes viable practice for leadership development and their implementation of it provides the starting point for the process of student growth as leaders. Representing the perspective of those bearing this responsibility places an emphasis on leaders developing leaders. Gleaning wisdom and insight from their work will strengthen our understanding of how the transition to accomplished leadership is made. The data gathered from Catholic educators participating in this study will describe how young people learn to lead through their understanding leadership concepts and demonstrating leadership behaviors while applying them in a specific context. In this case, the context is that of Catholic secondary schools affiliated with (Arch)dioceses in California. Studying Catholic educators and their approaches to developing student leaders will reveal their perceptions of that responsibility. Therefore, an examination of the practices used by

these Catholic educators and their impact on student leaders can lend credence to developing a framework that describes the process through which students grow as leaders who exercise their influence among their peers and in campus-related activities.

Significance of the Dissertation in Practice Study

This study will contribute to the field of Catholic secondary education in the United States through focused scholarly research on the topic of developing leadership among Catholic secondary school students. Most of the research in this area is limited to Catholic schools in Australia (Coffey & Lavery, 2018; Hine, 2017; Hine 2014; Hine 2013; Lavery, 2008; Lavery & Hine, 2013). This study will focus exclusively on leadership development within Catholic secondary schools located in the State of California. By describing the experiences of leadership educators, the study will contribute to a deeper understanding of the practices by which student leaders are formed. Additionally, the study will provide an examination of the ways these practices might serve as a framework for student leadership development in Catholic secondary schools.

Overall, existing research on student leadership development has provided a limited articulation of both process and practice. The literature demonstrates that there are positive impacts for the personal growth of student leaders (Bowman, 2014; Hoedel & Lee, 2018). The involvement of student leaders in activities offered throughout high school develop the interest of students in taking on leadership roles (Rosch & Nelson, 2018; Simonsen et al., 2014). Additionally, relationships with role models and peers have been shown to foster characteristics of leadership in secondary school students (Bowers et al., 2016; Schneider et al., 2002.). This research study will seek to understand how

student leadership is fostered and grown in young people within the specific context of Catholic secondary schools in California.

Conducting this study will benefit Catholic educators responsible for the formation of student leaders in four ways. First, it will identify the practices that are commonly utilized in the development of student leaders. Second, by proposing a framework within which such development takes place, Catholic educators can adopt a strategic approach to student leadership formation. Third, future student leaders in Catholic secondary schools will benefit from this research as they engage in processes and practices that are proven by research. Finally, the study will help other educators understand how a student is best formed as a leader and this can guide the implementation of student leadership development efforts in the Catholic secondary school setting. Even though this study is focused on Catholic secondary schools, its findings may have relevance to other secondary school settings including public schools as well as religious, private, and independent schools. These entities can identify or implement practices in their respective context and use them as impetus for creating their own initiatives focused on developing student leaders.

Ultimately, the study will extend the current literature by describing the practices used in the formation of student leaders in Catholic secondary schools. Additionally, this research will suggest a process for approaching student leadership development in Catholic secondary schools in the United States. The effort will help to improve the current situation by providing a framework to guide future practice and policy. It will also add to the literature by delving into the topic as it pertains to a specific geographic context, that of Catholic secondary schools in California.

Summary

This concludes chapter one of the Dissertation in Practice proposal. In this chapter, the case is made for the study of student leadership development in Catholic secondary schools. This emanates from a trend in which young people are the object of leadership development in various settings. In response to this trend, this study proposes an examination of the practices used by educators in Catholic secondary schools to develop student leaders. The research question, “What practices are used by educators in Catholic secondary schools to develop student leaders?” and sub-questions “What student leadership development practices are more commonly used by educators in Catholic secondary schools? How are practices for student leadership development implemented by educators in Catholic secondary schools? What are the criteria for determining the effectiveness of practices used by educators in Catholic secondary schools to develop student leaders?” specify the variables the study will consider, and these will shape the direction of interviews with Catholic educators. Thus, the aim of this study is to propose a framework for the development of student leaders based on the practices used by educators in Catholic secondary schools.

Furthermore, this section describes the qualitative exploratory case study method as the researcher’s preferred approach to the topic. This is followed by a definition of terms found throughout the proposal. Because this study involves research within a specific context, understanding the vocabulary unique to this context is essential. The delimitations, limitations, and biases of the study and its researcher are identified, and they outline the boundaries within which the study will take place. A reflection on the role that leadership plays in this study is also included. Lastly, the significance of the

Dissertation in Practice study outlines the benefits this research topic will provide by expanding the base of knowledge and literature in the fields of education and leadership studies.

CHAPTER TWO: PRELIMINARY LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Leadership as a field of study has experienced tremendous growth since the 1970's (Landis et al., 2014). In addition, scholarly research in the field has yielded commitment to a more scientific approach that seeks evidence-based understanding and practice (Day et al., 2014). Specifically, historical shifts in the way human beings interact and organize, especially with the onset of the industrial and technological ages, have contributed to the recognition that leadership makes valuable contributions to the progress of humanity. This continues today as global interactions increase the need for leadership that addresses challenging issues such as economics, poverty, environmental concerns, racism, violence, and political unrest. The exercise of leadership has become a necessary function for many, especially those whose roles involve the management of human capital.

Given these trends, leadership can be found in a wide variety of contexts and settings. Political leaders are relied on to encourage national growth and foster international relations. Business leaders seek organizational health while attempting to compete successfully in the marketplace. Leaders in the health care industry develop approaches to provide care that is affordable and improves the quality of people's lives. Educational leaders offer guidance to teachers and school staff so that the young people of today are equipped to take on increased responsibilities for leadership as they get older. In the field of human and social services, dedicated leaders seek solutions that provide for basic human needs across the world through practices that are just and provide an equitable distribution of resources. Even in the sports and entertainment

industries, leadership is exercised as teams seek world championships and entertainers work to create blockbuster films and television shows.

Leadership has no age limitations as adults, young adults, and adolescents are developing an understanding of leadership and the skills needed to make valuable contributions benefitting organizations and individuals. In particular, the cultivation of leadership in young people is becoming an area receiving greater attention, especially as a topic of study (Bowman, 2014; Conner & Strobel, 2007; Karagianni & Montgomery, 2018). Certainly, as the present generation of leaders looks to the future, there is a recognition and acknowledgement that the development of new leaders must be pursued. This can be seen in the efforts being put forth at the college and university level with degree programs focused on leadership and the emphasis on developing leaders articulated by secondary schools throughout the country. This discussion leads to the question: How, then, are today's leaders attempting to form leadership in future generations?

This literature review presents findings about leadership development among young people of secondary school age. It will be followed by a review of the literature identifying the variety of settings and approaches in which their leadership development takes place. Next, practices leadership educators use to develop the leadership capacity of students will be explored. Finally, it will provide an analysis of leadership theories and models related to older adolescents. This review attempts to demonstrate the quality of scholarship related to youth leadership development as well as provide a foundation for the pursuit of additional study.

Leadership Development and Young People of Secondary School Age

Scholars are interested in the process of how secondary students develop into leaders. At the same time, there are myriad ways and contexts in which youth leadership development is occurring. Among the factors examined by researchers are age, social skill, context, and activities. These factors contribute to a deeper awareness of how youth leadership development takes place.

When looking forward to a new generation of leaders, the issue of age becomes an area of focus. Dhuey and Lipscomb (2008) found that a student's relative age, within a specific cohort or grade level, contributed to a greater likelihood in holding leadership positions and accumulating leadership experience. In a longitudinal study, Guerin et al. (2011) noted that social skill is related to one's leadership potential. As individuals engage in activities pertinent to leaders, exercise extraversion, and show some qualities of transformational leadership, their capacity for leadership increases. These studies indicate that youth leadership formation is affected by age and social skill and therefore should be considered when studying young leaders.

Given this developmental perspective on adolescents, the process of maturation, and identity formation, provide important markers in growing student leaders. Rehm (2014) suggested that identity and personality are integral to developing secondary school student leaders. Engaging in leadership activity shapes the individual by allowing for reflection that results in clarification of values and formation of one's character. This fosters self-efficacy, which in turn, generates confidence in one's ability and a willingness to continue and expand their leadership experience. Rehm (2014) reported that these experiences can be assessed on a scale known as the "Student Leadership

Practices Inventory” (SLPI). This inventory was developed by Kouzes and Posner as an instrument to measure the leadership behaviors of college students but is also used with young people of secondary school age (Posner, 2012). It verified that leadership makes a difference, especially when practiced on a consistent basis. Additionally, students were able to examine their personal experiences and apply them to learning about leadership and how they might improve their practice of it in the future. Posner (2012) also found that the SLPI was applicable across a variety of demographic factors including gender, ethnicity, and educational level.

The wide variety of young people and contexts affects the ways that students develop their knowledge and skills for leadership. Student participation in sports, school, and extracurricular activities contribute to a positive perception of their leadership abilities (Hancock et al., 2012). This, combined with the influence of parents and supportive adults, provide two ingredients that encourage youth to grow in their leadership skill. These findings are like those reported by Kagay et al. (2015) who studied youth participants in local chapters of the Future Farmers of America. The participants believed that holding leadership roles within the organization provided them with the unique opportunity to exert influence on others. At the same time, it was the encouragement that they received from others, especially an adult teacher or advisor, that provided the impetus for their seeking leadership roles and responsibilities. Both studies show that young people of secondary school age can and do develop as leaders.

Young people themselves are becoming more adept at understanding and demonstrating leadership. Lavery and Coffey (2021) studied the leadership perceptions of students in grades seven through nine. They found that the students expressed a

comprehensive view of leadership, identifying traits and characteristics of distributed, transformational, and servant leadership (Lavery & Coffey, 2021). Students also placed great emphasis on leadership as a relationship rather than as an expression of authority. They expressed that leadership is demonstrated by people of integrity who are courageous, other-centered, and inspirational (Lavery & Coffey, 2021). Based on these findings, Lavery and Coffey (2021) recommended that the voice of students should be included when planning student leadership development programs.

In terms of understanding what contributes to leadership development programs for students, Meyer and Rinn (2021) conducted a systematic review of 38 existing studies on leadership talent development and adolescents. Their critical review surfaced four themes that provide direction for student leadership development. The first theme indicated that leadership talent is developed through an interplay among a students' cognitive ability, their psychosocial skills, domain-specific skills, context, and opportunity (Meyer & Rinn, 2021). Each of these factors should be considered when creating opportunities for leadership development. The second theme noted that the development of skills for leadership happens best when students apply them to leadership situations. More skills application and practice results in growth and adaptation as skills are used over time (Meyer & Rinn, 2021). The third theme situated leadership development within particular social and cultural contexts which shape students' potential for growth in leadership. Meyer and Rinn (2021) identified the final theme as student leadership development requiring a balance of direct instruction, experiential learning, and adaptation. These findings provide guidance for developing the leadership talent and capacity of young people.

Thus, efforts to help youth learn and practice leadership are increasing. They are also diversifying. As individuals and organizations establish new programs for the leadership development of young people, there is increased awareness of their various needs and circumstances. Because it is more widely known that youth are capable of leading, that they embrace opportunities to do so, and that adults play a critical role in their growth, there has been a burgeoning movement to create structures and initiatives that respond to and cultivate young people's interests in leadership. This bodes well for a new generation of leaders who are ready to assume the leadership roles presented to them.

Leadership Development of Young People in Various Settings and Contexts

From fostering leadership growth in young women to students of color in civic organizations to camp programs, chances to lead abound. This diversity promotes a generative approach to youth leadership development opening the door to further exploration of this topic. As young people encounter new opportunities to learn and practice leadership, many strategies to support them are being implemented across a variety of settings and contexts. This review now turns to an examination of the literature related to strategies employed to foster the development of leadership in young people in different settings and contexts.

In the case of young women, Michael and Mitton-Kükner (2016) suggested that gender plays a role in youth leadership development as negative stereotypes and expectations can be placed on female leaders. A critical element to help navigate stereotypes is the important role that adults can play in helping young women to assert their leadership (McNae, 2015; Michael & Mitton-Kükner, 2016). There is also the

element of voice that requires making space for all involved in learning and decision-making to feel comfortable participating. Attending to the relational aspects of youth leadership development are a recurring theme when examining research related to other populations of young people.

First Nations youth in Canada benefitted from a variety of initiatives that fostered leadership development over time and has resulted in a core group of youth leaders who assumed greater responsibility for leadership among their peers (Crooks et al., 2010). Grenwelge et al. (2010) posited that leadership opportunities should also be provided to young people with disabilities. This effort can promote the acquisition of skills for self-advocacy and leadership thereby empowering youth with disabilities to speak for themselves while working on solutions that support their growth. The same is true for students of color who can assert their leadership in a variety of ways (Bertrand, 2018). Given their unique experiences and perspectives, they can challenge institutional injustice as change agents who lead reforms aimed at improving the situation of their peers. Each of these populations presents a specific contextual concern for those promoting opportunities for youth to lead. The research indicates that there is a need to address the specific context to provide effective leadership development opportunities among young people.

One way to address context is by offering leadership development opportunities in settings where young people reside or have interest. Shera and Murray (2016) and Monkman and Proweller (2016) demonstrated the effectiveness of civic engagement programs that allow youth to interact with environments outside of the school setting and experience leadership growth in their local community. Summer camp settings also

provide an avenue for leadership development of youth (Martin, 2018). The residential experience of camp provides young leaders with time for reflection that encourages their personal and social growth. Athletics are also found outside of school environs as club teams enable young people to participate in sports year-round. Though their study focused on student athletes in secondary school settings, Dobosz and Beaty (1999) found that athletes demonstrated higher leadership scores than those who did not participate in sports. Another venue for athletes is the formation of a leadership development club that specifically focuses on learning and practicing leadership (Blanton et al., 2014). The literature points to leadership facilitators implementing a variety of approaches in seeking to address both the desire for youth to lead and providing innovative ways to channel that desire toward serving diverse populations of young people.

Leadership Development in the Secondary School Setting

Most efforts for developing young people as leaders occur in adolescence with specific emphasis in the secondary school years. As a result, the educational field has taken to heart the inclusion of leadership as a key element of the secondary education experience. Ninety years ago, Levi (1930) pointed out that education was concerned about the transfer of leadership from younger grades into secondary school. The interest in preparing young people to contribute to society via intentional leadership development strategies has grown and it continues to be an important educational aspect and point of emphasis for secondary schools.

Secondary school educators have endeavored to form the character and leadership of their students and do so in a variety of ways. Efforts have been made to commit class time to the study and practice of leadership through the development and implementation

of curriculum as well as supportive resources (Hoedel & Lee, 2018). At the same time, students require opportunities to practice leadership and apply their learning to real-life scenarios (Bowman, 2014). It is from practice that students will glean deeper insight to leadership as they reflect on their experiences using the knowledge and skills they are acquiring. Simonsen et al. (2014) noted that incoming college students have benefitted greatly from their involvement in secondary school activities. This participation equipped students with characteristics of leadership that could be applied in a new setting. This correlates with the work of Rosch and Nelson (2018) who suggested that young people experience a progression from leadership in secondary school into college. Participation in student activities and organizations as well as holding office or another designated leadership role in secondary school both contribute to young people's ongoing development as they assume leadership at the college level.

Of particular interest is the part that relationships play in leadership development during the secondary school years. Adults in the secondary school setting hold primary responsibility for this task and exert it in multiple ways. More specifically, the interactions between an adult with the young leader, can take on the quality of role modeling where knowledge and experience are shared in a mutually beneficial relationship (Bowers et al., 2016). The impetus for leadership growth resides in the way that the relationship is conducted rather than the influence of the position the adult holds relative to the young person. As adults exercise positive leadership behaviors and characteristics, their influence comes in the desire for the young person to emulate the adult thus learning to take on leadership for their self. Additionally, perceptions of leadership potential by young people's peers can be an indicator of leadership success in

secondary school (Schneider et al., 2002). In other words, peers' understanding of a student leader's personality traits and academic ability contribute to their willingness to identify students who will be effective leaders in their respective school. This correlates with adult ratings of students' aptitudes for leadership (Schneider et al., 2002). Adults and peers in the secondary school setting have much to offer when it comes to the selection and formation of young leaders.

One relationship that is prevalent in the secondary school setting is that of student athletes and their coaches. Voelker et al. (2019) studied how coaches in secondary school sports approached the leadership development and training of team captains. While coaches relied on team captains to handle conflicts among teammates, addressing teammates whose behavior is detrimental to the team, and taking risks such as confronting difficult situations, they were less likely to employ intentional approaches to foster leadership in team captains (Voelker et al, 2019). Additionally, Pierce et al. (2020) found that secondary school student athletes viewed leadership as a function of task and relationship. Task leadership is based on actions such as working hard and managing time, while relational leadership emphasizes caring for and satisfying the needs of teammates (Pierce et al., 2020). Taken together, these studies show that coaches can integrate leadership development within existing structures related to their sport. In this way, their work results in a more intentional effort to develop leadership in young people of secondary school age.

Research indicates that secondary schools and educators are making concerted efforts to develop leadership among their students. There is also a desire to understand how this process takes place as well as what can be done to increase the engagement of

students in opportunities for leadership development. These efforts are resulting in a variety of initiatives that seek to form strong and effective student leaders.

Leadership Development in the Catholic Secondary School Setting

A more specific setting for study is that of Catholic secondary schools serving 520,875 students in 1,174 secondary schools nationwide (National Catholic Educational Association, 2024). Hine (2013) noted that student leadership in Catholic schools is an area of focus garnering great interest. The context of the Catholic secondary school, with its values and faith-based approach, add a specific point of emphasis that nuances its formation of student leaders. However, there is a lack of research related specifically to youth leadership development as it pertains to Catholic secondary schools in the United States. Most study of this topic has been done with students in Australian Catholic secondary schools, offering significant insight to how leadership development takes place in the Catholic secondary school setting.

Hine (2013) suggested that the development of student leadership in the Catholic secondary school setting contributes to individual growth and the shaping of school culture. As such, Catholic educators should commit resources to offer and promote opportunities for students to develop leadership (Hine, 2013). Specifically, Catholic school principals hold student leadership as a priority for their schools (Lavery & Hine, 2013). Given their role, principals should provide modeling and mentoring for student leaders, assist in the design of leadership opportunities, communicate leadership and school values to the school community, and promote a vision for leadership at their schools. A major consequence of this research is that efforts should be made to develop

the capacity of student leaders that are in alignment with the educational outcomes of the school.

In terms of programmatic approaches, Lavery (2008) proposed that service learning be included as an element of developing student leaders. The benefits of this approach are to be found in the cultivation of social awareness and character in students, giving of one's own time and talents for the good of another, and a heightened sensitivity to issues concerning social justice. Bickett (2008) concurred with the role that service plays in the leadership development of high school students, specifically when it comes to those in a Catholic female single-sex high school. Leadership then is practiced at the personal, school, and community levels, attempting to create the most good for all related to the Catholic school setting (Hine, 2017). And this should not be limited to simply the Catholic secondary school. Coffey and Lavery (2018) advocated for a continuum of opportunities throughout the whole of Catholic education that foster age-appropriate leadership development in students from primary grades through secondary school.

Hine (2014) also engaged focus groups of student leaders in a longitudinal case study to identify the benefits and shortcomings of their experience. Student leaders named the number of leadership opportunities, the number of student leaders participating, and working with other student leaders as the main benefits they receive from their involvement. In terms of shortcomings, a lack of involvement of younger leaders, the perception that leaders are elected based on their popularity, and the evasion of responsibilities by some student leaders were viewed as detrimental to the experience of the student leaders participating in the study. Hine (2014) encouraged Catholic school

educators to regularly evaluate leadership programs and identify areas for improvement and work to strengthen them.

While student leadership is expressed in many ways like public, private, and independent secondary schools, one key area of distinction for Catholic secondary schools is the development of student leaders within campus ministry. While the Church has not articulated a particular plan for campus ministry in Catholic secondary schools, it has done so for the university and collegiate level. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (2020) identified six aspects of campus ministry that are the emphases of pastoral action within educational institutions. These aspects include appropriating the Catholic faith, developing leaders for the future, educating for peace and justice, forming community, forming conscience, and personal development. A national qualitative study on Catholic campus ministry conducted by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) noted one of the study's principal findings as ensuring that students are prepared to take responsibility and exercise leadership (USCCB, 2020). While this finding is related to preparing students for life after graduation, the need for students to share in the creating, planning, preparing, and implementing of campus ministry should be a point of emphasis. In the case of Catholic secondary schools, this rings true.

A specific dimension of campus ministry is the work done directly with and for students. Hackett and Lavery (2010) used the term student ministry to identify this dynamic. They described the need for student ministry as the Catholic secondary school's response to the societal challenges faced by young people. Among these challenges are the clarification and practice of values as a response to materialism and moral relativism, a focus on the self and one's immediate relationships without regard for the needs of and

responsibilities to the wider community, and a weakening sense of spirituality in the face of anxiety and an excessive desire for achievement (Hackett & Lavery, 2010). Student ministry moves the opportunity for leadership development into areas different from student government, clubs, and athletics. In their study of student ministry, Hackett and Lavery (2011) identified five findings that are relevant for Catholic educators responsible for developing student leaders. The first is that schools whose cultures embrace service provide a context for leadership development among students. This culture enables students to respond freely in meeting the needs of others around them, an element of student ministry and leadership. Third, through reflection on their experiences of serving others, the spiritual and religious lives of students can be nurtured. Providing a comprehensive system or series of programs can create a multiplicity of leadership opportunities for students. Lastly, the role of adult educators is essential as they provide mentorship and guidance to aspiring student leaders.

Belmonte and Calleja (2020) studied the role of student ministry as it pertains to the religious formation of younger students. Leadership development was at the center of this student ministry effort as 80 students were prepared to implement and facilitate a series of retreats in support of the sacramental life of students from the Diocese of Bathurst in Australia. Students were empowered to lead others in theological reflection and religious study that was found to be appropriate and relevant for the life of an adolescent. The student ministers of this program found the experience to be impactful on their leadership capacity as well as their own growth in faith (Belmonte & Calleja, 2020). Whether it is called campus ministry or student ministry, the notion of student leadership development is expressed through a Catholic secondary school's faith-based identity and

programming. This facet is unique to Catholic secondary schools as it provides an additional layer of opportunity for students to exercise leadership.

This survey of existing research points to two critical aspects for developing leadership in students at Catholic secondary schools. First, that such an effort must be intentional, purposeful, and strategic, relying on best practices to develop student leaders. Secondly, that it requires a serious commitment from educators, especially principals, to sustain the processes and systems that facilitate the effective development of young people into leaders. These elements are essential for Catholic secondary schools to effect changes that provide optimal opportunity for their students to participate in meaningful experiences that shape consistent leadership growth.

Practices for Developing Student Leaders

The effort to develop student leaders requires the engagement of a variety of approaches and practices. It is through the effective implementation of such practices that student leadership development takes place. In their study of undergraduate business students, Allen and Hartman (2009) used Conger's four approaches to leadership development to identify 20 sources of learning used in developing leadership in students. The first approach is that of personal growth which relies on journal reflections, small group reflections, personal vision statements, service learning, and informal networking as sources for learning. Conceptual understanding is the second approach, and it can use case studies, film and television clips, lecture, expert panels, tours, stories, observations, books or articles, and research as practices that foster learning about leadership. Conger's third approach is feedback which can be accumulated through assessments and

instruments. The last approach is skill building which can involve a low ropes or team course, icebreakers, simulations or games, and role-playing activities.

Allen and Hartman (2009) found that students preferred leadership education that focused on personal growth and skill building. The practices used in these approaches represent a focus on the individual's development as a leader. They also encourage the best opportunities for hands-on involvement. Students were less inclined to prefer those leadership development approaches related to conceptual understanding and feedback. The sources of learning found in these categories rely on group interaction or instructor choice and do not require as much direct involvement from students. Based on these results Allen and Hartman (2009) recommended that leadership educators attend to student preferences and design leadership learning experiences that provide opportunities for self-development. At the same time, some sources of learning are best conducted in a group setting and require interaction among students (Allen and Hartman, 2009). In this circumstance it is recommended that attention be given to ways in which the individual student can attend to their learning, even when working collaboratively with a group. Allen and Hartman (2009) suggested that incorporating a diversity of leadership development practices from all four of Conger's approaches, leadership educators can balance student preferences for personal growth and skill building with opportunities to foster conceptual understanding and feedback that will deepen students' learning about leadership.

Jenkins (2013) built upon the work of Allen and Hartman (2009) when conducting a study of over 300 leadership educators. Given that Allen and Hartman (2009) examined the preferences of students, Jenkins (2013) looked at those from the

educator's point of view. Jenkins (2013) offered seven categories of instructional strategies utilized in student leadership development programming. More than any other strategy of the seven, class discussion was the practice exercised most. To maximize effectiveness, class discussion, interactive lecture and discussion, and small group discussion must take place in an environment where inclusivity, empowerment, and ethics are part of a purposeful learning process (Jenkins, 2013).

Jenkins (2013) second through fourth categories focused on conceptual understanding. Conceptual understanding improves students' knowledge of leadership topics and is attained in three ways. First, using research and observation where strategies such as group projects and presentations, research projects and presentations, and guest speakers are utilized to inform students about leadership theories, themes for leadership research, and provide them the opportunity to learn from peers or guest presenters (Jenkins, 2013). Second, conceptual understanding attained through interaction is best expressed through small group discussions, team building exercises, and student peer teaching (Jenkins, 2013). Jenkins (2013) noted that these strategies achieve optimal results when a skilled facilitator is active in the learning process. The next category looks at conceptual understanding and feedback. Included in this group of strategies are leader interviews, lecture, story or storytelling, individual leadership development plans, media clips, research projects and presentations, and self-assessments and instruments (Jenkins, 2013). These practices are aimed at developing leadership understanding through reflection, practice, and feedback. All these categories support the student leader and expand their capacity for understanding what leadership is and how it occurs.

Jenkins (2013) identified the fifth category as personal growth. These strategies are geared toward helping the student leader reflect on the personal applications of their learning. Reflective journals, service-learning, icebreakers, individual leadership development plans and in-class short writing are the strategies identified within this category. The sixth category is skill building and includes games, simulations, and role play activities. These strategies allow student leaders to learn by doing and experiencing in a setting focused on purposeful activity. The seventh and final category is that of traditional assessment where exams and quizzes are the strategies used for leadership education. In comparison to the other categories, traditional assessments are the least frequently utilized instructional strategies to develop leadership in students. The 24 instructional strategies identified by Jenkins (2013) and the 20 sources of learning from Allen and Hartman (2009) provide a strong foundation for understanding what constitutes an effective practice for leadership development in students.

The findings of both their studies complement the model of high-quality leadership programs proposed by Eich (2008). The model organized 16 attributes of high-quality leadership programs into three clusters. The engagement of students in the building and sustaining of a learning community emphasizes the role that individuals play in helping others to grow as leaders. The educational process is relational, and this is also demonstrated in programs that foster leadership development. Student-centered experiential learning are those opportunities that involve students in concrete activities and promote their development as leaders. Finally, continuous program development that is grounded in research allows leadership educators to “include flexible program design to accommodate student interests, content anchored in model leadership behaviors, and

systems thinking applied for constant program improvement” (Eich, 2008, p. 184). The attributes identified by this study provide a lens through which leadership educators can view and organize their approach to developing student leaders.

Practices for Developing Student Leaders in Undergraduate Education Settings

Most research on student leadership development can be found in higher education at the undergraduate level. Kiersch and Peters (2017) indicated that leadership development in this setting utilizes a variety of formats and practices, including classroom-based learning and direct experiences. Without a common language or theoretical framework, student leadership development can lose its connection to the broader leadership research discussion. This is why Kiersch and Peters (2017) attempted to bridge this gap by proposing 11 main competencies in the leadership development of undergraduate students. Drawn from authentic and servant leadership theories, these competencies offer an integrated framework to student leadership development. They distinguish the competencies based on an inward versus outward focus. Self-awareness, unbiased processing, humility, and courage make up the inwardly focused leadership competencies. The outward focused competencies include authentic behavior/authenticity, authentic relational orientation, empowerment, accountability, the ability to stand back and put others first, interpersonal acceptance, and stewardship. When combined with experiential learning, these competencies provide an educational approach based on action, reflection, cognition, and experience that prepares students to lead amidst a complexity of circumstances, issues, and resources (Kiersch & Peters, 2017).

Research performed by Rosch (2015) determined that classroom-based team learning experiences, in and of themselves, do not constitute effective student leadership development. Instead, he proposes that leadership education must be intentional and include structured planning as well as post-experience reflection for it to be effective. This means that team learning experiences can serve the development of student leaders when educators partner them with a strong curriculum and opportunities for structured thinking. This notion of a curricular emphasis on leadership development is seconded by Knight and Novoselich (2017) who found that leadership development is best accomplished by incorporating leadership and professional skills within a course approach. Friedel et al. (2016) took this to heart in their development of a peer leadership course based on Kolb's experiential learning theory. The course includes three components: an online course, a supervised peer leader experience, and a recitation meeting. By designing the course using experience and content and incorporating learning through interaction and designated peer leadership roles, a comprehensive approach to student leadership development is realized. The practice of integrating a curricular approach in a classroom setting with structured experience lends itself to effective development of student leaders.

Undergraduate leadership educators also employ a variety of reflection strategies to assist with the process of developing leadership in students. Johns et al. (2017) proposed that structured, student-centered debriefings of experiential learning activities serve as a key component to the transfer of learning. These debriefings consist of three phases that engage students in critical reflection that leads to deeper learning. The description phase is centered on the experience itself and helps students to articulate a

clear and detailed understanding of what took place and how they responded in the moment. The analysis phase allows students to identify the lessons and learning they glean from the experience. Students apply previous learning as well as compare or contrast similar situations from other contexts. This phase develops critical thinking and higher-order cognitive skill. The third phase is the application phase, and it moves students to discern what is meaningful from the experience and transfer it to other aspects of their lives. Facilitating a debrief requires planning and preparation so that learning objectives can be realized through the implementation of this reflective activity.

Researchers have identified practices that encourage student learning through intentional reflection. These practices can be applied to leadership learning and development. Jenkins and Clarke (2017) identified 20 different options for engaged journaling. Engaged journaling builds on in-class journaling by targeting specific strategies enabling the leadership educator to broaden their approach to journaling. These are then applied to reflection on experiences from outside the classroom. Implementation of these options has provided students with several benefits for learning. Students can develop a more holistic comprehension of concepts by being provided with a multiplicity of ways to express understanding. Disengaged students benefit from these opportunities for reflection because they allow for creative individual expression. Using engaged journaling as a steppingstone toward class discussion has resulted in more robust student interaction. Finally, this practice provides educators with an entry point for giving critical feedback to students.

Maellaro (2013) offered a structured form of journaling that uses three touchpoints for reflection: insight, application, and implications. Students provide

insights they glean from classroom presentations and activities to discover their deeper meaning. They apply their insights, using them to develop their understanding of leadership. Implications refer to the various connections students make to organizational contexts such that their practice of leadership is expressed in new ways. As a departure from journaling, Moore et al. (2010) incorporated reflective writing as a form of experiential learning used with undergraduate leadership development students. Reflective writing maximizes learning by increasing the likelihood of student retention and internalization of concepts, allowing them to better articulate and grasp their leadership learning. Reflective writing helps students to recognize any transformation they have achieved because of critical examination of their experience.

Harrop et al. (2018) proposed another form of writing in the practice of a prior learning assessment. The prior learning assessment is an essay modeled after the phases of Kolb's experiential learning theory. In the initial narrative, students describe their learning experience. This is followed by writing about their observations and reflection on the experience. Students then list learning outcomes to generalize the information gleaned from their reflection. Finally, the student writes about the ways they have been able to apply the initial learning experience to new experiences (Harrop et al., 2018). Reflection is a foundational element of experiential learning theory and the practice of recording and writing about leadership experiences enhances students' ability to learn and apply new ideas and knowledge.

While reflective writing emerges from the individual, there are several student leadership development practices that involve a group dynamic. Swinford et al. (2019) described a one-week leadership development camp that emphasizes learning and

practice in a series of assigned teams. Team members work cooperatively to address challenges and solve problems designed to test their leadership skill. Other elements of the camp include 360-degree feedback from team members, a one-on-one debriefing with a leadership counselor, self-evaluation, and the completion of a daily entry in a personal learning journal. The experience of camp was found to be effective in developing the leadership capacity of participating students.

Matthews et al. (2018) reported that use of a student society was effective in assisting medical students learn medical leadership and management skills. The society took on the task of organizing a series of extracurricular educational events that emphasized leadership topics. The events relied on personal storytelling and case-based interactive discussions to engage students in conversation about the role that leadership and management play in the field of medicine. The student society was successful in enhancing the undergraduate curriculum, and it enabled students to take responsibility for their own learning. These make the student society a valuable practice for advancing the learning of leadership.

Another group approach is teams that learn leadership by participating in service-learning projects (Snell et al., 2015). The service projects were connected to academic courses as a cocurricular requirement. The projects fostered the practice of leadership as students learned through interactions with their teammates or by taking on responsibility for coordinating certain activities. These activities brought students into relationship with representatives of service organizations, recipients of service, and team members. The reality of circumstances presented by individual projects created the context within which students exercised leadership and grew as leaders. In a similar vein, Tabloski (2016)

pointed to mentoring and leadership development in nursing education through the creation of mentoring and leadership projects. One of the projects involved a student-focused leadership conference where mentees designed and implemented the conference program. Another project involved the transition of underrepresented nursing students to graduate education. In this project, a toolkit and opportunities for mentorship were created to assist nursing graduates of racial, ethnic, or gender minorities. Building intentional relationships is a practice of developing student leaders that can be delivered in myriad ways including project-based teams, educational societies, and professional mentorships.

The final set of leadership development practices described in this review are concrete experiences that allow students the opportunity to learn by doing. Simulations are low risk experiential exercises that encourage application and deeper learning. Strickland and Welch (2019) described a capstone simulation for leadership development in nursing education where students engage in a mock hospital designed to simulate the reality of professional nursing practice. In addition to the experience itself, students were given opportunities to debrief and share their reflections with faculty and staff as well as other students. Katsiolouides and Cannonier (2019) studied a semester-long internship focused on leadership development with undergraduate students. Through an examination of internship portfolios, the researchers identified a series of leadership themes that helped to develop the capabilities of student leaders. These include self-awareness, growth, project planning, team management, and adversity management. Additionally, students were able to expand their view of leadership and build leadership self-efficacy.

All of this is the result of delving into the practice of leadership in a setting immersed in real conditions and situations.

Similarly, the Empowering Leadership Project designed by Webber et al. (2020), sought to improve management students' understanding and practice of empowering leadership through a team-based process focused on a leadership challenge. In this project, each team must analyze and research the various elements of the challenge, then propose solutions and implementation plans to solve it. The teams also author a written report and provide an in-class presentation to demonstrate what they learned from attempting to solve their respective leadership challenge. The semester-long project proved to be an experience that helped students face authentic leadership challenges in preparation for future roles and responsibilities as well as practice the skills they have accumulated (Webber et al., 2020). Through the practices of classroom-based learning, intentional reflection activities, group/teamwork, and concrete experiences, leadership educators facilitate the development of leadership knowledge and skill within undergraduate students.

Practices for Developing Student Leaders in Secondary School Settings

Though the bulk of intentional leadership development is taking place in the higher education setting, several practices have been touted as successful with secondary school students. Hoedel and Lee (2018) studied a dedicated classroom curriculum for secondary school students emphasizing character development and leadership education. The Character Development and Leadership Program was found to be effective in cultivating personal traits that reduce students' antisocial behavior and promote character and leadership. All of this was delivered in a focused classroom setting and led to

positive social interactions within the student body. The key to realizing such results was the leadership educator's pursuit of a program based in research of best practices (Hoedel & Lee, 2018).

Classrooms are not the only places within a secondary school where leadership development is happening. Athletic participation has been deemed a prime arena for the practice of student leadership development (Dobosz & Beaty, 1999; Simonsen et al., 2014). In a study of 60 suburban secondary school students, Dobosz and Beaty (1999) found that participation in school sports contributed to an increase in leadership ability. Simonsen et al. (2014) noted that first-year college students who participated in athletics and community service as secondary schoolers reported greater self-perceptions of leadership characteristics. Blanton et al. (2014) described the effectiveness of a leadership development club for secondary school athletes that integrated a learning process through multiple gatherings, defined roles, and implementation of a leadership development program for middle schoolers. Their research encourages leadership educators, in their role as facilitators, to provide an empowering context where student athletes share ownership over the process, consistency in leadership growth over time, and flexibility that allows for adaptation to meet the learning needs of students.

In addition to athletics, community service and service learning contribute to leadership development in students (Hackett & Lavery, 2011; Lavery, 2007; Lavery, 2008; Lavery, 2009; Simonsen et al., 2014). Lavery (2007) suggested that service-learning holds many benefits by providing leadership opportunities, encouraging leadership development by students, and offering a constructive means for students to model leadership. Lavery (2009) goes on to describe how service-learning promotes

student leadership. First, students engaged in service-learning can begin to develop leadership skills. Secondly, service-learning enhances student participation in civic responsibility. For service and service-learning to be most effective, particularly in Catholic secondary schools, adequate resources in terms of staffing and budget must be allocated (Lavery, 2007). Students' participation in community service serves as a steppingstone to participation in leadership. Hackett and Lavery (2011) found that service and leadership were elements of a student ministry program that worked hand in hand in a Catholic secondary school. They propose that a Catholic secondary school can buttress its leadership development efforts when it cultivates a culture of service. Such a culture encourages students to take initiative in performing selfless acts that serve the needs of others and provides opportunities for religious formation. Finally, a comprehensive student ministry program offers multiple leadership roles that give students the chance to exercise service and leadership. Service and service-learning are practices supporting student leadership development.

Student leadership development has emerged as a response to specific needs experienced by secondary schools and students. Winchester (2018) described the work of Students Organized Against Racism (SOAR) as a form of critical leadership development. SOAR prepares students to serve as facilitators of difficult conversations pertaining to race. It accomplished this through the offering of four one-day workshops spread throughout the school year (Winchester, 2018). Winchester (2018) characterized the approach toward leadership development using the name, D.I.Y. as a way of articulating each component of the framework. Decentering adultism is its initial component which works to increase the voice and agency of youth while adults take a

reduced role. Inculcating a culture of critical self-reflection engages students in examination of their own experiences with issues related to race as well as learning how to converse across differences. In the last component, youth act on their capacity for leadership and work to create initiatives that combat racism (Winchester, 2018).

Atkinson et al. (2019) noted that mental health issues gave rise to young people's involvement in leading school mental health strategy. Through the establishment of a wellbeing ambassador program, a team of educational psychologists worked with students to identify ways to promote mental health and destigmatize the need for support while encouraging others to seek help. The wellbeing ambassadors identified mental health stressors related to each year in school as well as designing a mental health support guide for students (Atkinson et al., 2019). The student ambassadors also took responsibility for sharing their new-found knowledge by making presentations to peers and creating a video about their work. Related to mental health, Wulandari et al. (2019) researched the role peer leadership can play in reducing suicidal ideation. Training was provided to prepare students to serve as positive role models to students who have expressed suicidal tendencies. The peer leaders learned skills in communication, team building, and project planning. The program was able to achieve a reduction in the instances of suicidal ideation (Wulandari et al., 2019).

Creating structures in which defined leadership roles may be assumed by secondary school students is another practice that secondary schools exercise to foster student leadership. Rosch and Nelson (2018) noted that student involvement in secondary school organizations and holding official positions within them contributed to leadership development as well as future participation in collegiate organizations. This involvement

predicted leader self-efficacy, leadership motivation, and development of skills for leadership (Rosch & Nelson, 2018). Eke (2022) investigated a South African Schools Act mandate for the establishment of representative councils of learners in schools. He found that while the students serving on these councils exercised leadership, there was no formal training of leadership development provided by the schools. Eke (2022) identified this as a major flaw in the implementation of the representative council of learners and its ability to exert influence over school-related concerns. Hine (2013) studied a functioning program of student leadership where students were elected to leadership roles through a house system. Student leaders were provided training events that provided a study and practice of leadership. They reported that their efforts made positive contributions to the school community especially in terms of shared leadership, serving student needs, and achieving goals set by their house. It was also found that collaboration among student leaders and their educators broadened their capacity for balancing academic commitments with leadership responsibilities and navigating difficult situations. Hine (2014) also noted that the practice of student involvement in an organized program helps to develop leadership in students at a personal, school, and community level.

Duckworth et al. (2019) found that an interfaith dialogue program provided opportunities for student leadership development. The program was established in Broward County Public Schools to reduce incidents of interfaith bullying. Though the research could not quantify this, it did find that students exercising leadership roles could contribute to a more peaceful school culture (Duckworth et al., 2019). The combination of dialogues and student-led peace projects demonstrated students' capacity for

facilitating conversations and designing a need-focused initiative. Such efforts allow students the chance to lead change and achieve a positive impact on their school.

Lavery and Neidhart (2003) advocated for the exercise of leadership by secondary school students in Year 12. They suggest that all Year 12 students should be provided opportunities to exercise leadership within their respective school community. These could be expressed in a variety of roles and commitments that possess designated leadership responsibilities. Offering multiple ways to participate can encourage senior students in their practice of leadership at a level each feels most appropriate. At the same time, Coffey and Lavery (2018) envisioned leadership development occurring in younger grades. In providing a continuum of opportunities, leadership development can be appropriated by age and grade level through both formal and informal student leadership structures (Coffey & Lavery, 2018). Just as important is the role of school administrators, faculty, and staff who encourage and support student leadership. Hackett and Lavery (2011) concurred as they cite concerned adult mentors as a key contributor to the development of student leaders in the context of student ministry programs in Catholic secondary schools.

Another practice specific to the Catholic secondary school setting is the planning and implementing of retreat programs where older students provide faith witness to younger peers (Belmonte & Calleja, 2020). In their study of the Catholic Schools Youth Ministry Australia model, Belmonte and Calleja (2020) found that planning and implementing a retreat program provided student leaders with multiple opportunities to engage their leadership abilities. This was accomplished with the assistance of adults who facilitated the process of preparing student leaders for their role. The student leaders had

a profound impact on the younger students they were charged with helping. This element of peer mentoring, under the auspices of a religious retreat, had mutual benefits for student leaders. In addition to those described previously, the practices of adult and peer mentoring, comprehensive programming, and formal leadership structures or systems contribute to the successful development of student leaders.

A final practice serving the purpose of forming and developing student leaders in secondary schools is that of gathered programs, some of which are offered outside of school campuses. Pearson (2021) described a private university's effort to develop and implement a week-long High School Leadership Academy held in the summer for rising sophomores. The program integrated the elements of leadership learning and an action-based project that would address a critical challenge in their respective school and community. The *Student Leadership Challenge* by Kouzes and Posner (2014) was selected as the curriculum framework for the academy while the Student Leadership Practices Inventory® was used as the pre-post survey to assess students' leadership growth (Pearson, 2021). Students reported significant improvement in their perception of self as leaders in addition to gaining a deeper understanding of leadership based on survey results.

Gathered programs are also prevalent in Catholic circles as targeted opportunities for developing student leaders. Founded in 1982, The Association of Catholic Student Councils (TACSC) provides leadership development programs for members of student councils at Catholic schools. TACSC provides the following programs to Catholic secondary schools in California and Arizona: Student Leadership Days, a High School Summer Leadership Seminar, and the opportunity to serve on a regional Core Leadership

Team that teaches and mentors middle school students (The Association of Catholic Student Councils, n.d.). Its programs are based on the four curriculum pillars of real-world strategic planning, effective communication, servant leadership, and lifelong mentorship. Lasallian Student Leaders is a week-long summer program sponsored by the Office of Young Lasallians for the Christian Brothers District of San Francisco-New Orleans (Brothers of the Christian Schools, District of San Francisco-New Orleans, n.d.). This annual program draws together students from Lasallian Catholic secondary schools located throughout the states of California, Oregon, Washington, Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, and Louisiana. Students participating in Lasallian Student Leaders hold designated leadership roles at their respective school. They gather to develop their skills for leadership, acquire a deeper understanding of leadership, and learn to apply these in the context of their school campus. YouthLeader was a program of the Center for Ministry Development that began in 1995 and was offered at various sites throughout the United States and Canada before the Center closed in 2021 (Center for Ministry Development, 2021). It was designed as a Catholic training experience for secondary school age young people and can be conducted in a variety of formats ranging from one to five days. At its core, YouthLeader provided leadership formation and personal development utilizing a variety of educational techniques to foster student growth. Gathered programs provide another option to the range of practices available for the purpose of developing student leadership.

Practices for Developing Student Leaders in Other Settings

As has been expressed, the development of students as leaders is present in a variety of settings. Thus, practices for developing student leaders can be found in settings

apart from education. The work of Shera and Murray (2016) outlined seven strategies for leadership development that are present in the Creative Institute for Toronto's Young (CITY) Leaders Program. These strategies worked together to promote desirable outcomes in the young people participating in this initiative. The first strategy is focused on the promotion of connective relationships with peers as well as mentors and instructors. The second is the creation of a peer community that exhibits trust, respect, and pursues learning in a collaborative environment. The introduction of new ideas, values, and knowledge is the third strategy. The fourth is participation in systems analysis and formation of a shared vision for change. Fifth is the practice of critical self-assessment and the sixth is the enhancement of skill and capacity for leadership. Lastly, participants can engage in additional growth by accessing new opportunities. Shera and Murray (2016) found that each of these strategies, individually and collectively, contributed to the overall leadership development of the CITY Leaders Program participants.

Another civic-inspired practice is the Urban Teen Summit being implemented in South Central Texas (Scott et al., 2021). The summit was developed to increase student engagement in schools and community, bring students and community leaders into meaningful dialogue, and to build the leadership capacity of students from underserved and underrepresented populations. Scott et al. (2021) stated that student leaders were trained to serve as facilitators for conversations that included young people and community stakeholders. They were also prepared to lead discussion on topics important to the community such as civic activism by youth, police relations, and entrepreneurship (Scott et al., 2021). The result of the summit is a platform for students to engage the

community and its stakeholders in productive ways. It also leads to a variety of grassroots initiatives. Scott et al. (2021) concluded that the summit was instrumental in providing students a sense of purpose as they were prepared to lead. This resulted in increased confidence, improved relationships with others, deeper community connections, and a sense that their voice is valuable and important.

Combining the practices of peer mentoring, a leadership course, and a conference gathering fostered the leadership development of First Nations youth (Crooks et al., 2010). Peer mentoring, in partnership with adult mentors, created ownership not only in the program but also facilitated meaningful connections among youth and adult participants. The leadership course served as a classroom based, rather than an extracurricular, approach to the intentional building of leadership skills. And the conference gathering reinforced practice while enabling young people to participate in community outreach. This program of leadership development has contributed to a strengthening of the native cultural identity belonging to First Nations youth.

Blythe and Harrè (2020) studied the MAD or make a difference program in Auckland, New Zealand which develops sustainability leadership in secondary school students. The program's centerpiece is a three-day residential camp where students participate in a range of activities emphasizing environmental stewardship. The post-camp experience lasts for two years and includes connections via email and social media, quarterly gatherings, and mentoring (Blythe & Harrè, 2020). The researchers found that the MAD program had a positive impact on the leadership capacity of its participants. The students experienced transformative learning and exercised the competence to take appropriate action in relation to environmental concerns (Blythe & Harrè, 2020). They

have been able to apply their learning to take on leadership of creative projects in their schools and communities that contribute to increased sustainability for the future.

An afterschool program is the setting for leadership development in the Civic Engagement Program (CEP) where student voices are empowered to take initiative in decision-making within and outside of school (Monkman & Proweller, 2016). This begins with students developing good habits of self-leadership and relational leadership. The key to the CEP is the creation of “space” that is conducive to leadership development. These include the physical, curricular, structural, and relational space that allow youth to be, grow, and do. This notion of space goes beyond that which is defined by walls or structures, but also refers to the kind of environment that supports maturation and growth. Physical space contributed to growth by using a classroom located in a remote area of a school building. Curricular space allowed for creativity and innovation in the delivery of learning activities with purpose. Structural space refers to the flexibility CEP had by not being tied to the requirements of in-school programming. And relational space was created through the supportive relationships built among students and staff. Each of these spaces contributed to CEP’s ability to help students conceptualize leadership then begin to apply it “in relevant and purposeful ways that effect change” (Monkman & Proweller, 2016, p. 194).

The notion of space is also addressed by Bertrand (2018), who described the concept of a third space as temporal where personal interactions result in new social relationships or shape culture (Bertrand, 2018). The notion of a third space emerged from researching the leadership development of students of color who received guidance from adults and participated in defined program roles. This occurred through Youth

Participation Action Research (YPAR) whereby students and adults partnered in researching local issues that can then be acted upon. Bertrand (2018) suggested that students in the YPAR program used third spaces to gain and increase their influence within the program. This allowed students to position themselves as leaders and provide valuable feedback regarding the issues they were responsible for researching. While not exercised in traditional educational settings, these practices were found to be effective in developing leadership within young people. The final area for review will be identifying practices for student leadership development emerging from models of youth leadership.

Practices for Developing Student Leaders in Models of Youth Leadership

In Rehm's (2014) proposed practitioner's model for high school leadership development, leadership assessments and personal application experiences are considered foundational practices. Leadership assessments such as the Student Leadership Practices Inventory and the Myers Briggs Type Indicator are used to raise self-awareness in students regarding their identity, personality, and ways of practicing leadership. Learning gained from the assessments is then applied to personal application experiences where students work on a specific project. This combination of practices fosters self-efficacy, leading students to identify successes through their reflection on the project. The practices are part of a learning process that emphasizes personal growth as students absorb their training, implement their projects, and develop new understandings and skills.

In their conceptual model of youth leadership development, Redmond and Dolan (2016) suggested that mentor access contributes to the creation of an environment conducive to developing young leaders. Mentors provide a sounding board to help young

leaders navigate obstacles, challenges, and doubts while providing encouragement and inspiration to a dedicated pursuit of leadership growth. Mentors also offer the wisdom of their experience and expertise as ways to support the development of youth entrusted to their care. Young leaders, in partnership with adult mentors, participate together in the process of learning the attitudes, skills, and behaviors that are part of leading effectively. When mentor access is coupled with authentic opportunity, the proper environmental conditions are present to encourage the development of leadership in young people (Redmond & Dolan, 2016).

Hastings et al. (2011) introduced a paradigm model of youth leadership and community engagement that identifies a series of collaborative actions and interactions among adults and youth fostering leadership development. In their research, young people noted that the invitation to participate in community engagement by an adult was a significant factor in their willingness to contribute. Once involved, the interactions between youth and adults leveraged common interests into social capital. Because of this, youth were encouraged by adults to help in shaping a common purpose or project. A collaborative relationship developed as young people expressed their views and worked collectively with adults to identify and shape ideas that would contribute to improving a particular issue within their community. Young leaders saw each adult as championing the activities of and relationships among group members (Hastings et al., 2011). Adults also helped to create the type of supportive environment that fostered validation and collective action.

The practice of involving adult role models and mentors was found not only in models of youth leadership development but also in related studies. Bowers et al. (2016)

offered a role model-driven framework for youth leadership development that highlights relationship as the foundation for leadership growth. When a role model builds a strong relationship with a young leader, the role model earns the right to influence the young person's desire to grow in leadership. Parents and other adults also contribute to youth leadership development by shaping young people's perceptions about and openness toward assuming leadership roles (Hancock et al., 2012). Parental support is a key factor in young people's willingness to serve as designated leaders. Kagay et al. (2015) pointed to the influence of advisors, agricultural teachers, and parents on youth who pursue and sustain their involvement in chapter leadership roles within the organization, Future Farmers of America. The use of assessments and personal application experiences at the individual level and the involvement of mentors and role models at the interpersonal level highlighted here, are additional practices enhancing the development of leadership among young people.

Leadership Literature

While secondary schools engage in the pursuit of effective leadership practices, leadership theories applicable to young people are part of this quest. Given the context of the Catholic secondary school as a religious educational setting, which theories are applicable to student leadership development is an ongoing question beyond the scope of this study. However, Canales (2014) believed that the current understandings of youth leadership development fall short when it comes to a foundational theory to guide it. He noted that the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops envision leadership development of young people as an extension of the Church's ministry that can impact any of its members (Canales, 2014). As such, leadership development in the faith-based

context will include aspects of Christian discipleship. Navigating this tension is embedded in the reality of developing student leaders in Catholic secondary schools. To advance the conversation, Canales (2014) identified the theories of servant leadership, transformational leadership, moral leadership, and spiritual leadership as contributing to a fuller understanding, and therefore more effective pursuit of, Christian leadership as proper to the context of the Catholic secondary school.

Servant Leadership

Canales (2014) saw servant leadership holding a place in student leadership development in a Catholic setting noting that its characteristics can be found in those stories of Jesus of Nazareth from the Gospels of the New Testament. Hine (2011) identified instances in New Testament Scriptures where Jesus speaks and acts in ways that are congruent with servant leadership. Blanchard and Broadwell (2018) viewed Jesus as the best example of what it is like to live as a servant leader and Robert Greenleaf, who proposed servant leadership in his seminal work with that title, references Jesus as an exemplar (Greenleaf, 1977). He posits that servant leaders are motivated by serving others first. They desire to support the growth of others, helping others by address their needs and helping others to realize that they can provide similar benefit by offering service. Greenleaf (1977) expressed concern that the educational field had not embraced leadership formation as part of its mantle and that it was not committed to helping young people learn how to clarify values. Despite these concerns, there has been great interest in recent study of servant leadership, and this has helped to legitimize it as a normative theory of leadership (Johnson, 2015; Northouse, 2019). Researchers found servant leadership to be the primary approach exercised in the Australian Catholic high schools

they studied (Hine, 2014; Hine & Lavery, 2013). These schools' emphasis on servant leadership helped to shape young people who extended their contributions as leaders beyond the school community. However, student engagement in leadership development began with a pursuit of their personal growth then moved to making selfless contributions that strengthened their school cultures.

Moral/Ethical Leadership

Leadership in the Catholic school context goes beyond service, requiring a desire to behave ethically and exhibit moral integrity (Canales, 2014). The practice of moral and ethical leadership focuses on who leaders are and the actions they take (Northouse, 2019). For leaders to garner followers, they must be willing to speak and act in ways that demonstrate fairness, honesty, and build trust with others (Robbins & Judge, 2016). Johnson (2015) described the leader's expression of ethical and moral standards as integral to exercising authentic leadership which requires internalized moral perspective as one of its components. All of this requires a heightened self-awareness and understanding of one's own values. Ethical leadership possesses similarities also expressed in spiritual and transformational leadership (Brown & Treviño, 2006).

Brown and Treviño (2006) stated that there is a relationship between ethical leadership and the overall effectiveness of a leader. Their research found that ethical leadership is not only related to an individual leader's personal characteristics but also to their efforts as a moral manager (Brown & Treviño, 2006). Moral management includes a willingness to model acceptable ethical behavior, to promote such behavior, and to address instances where others must be held accountable to an ethical standard. The work of Mayer et al. (2012) found that moral identity is key to demonstrating ethical

leadership. When the leader is motivated by the personal characteristics constituting their moral identity, they are then able to serve as an example of ethical behavior in the organizational setting. Solinger et al. (2020) suggested that the individual leader engages moral leadership when they exercise moral awareness, recognizing that there is a gap between a particular circumstance and some perceived value. This awareness then triggers a moral motivation to respond in an ethical manner which requires the leader to act with a sense of moral courage where they are willing to face undesirable consequences to uphold a value that has meaning for the leader or the organization. The internal and external dimensions of moral/ethical leadership contribute to the kind of leadership that is consistent with Christian discipleship.

Spiritual Leadership

Fry (2003) presented spiritual leadership as a theory founded on the qualities of vision, faith/hope, and altruistic love. He suggested that spiritual leadership meets the needs of both leader and follower such that their commitment to and production for the organization increases. At the personal level Sweeney and Fry (2012) proposed that spiritual leadership can serve as a form of character development by the leader's promotion of the spiritual well-being of others. This character development can serve to help others discover a sense of meaning and purpose. Brown and Treviño (2006) noted that some spiritual leaders are seen as having a higher calling to serve others or a divine power. Canales (2014) believed that spiritual leadership is appropriate to Christian discipleship as it invites the leader to seek divine guidance, discern the will of God for their life, and involves a practice of meditation and prayer.

Research done by Low and Ayoko (2020) identified three characteristics that embody the spiritual leader: authority, spiritual lifestyle/humility, and role modeling through inspiration. These characteristics form the basis of the spiritual leader's efficacy with developing followers. Followers are the focus of the spiritual leader and their sense of care and altruism for others is the driver for the relationship between leader and follower (Low & Ayoko, 2020). Wang et al. (2020) found that this relationship to the spiritual leader also results in increased helping behavior exhibited by their followers. Their findings have positive implications for workplace spirituality and its contribution to improved outcomes for the organization. Based on this research, the theory of spiritual leadership is relevant for the development of student leaders in Catholic education.

Transformational Leadership

Canales (2014) defined transformational leadership as “a process that has the potential to change and ultimately transform individuals, groups, and organizations” (Canales, 2014, p. 37). He views Jesus exhibiting transformational leadership, leading by example and enabling others to realize their fullest potential, empowering others with a sense of self-motivation, challenging others to live morally and encouraging them to do so, and exerting a charisma that others found appealing to follow. Hine (2011) cited transformational leadership as a theory that is relevant to the development of student leaders. Johnson (2015) referred to the work done by James MacGregor Burns, Bernard Bass, and Bruce Avolio related to transformational leadership. Transformational leadership focuses on the quality of relationship between the leader and the follower that raises motivation and morality in both (Northouse, 2019). Northouse (2019) pointed out that Burns' places emphasis on communal values that bring the attention of leaders to the

needs of others as the element that makes one's leadership transformational. It seeks change and accomplishes change. Johnson (2015) cited the work of Bass and Avolio who identified the characteristics of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration as hallmarks of authentic transformational leaders. This term marks the difference between those whose leadership works for good versus leadership that is self-seeking, manipulative, and creates conflict. Zacharatos et al. (2000) studied the effects of transformational leadership in adolescents and found they can practice such leadership and have influence over their peers.

The application of leadership theory to young people appears to be at fledgling stage (Karagianni & Montgomery, 2018). This reality leaves the path to discovery wide open, creating opportunities for understanding the ways that young people engage leadership through further study and research. At the same time, there is evidence that leadership theories are present in the educational setting as educators strive to find ways to help their students develop their knowledge of and skills for leadership. In addition, the theories of leadership addressed here are in harmony with the exercise of Christian discipleship which is one aspect of student leadership development in the context of the Catholic secondary school. In sum, the future is one of promise where new revelations about young people and leadership are poised to capture the attention of secondary school youth, school administrators, teachers, and parents alike.

Summary

This review of literature provides specific findings related to leadership and their connection to young people of secondary school age. The review demonstrates that leadership development with adolescents is taking place in a variety of settings and

contexts as well as with young people of diverse populations. Such broad interest in the topic shows that applications of leadership are being made and understanding their contributions to the development of young leaders is apropos. Despite this diversity, the value of youth leadership is upheld. Central to the research is the prominence of the secondary school setting where older adolescents are concentrated in terms of their presence and their ability to contribute leadership in meaningful ways.

Yet the notion of student leadership development entails more than just setting and context, it also involves identifying educational approaches that nurture growth in understanding and practice. The onus is on leadership educators who bear responsibility for selecting and implementing those practices which resonate with young people, inspiring student engagement in the task of learning leadership. While there are numerous approaches to consider when developing leadership in students, several criteria emerge as significant for their effectiveness: creating the kind of environment that is conducive to expanding the leadership knowledge of students, the prevalence of experience-based practices for developing student leaders, the role of adults as mentors, role models, and facilitators, and articulation of a process that effectively forms youth as leaders. Identifying an emergent approach in the context of Catholic secondary schools in the (Arch)Dioceses of California is the intention for this study. The lack of research on student leadership development in Catholic secondary schools in the United States is particularly concerning. However, there is cause for optimism given the emergence of recent scholarship in this area. This review of the literature supports the cause for a new effort in understanding leadership theory and its connection to developing student leadership, especially regarding the setting of Catholic secondary schools.

CHAPTER THREE: PROJECT METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this section is to describe the methodology for this research project. It articulates the central research question and sub-questions then proposes a research design. Included in this design are a discussion of the participants involved in the study, the ways that data will be collected and analyzed, and a proposed timeline for completion. The reflections of the researcher, their relationship to the project, and ethical considerations will also be presented.

Much of the previous research about secondary school student leaders has not resulted in identifying the process or practices of developing their leadership. This qualitative exploratory case study will investigate and address this gap in four ways. First, it will identify the practices educators use to form student leaders in their respective Catholic secondary schools. Secondly, this study will seek understanding of the implementation of leadership development practices utilized by those educators. Third, it will propose criteria for determining the effectiveness of student leadership development practices. Lastly, since the study will be conducted in Catholic secondary schools, it will complement the literature related to student leadership in Catholic education.

Research Question(s) and Hypotheses

The following central research question guides this qualitative Dissertation in Practice study: What practices are used by educators in Catholic secondary schools to develop student leaders?

Research sub questions include: How are practices for student leadership development implemented by educators in Catholic secondary schools? What are the

criteria for determining the effectiveness of practices used by educators in Catholic secondary schools to develop student leaders?

Proposed Research Design

A qualitative exploratory case study is the proposed research design for the topic of Catholic student leadership development and its related questions. Yin (2018) offered a two-part definition of case studies. Part one of the definition entails investigating a real-world phenomenon which is affected by the context which surrounds the case. (Yin, 2018). The second part of the definition refers to the features of a case study as relying on multiple sources of evidence and methodological considerations which attend to several variables of interest (Yin, 2018; Yin, 1999). Harrison et al. (2017) suggested case study research as qualitative inquiry that undertakes exploration to understand and develop meaning from the case(s) being studied. It is characterized by an exploratory approach to real-life settings that seeks clarity from complex issues (Harrison et al., 2017). Case studies collect data from multiple information sources that are analyzed to reveal case descriptions and themes which form the results of the research. (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Boblin et al. (2013) stated that the use of case study research is most applicable to understanding the “how” and “why” of a particular phenomenon.

Babbie (2017) noted that case studies are useful for descriptive research. Case studies are designed to achieve in-depth analysis by focusing on a case which might be an event, process, a single individual, or a group (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Identifying a congruence among practices in the development of student leaders is the principal objective of this study. This design is selected because of its ability to engage individuals in critical reflection on their experiences of the phenomenon in question. A key attribute

of qualitative research is its reliance on the natural setting where researchers engage participants in the local environment (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). As such, the research will reveal descriptions that contribute to an understanding of educators' perceptions about their development of student leaders within the context of Catholic secondary schools located in the (Arch)Dioceses of California.

Proposed Participants/Data Sources and Recruitment

Though all Catholic educators can contribute to the leadership development of students, the participants in this study will be drawn from directors of student activities and campus ministry responsible for student leadership development in Catholic secondary schools in the (Arch)Dioceses of California. Presently, 110 Catholic secondary schools are located among these (Arch)Dioceses: Fresno, Los Angeles, Monterey, Oakland, Orange, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco, San Jose, Santa Rosa, and Stockton. This study will engage approximately 12 participants unless saturation is reached. These school personnel in student activities and campus ministry will be purposively selected with the intention of providing maximum variation based on school size, demographic make-up of the student body, geographic location, and sponsorship by a diocese or religious order.

Because existing literature suggested that intentional leadership development unfolds in campus ministry and student activities, the participants proposed for this study are educators responsible for developing student leaders in those areas of their respective Catholic secondary school. The participants are expected to perform duties that develop student leaders who enhance student voice, facilitate student activities, engage students in campus ministry, and build school culture among their peers. They will be asked to

describe the practices and processes they use to develop effective student leaders in their schools. They should be versed in an understanding of the role of student leadership on campus and can articulate how their preparation of student leaders helps to maximize their effectiveness as they serve the school. While there may be other populations worthy of study, this purposeful sample of personnel in student activities and campus ministry in Catholic secondary schools will provide data that demonstrates the level of impact leadership formation has on their students' capacity for learning and practicing meaningful leadership.

Data Collection Tools

The study will rely on data from individual interviews. The researcher will conduct up to 12 semi-structured interviews with educators responsible for developing student leaders in Catholic secondary schools, six interviews with educators who work in student activities and six in campus ministry. This type of qualitative interviewing allows for deviation from set questions and engages the respondent in critical reflection (Babbie, 2017). This approach to interviewing provides deeper exploration of issues as well as additional description regarding a specific issue. An interview protocol will be created to guide the interaction between the researcher and the respondent (see Appendix D for the interview protocol with questions).

Proposed Data Collection Procedures

Having identified the participants for study and the methods for data collection, this section will outline the procedures for collecting data. The purposive sample will draw participants from one Catholic secondary school in each of the (Arch)Dioceses in the state of California. The sample will seek to represent a broad variety of Catholic

secondary schools based on school size, demographic make-up of the student body, geographic location, and sponsorship by a diocese or religious order. Potential interviewees from selected schools will be sent a letter describing the research and requesting their participation in the study. The following describes each of the steps that will be involved in the data collection process.

The process begins with approval for exempt status from the Institutional Review Board. The next step in the process is seeking authorization from the sites involved in the study. This would entail securing permission and consent from the educators and their Catholic secondary schools included in the research sample. Once the sites have approved, consent from interview participants will be sought. The researcher will also secure the MAXQDA research software for use in this qualitative descriptive study.

The process moves to creating and field testing the interview protocol. This step requires identifying the major questions and developing a protocol to guide the asking of questions and record information from the interviews. The protocol will include basic information about the interview, an introduction, opening and content questions, suggested probing questions, and instructions to guide the closing of the interview (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The interview questions will be refined through a series of mock interviews that allow for critique and adjustment. Once the protocol is ready, the researcher will begin the task of scheduling interviews. This involves working with school educators to determine mutually convenient days and times for the interviews to occur. Research interviews will be conducted using a videoconferencing platform.

Once the interviews have been scheduled, the collection and recording of data begins. As the interviews take place, the researcher will collect and record observations

(Babbie, 2017). Given the time constraints of the researcher, it is anticipated that the interviews will take place over the present school year. This would allow transcription, coding, and member checks to occur in between each interview. As each interview is completed, the data will be transcribed within MAXQDA to ensure a high rate of accuracy and expedite the transcription process. Participants will have the opportunity to confirm the accuracy of the transcript through member checking. The member checks will be conducted by providing a copy of the interview transcript to each interviewee. This check will ensure that the analysis of data is accurate. Participants will be assigned a pseudonym and all personally identifying information will be removed from the transcript. Once the data is ready, it will be stored online and backed up on a dedicated portable hard drive.

A critical work of the researcher is to ensure the validity of the data collected. Creswell and Creswell (2018) noted that qualitative validity is enhanced when employing procedures such as triangulation. Triangulation strengthens the researcher's ability to interpret findings from data to achieve an understanding of phenomena (Carter, et al., 2014; Renz, et al., 2018). Triangulation of data in this research study will come through examination of the interview transcripts during the process of coding and theming. It will be achieved when a code or theme is mentioned at least three times by three different participants. Carter et al. (2014) referred to this form of data validation as data source triangulation.

Ethical Considerations

Creswell and Creswell (2018) encouraged researchers to reflect on their experience of the research process and to record notes that can be used to maintain

reflexivity. As the study evolves, the researcher must practice reflexivity given that he holds a personal interest in the topic of student leadership and is presently employed by a Catholic secondary school located in the Northern California Archdiocese of San Francisco. The researcher has been a participant in, and observer of, many youth leadership development programs. Because of this background, the researcher will have to address issues of bias while conducting the study. The principal bias is that of experience. Babbie (2017) noted that qualitative researchers make subjective judgments about data, therefore it is important to maintain a research perspective in approaching data and ensuring quality in the process of collecting and analyzing data.

The National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research (1979) produced the Belmont Report as a summary of the ethical principles guiding research involving human subjects. Foremost is the notion that researchers should operate with a profound respect for the human person. Each person is granted the freedom to articulate their assent to participate in a research study and vulnerable persons should be granted protection if their capacity for self-determination has been compromised in some way. Researchers are also obliged to ensure that no harm will come to any human research subject and that their wellbeing is a priority to be cared for. Finally, the report requires that the principle of justice be applied to research to ensure equity among research subjects.

Based on the Belmont Report, it is important to address the ethical considerations related to the research study especially. Because the researcher has been employed by three and is currently employed by one Catholic secondary school in Northern California, those schools will be omitted from the study. Additionally, the researcher has limited

knowledge of the leadership development practices utilized by the schools selected for study. These choices will reduce the potential for bias and encourage objectivity in the analysis of data. The researcher will be presented as a doctoral program candidate when seeking consent from educators to participate in the study. Informed consent will be sought from educators participating in the study by writing a letter describing the parameters of the research along with its intended purpose. Consent will be sought after IRB approval has been granted.

The IRB process entails creating and designing a research project, sharing the project to appropriate parties such as committee members, and electronically signing and then submitting the project package for review. Because of the population involved in this study, full board approval is not required. Rather, exempt status will be requested from the IRB. Items to be included in the project package include the requests for permission and consent to participate forms. These steps require proper preparation though the committee may require revision prior to determining whether the project is approved.

In terms of the participants, anonymity will be maintained by assigning pseudonyms to the respondents as well as their schools. Creswell & Poth (2018) advocated for protecting the participants by taking this step prior to data analysis. Data will be stored and secured using an online service. The data will be backed-up on an independent external hard drive. Data will only be shared with members of the dissertation committee. All these techniques will be utilized to maintain a reasonable degree of confidentiality and conduct a research study with ethical integrity.

Data Analysis Plan

This study will take a qualitative exploratory case study approach. Since cases are limited by time and activity, researchers collect detailed information within a specific timeframe (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The transcripts derived from video recordings of personal interviews serve as the focus of data analysis in this study. Recorded communications are the subject of content analysis (Babbie, 2017). This method is conducive to the process of coding where raw data is presented in a manner that allows for deeper analysis and understanding. Creswell and Poth (2018) noted that case studies result in descriptive themes that lead to findings and conclusions learned from researching the case.

Creswell and Creswell (2018) proposed a process to complete a qualitative data analysis. This is the process by which the researcher analyzes the data gathered in the interviews. It begins with organizing, preparing, and reading the data. These steps involve assembling field notes and sorting the data, so it is accessible for analysis. The researcher will utilize the MAXQDA qualitative analysis software to assist with the study. Raw data will be transcribed using the transcription feature found in MAXQDA and it will be uploaded and stored. Reading the data gives the researcher an initial sense of the data and an opportunity to reflect on the tenor of what has been collected. This will require writing memos that capture preliminary thoughts. After organizing and preparing data, reading it will give the researcher an opportunity to gain a sense of the data and what it has the potential to communicate.

The next series of steps involves the coding and categorizing of data. Elliott (2018) noted that coding is a process that is unique to the research question being studied.

At the same time, the researcher is charged with making decisions that help them to complete the coding process. The principal effort of coding is to make sense of data that can be dense, even cumbersome (Elliott, 2018). However, coding helps to separate data for examination to create a new level of understanding what the data contains. Creswell and Poth (2018) suggested that the coding process includes the creation of a codebook as a way of defining the parameters of each code thus avoiding duplication or overlap of meaning. The researcher will employ the use of MAXQDA to assist in coding and classifying data. As codes are developed, they will be checked for consistency relative to other data collected.

Saldaña (2021) articulated that coding is a craft requiring appropriate methods and techniques. It is also a process of applying methods that enable the researcher to identify and articulate key findings. The process of data analysis for this study will include structural coding, phenomenological theming, code mapping, and pattern coding. Structural coding is an elemental, first cycle coding method that can be used as a primary strategy for analyzing qualitative data (Saldaña, 2021). It is particularly appropriate for studies involving multiple participants and standardized or semi-structured interview protocols. Structural coding is used to apply a phrase that represents a particular topic found in a piece of data. This method leads to the development of initial codes and categories that form the basis for more detailed coding.

Saldaña (2021) suggested that theming data phenomenologically is applicable to qualitative interviews. Phenomenological theming assists the researcher in identifying two levels of information found in the data. The manifest level categorizes data into specific topics that emerge from the repetition of ideas. The latent level ascribes meaning

to descriptions of lived experiences. Together, these levels provide a foundation for elaborating on the themes from the data.

Code mapping is a technique for transitioning the process of data analysis from first to second cycle coding (Saldaña, 2021). It involves a series of iterations that move the data from codes to categories, which eventually results in the identification of higher-level concepts. These are then taken into a second coding cycle. The previous steps involve summarizing data. Saldaña (2021) proposed that pattern coding can be utilized to create a smaller number of themes or categories as well as locate causes or explanations from within data. Pattern coding results in creating rich thematic descriptions, identifying patterns of actions, or mapping relationships found among the data.

In sum, coding will lead to the identification of emergent themes found in the data. As codes and themes are developed from the data, the researcher will write observations and notes in the form of memos to capture reflections as well as assist in the development of codes and themes (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The themes will provide shape to the findings of the study. Once this step has been completed, the creation of narratives describing each of the themes and their significance will close the process of data analysis. Throughout the process of collecting and interpreting the data, consultation with and feedback from the members of the Dissertation Committee will be solicited to maintain the integrity of the research findings.

Timeline for the Study

The study will commence in January of 2023 as the researcher seeks approval of the Dissertation in Practice (DIP) proposal. If the proposal is accepted, then IRB review and permissions from the schools and participants would be sought with anticipated

completion by February 2023. As this process is completed with each interview, transcription and coding will take place. Data analysis would be completed by June 2024. From July 2024 through September 2024 reporting the findings and writing of the dissertation as well as preparation for the defense of the dissertation will be accomplished. A successful dissertation defense to be scheduled for October 2024 will complete the process. Table 1 illustrates the proposed timeline for completion.

Table 1

Timeline for Completion of the Dissertation in Practice

Dissertation Process Step	Expected Start Date	Expected Completion Date
DIP Proposal Writing	May 2019	October 2024
DIP Proposal Defense	January 2023	January 2023
IRB Review	February 2023	February 2023
School & Participant Permission	March 2023	May 2024
Data Collection	March 2023	May 2024
Data Analysis	May 2024	June 2024
Dissertation Writing and Preparation for Defense	July 2024	September 2024
Defense of Dissertation	October 2024	October 2024

Reflections of the Researcher

In anticipation of the start of the Dissertation in Practice journey, a reflection on the topic will capture my motivations for pursuing a doctoral degree. Essentially, this journey is motivated by a desire for continued growth and learning. For over three

decades I have attempted to practice leadership formation with young people in a Catholic setting. When looking at the results anecdotally, the question about identifying the elements necessary to foster leadership in adolescents began to stir. At the same time, there was a recognition that many Catholic organizations seek to inspire younger generations to take on leadership roles. These roles can be found in local Catholic parishes, schools, movements, and organizations. Despite this interest in youth leadership, there has not been a wealth of study of the topic. However, there are more Catholic youth leadership development opportunities available than ever. This was the impetus for considering the question regarding what constitutes effective leadership formation with secondary school age young people. It led me to apply for, and subsequently enroll in, Creighton University's Doctor of Education in Interdisciplinary Leadership Program. The notion of a practice-based terminal degree caught my attention and interest as it appeared most applicable to my interest in studying youth leadership development.

I began this effort in 2012 but due to some personal challenges, was forced to withdraw and took a four-year hiatus from study. However, I successfully reapplied and restarted the program in 2016. The passing of my mother, whose passion for education was instilled in me, served as an inspiration to return. As I look back on my years in the program, I am bolstered by the growth in knowledge and practice that have expanded my skill set and capacity for my own leadership. This was most evident in my role as Dean of Student Life at Justin-Siena High School in Napa, California. I applied my learning as I exercised the responsibilities of my position and attempted to contribute to creating a school known for excellence in education, leadership, and service. My interactions with

students demonstrated that their capacity for leadership is critical for the school to be at its very best. At my current place of employment, Sacred Heart Cathedral Preparatory High School, I will create a student leadership program for campus ministry and this research will greatly help its development.

It is within this context that I look forward to engaging in research related to student leadership in a Catholic secondary school setting. The first opportunity I had to learn about leadership in secondary schools was through a summer institute sponsored by the District of San Francisco-New Orleans known as Lasallian Student Leaders. This experience allowed me to observe students from a variety of Lasallian high schools as they participated in workshops and activities intended to foster their leadership as well as their understanding of the core principles of Lasallian education: faith in the presence of God, respect for all persons, inclusive community, quality education, and concern for the poor and social justice (Brothers of the Christian Schools, n.d.). In my conversations with student leaders and educators at the event, I realized that there were a variety of approaches taken to develop and form student leaders. Yet there does not appear to be a consensus regarding those which are most effective. This is how I identified the topic for this Dissertation in Practice proposal.

It is my hope that completing this study will make a valuable contribution to Catholic education in the United States and help its schools to educate students who will serve and lead in a world with many needs. I also trust that the work done on this study will encourage additional research on youth leadership development, particularly in Catholic circles. As the Church faces a period of disaffiliation by its younger members, identifying how to engage young people in meaningful and purpose-filled ways can serve

as a vehicle for rekindling their interest and participation in their community of faith. Thus, it is my hope that the leadership efforts in Catholic secondary schools result in the development of older adolescents who contribute good to the world by virtue of their exercising leadership.

This is a journey that I genuinely look forward to and embrace. I expect there to be moments of challenge where something goes awry, and a solution must be found. But I fully expect the support of the members of my cohort, faculty advisor, and dissertation committee members to provide me with resources to continue and complete the Dissertation in Practice journey.

Summary

This section provided a discussion of the research topic and question relative to the methods employed for their study. Upon review of the research question, a description of the research design ensued. A qualitative exploratory case study will be conducted focusing on the development of student leaders in Catholic secondary schools. The participants include educators who will be recruited in partnership with Catholic secondary school administrators. Interviews and focus groups will be conducted to glean data that will help surface common practices for developing student leaders in Catholic secondary schools and the prevalence of experiential learning within those practices. The procedures for collecting and analyzing data were described, including the researcher's desire to use MAXQDA qualitative analysis software for the study. In addition, ethical considerations and a timeline for the study were addressed. This section closed with a reflection by the researcher on the transformational nature of the journey toward creating a Dissertation in Practice proposal.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter offers a presentation of the findings related to this study. The purpose of this qualitative exploratory case study was to identify the practices used by educators in Catholic secondary schools to develop student leaders. Data were gathered by conducting interviews with leadership educators working in campus ministry and student activities in California Catholic secondary schools. Analysis of the data surfaced 12 themes describing practices and criteria utilized by the interview participants. The findings emerged through analysis of the interview transcripts during the process of coding and theming and achieved when specific data were mentioned at least three times by three different participants.

The themes reported here are supported by evidence responding to the research question guiding this study: What practices are used by educators in Catholic secondary schools to develop student leaders? Research sub-questions included: How are practices for student leadership development implemented by educators in Catholic secondary schools? What are the criteria for determining the effectiveness of practices used by educators in Catholic secondary schools to develop student leaders?

Interview Participants and the Collection of Data

As stated in Chapter Three, interview participants emerged through invitations to take part in the study. A sample was drawn from personnel in student activities and campus ministry responsible for student leadership development in Catholic secondary schools in the (Arch)Dioceses of California. These leadership educators in student activities and campus ministry were purposively selected to provide maximum variation

based on school size, demographic make-up of the student body, geographic location, and sponsorship by a parish, diocese, or religious order. Due to a limited response, the researcher moved from purposive to snowball sampling, which called upon participants to recommend other qualified participants to participate in the study. These efforts yielded a total of 15 interviews with six leadership educators working in student activities and nine in campus ministry. Table 2 describes the schools included in the study. The sample consists of 11 of the 110 Catholic secondary schools in California and includes religious order, parish, and (Arch)diocesan schools representing eight of 12 (arch)dioceses across the state. They are a mix of schools found in suburban and urban settings with varied enrollments from 175 to 1760.

Table 2

Description of California Catholic Secondary Schools in the Research Sample (N = 11)

School	Diocese	Enrollment	Gender	Sponsorship
1	Sacramento	928	Male	Religious Order
2	Oakland	630	Coed	Religious Order
3	Fresno	510	Coed	Diocese
4	Santa Rosa	175	Coed	Parish
5	San Jose	1760	Coed	Religious Order
6	San Bernardino	410	Coed	Religious Order
7	Los Angeles	344	Female	Religious Order
8	Oakland	400	Coed	Religious Order
9	Orange	465	Female	Religious Order
10	Los Angeles	453	Coed	Archdiocese
11	Oakland	1250	Coed	Diocese

Table 3 identifies the years of experience possessed by the participants in the study. They have a minimum of two years of experience to a maximum of 30.

Table 3

Years of Experience: California Catholic Secondary Schools Leadership Educators (N = 15)

Participant	Years of Experience
Campus Ministry #5	30
Campus Ministry #1	27
Campus Ministry #3	13
Student Activities #5	12
Student Activities #4	10
Campus Ministry #4	8
Campus Ministry #9	8
Campus Ministry #7	5
Student Activities #3	4
Campus Ministry #6	3
Student Activities #1	3
Student Activities #6	3
Campus Ministry #2	2
Campus Ministry #8	2
Student Activities #2	2

Presentation of Themes

The themes found in this study emerged through a process of coding and theming that resulted in the identification of 12 themes. The themes fall into three categories: practices, implementation, and criteria for effectiveness. The themes, according to category, are listed in Table 4.

Table 4*Emergent Themes from this Study by Category*

Category 1: Practices	Category 2: Implementation	Category 3: Criteria for Effectiveness
Theme #1: Developing students' skills for leadership	Theme #8: Providing multiple leadership opportunities	Theme #11: Impact of student leadership
Theme #2: Fostering a servant leadership mindset in students	Theme #9: Facilitating student leadership formation activities	Theme #12: Increasing students' capacity to lead
Theme #3: Building relationships of trust among leadership educators, student leaders, and members of the school community	Theme #10: Coaching and mentoring student leaders	
Theme #4: Promoting a Christian dimension of student leadership		
Theme #5: Student leaders serve with and for others		
Theme #6: Student leaders are role models in the school community		
Theme #7: Student leaders follow through on a commitment to lead		

Category 1: Practices

Participants reported that they use a variety of practices when implementing processes for developing student leaders. These practices were viewed by participants as effective for this purpose. Table 5 identifies the practices employed by the leadership educators in Catholic secondary schools from this study.

Table 5*Themes from Category 1: Practices*

Category 1: Practices	Participants Coded (N=15)	Total References
Theme #1: Developing students' skills for leadership	14	39
Theme #2: Fostering a servant leadership mindset in students	10	14
Theme #3: Building relationships of trust among leadership educators, student leaders, and members of the school community	8	12
Theme #4: Promoting a Christian dimension of student leadership	7	11
Theme #5: Student leaders serve with and for others	7	8
Theme #6: Student leaders are role models in the school community	6	9
Theme #7: Student leaders follow through on a commitment to lead	4	7

Theme #1: Developing students' skills for leadership.

As a point of emphasis, leadership educators work to develop students' skills for leadership. Jenkins (2013) identified skill-building as a category of instructional strategies for developing student leaders. Allen and Hartman (2009) found that student leaders valued formation that emphasized skill building in addition to personal growth. Skills for leadership are best developed when students are given opportunities to apply them to leadership situations (Meyer & Rinn, 2021). Leadership educators identify which skills they wish to emphasize and determine how best to form them in student leaders.

Participants reported that leadership educators bear responsibility for developing the leadership skills of students. They spoke about a variety of skills they included in

their leadership formation efforts. Table 6 displays the leadership skills identified by participants as important to the development of student leaders.

Table 6

Student Leadership Skills Developed in California Catholic Secondary Schools

Student Leadership Skill	Participants Coded (N = 15)	Total References
Planning	15	18
Goal Setting	11	11
Communication	10	14
Public Speaking	10	10
Organization/Time Management	7	9
Reflection	6	9
Evaluation	6	8
Collaboration	6	8
Group Facilitation	3	6

The data from this study identified eight leadership skills that interview participants formed in student leaders. These skills were planning, goal setting, communication, public speaking, organization/time management, reflection, evaluation, collaboration, and group facilitation. Participants also identified ways that they foster these skills in student leaders. When preparing students for leadership, Campus Ministry Participant #1 reported “trying to get them to speak in public, with confidence.” Student Activities Participant #5 noted that “listening to others, working with others, and working with different types of personalities”, are necessary for collaboration. Student Activities Participant #4 described their approach to fostering their student leaders’ approach to planning: “We give them a template and we say adjust accordingly and add your own questions that are specific to what you did. And the students really, you know, take it upon themselves to put that together.” And Campus Ministry Participant #8 reflected on

the skill of goal setting, noting that as a leadership educator, “communicating expectations and responsibilities clearly with students” improved their ability to identify and pursue a desired end and objectives. In sum, participants reported that forming student leaders in a variety of skills was instrumental to increasing their capacity to lead.

Theme #2: Fostering a servant leadership mindset in students.

Servant leadership holds a place in Catholic secondary schools as an expression of mission and Catholic identity (Canales, 2014; Lavery & Coffey, 2021). Greenleaf (1977) proposed servant leadership with Jesus as an exemplar. And several studies concluded that service and service learning contribute to the development of leadership in students (Hackett & Lavery, 2011; Lavery 2009; Simonsen et al., 2014).

Participants in the study conveyed that to promote service as a desirable attribute of leadership, leadership educators must navigate a tension with the realities of adolescence their students face. Interview participants described how the age of student leaders affected their capacity to learn leadership. However, this was a challenge that leadership educators were willing to navigate because of the value student leaders bring to their Catholic secondary school communities. Student Activities Participant #1 commented that “even though they're not adults, their voices are valuable.” Campus Ministry Participant #2 expressed concern that the busyness of students interferes with “receiving commitment from students.” Student Activities Participant 4 affirmed this sentiment and stated, “they're teenagers, they're very busy people, and life happens.” Participants noted that understanding and working with the realities of student leaders’ adolescence helped them be able to promote service as a critical element for leadership.

Interview participants identified service as the foundation for effective leadership. But instilling adolescents with a mindset for service leadership is challenging given their age and level of maturity. Student Activities Participant #1 explained that their approach to student leadership involved helping them understand that “it's not about you, it's about your peers. It's about the people that you're serving...So, I think service is the number one word in my definition of student leadership.” Campus Ministry Participant #5 presented essential questions that highlight service in the development of student leaders:

What does it mean to serve your community? What does it mean to serve your community following the model of Jesus? What does it mean to serve or what does it mean to lead by serving? A lot of times it's not about you.

Participants saw service as a central aspect of student leadership development but were concerned that busy young people still maturing in identity posed a challenge to fostering their exercise of servant leadership within their schools.

Theme #3: Building relationships of trust among leadership educators, student leaders, and members of the school community.

Relationships are key to fostering the development and growth of student leaders. Bowers et al. (2016) posited that relationships are foundational to the purpose of developing young leaders. Coffey and Lavery (2018) noted that leadership development blossomed in Catholic schools whose administrators, faculty, and staff encouraged students to lead. Lavery and Hine (2013) found that Catholic school principals are instrumental in fostering student leadership development within their respective schools. When encouragement and support are demonstrated through these relationships, student leadership development flourishes (Hancock et al. 2012; Kagay et al., 2015).

Participants identified an emphasis on relationships as integral to student leadership development. They noted that student leaders' need relationships where they are trusted by others. Participants also reported that leadership educators and student leaders work as partners within the school community. Interview participants expressed that the relationships between leadership educators and student leaders contributed to students' development. Campus Ministry Participant #8 stated "that it's important to lead with relationships with students." Student Activities Participant #1 described the relationship with student leaders as one in which leadership educators need to be "honest with them, and vulnerable with them" so that "they realize (the leadership educator) cares about us and is invested in us."

An important aspect of the relationship is the need for trust. Student Activities Participant #4 explained that leadership educators "need to trust that the student leaders elected to positions or appointed, are able to follow through." Participants identified trust as the relational key to establishing a sense of partnership with student leaders in Catholic secondary schools. Campus Ministry Participant 9 noted that if leadership educators "focus on the relationship first, the other parts are organic. They become easy because the students know that you actually (do) care about them." This theme expressed the quality of relationship required to effectively foster the development of student leaders.

Theme #4: Promoting a Christian dimension of student leadership.

As a specific setting for student leadership development, Catholic secondary schools bear responsibility for promoting Catholic Christian ideals and perspectives. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (2020) identified appropriating the Catholic faith and developing leaders for the future as two aspects of campus ministry.

Hackett and Lavery (2010) noted that Catholic secondary schools formed student leaders to face the societal challenges of young people. Belmonte and Calleja (2020) found that student leaders serving younger students in an experience of religious retreat, had a positive impact. This missional approach is a dimension of Catholic secondary schools that shapes school identity and values.

Participants believed that leadership development in a Catholic secondary school incorporated a dimension that is guided by the values and example of Jesus Christ. However, not all student leaders affiliate as Catholic or Christian. Participants reported that it is important to help them understand ways of expressing the school's identity as a faith-based institution. Campus Ministry Participant #7 recounted teaching student leaders to plan "retreats or liturgies that go deep within a particular tradition, in this case, Catholic Christian tradition." While Campus Ministry Participant #2 experienced student leaders for whom affiliation with a religious tradition served as motivation for their interest and participation sharing "that they wanted to serve God and serve their community."

Participants stated that student leadership is modeled after the example of Jesus Christ. They noted that student leaders should be guided by Christian values. Campus Ministry Participant #1 expressed that a student leader should demonstrate the example of Jesus "not leading through his words but leading through who he is as a person." And Campus Ministry Participant #5 added that student leaders should be "following the example of Christ with humility." For the participants in this study, the promotion of a Christian dimension of leadership is fundamental to the way they approach the formation of student leaders in a Catholic secondary school.

Theme #5: Student Leaders serve with and for others.

The literature review cited a variety of studies that found service to others to be an essential behavior exhibited by student leaders. In Hine's (2014) longitudinal study, working with fellow student leaders was named as a benefit of student leadership. And Shera and Murray (2016) identified the creation of a peer community as an effective strategy for building trust, respect, and collaboration. Serving with and for others has a favorable impact on student leaders and school communities. Participants in this study identified service as the primary expression of student leadership. They believed that service is other centered and student leaders should share leadership with their peers. Campus Ministry Participant #1 desired that each of their student leaders worked toward "being a person that can put themselves out there and to have people follow them."

Participants also believed that student leadership has an invitational facet where student leaders bring others on board to share leadership. Student Activities Participant #4 noted that one aspect of the "important role of a leader" is "to recruit the next leader to replace yourself." Given that secondary schools graduate a percentage of the student body annually, there is a need to invite new students into leadership roles. When student leaders serve others rather than themselves and share leadership with peers, the influence of student leadership within the school community increases. Campus Ministry Participant #4 summarized this by stating that student leaders' "work should not be purely self-aggrandizing. It should not just purely be for self-benefit. It should always be in the service of others."

Theme #6: Student Leaders are role models in the school community.

To make an impact within a school community, student leaders act as models of its mission, values, and charisms. Research by Wulandari et al. (2019) found that students in a suicide prevention program who were trained to serve as positive role models helped to achieve a reduction in suicidal ideation. And Belmonte and Calleja (2020) noted that peer mentoring was impactful for those served by student leaders while providing benefits to student leaders themselves. In this study, participants reported that student leaders must serve as role models, approaching others as valued members of the community. They also identified charisms their respective schools seek to embody. Participants expressed that student leaders are obligated to be models of the school's mission in action thus bringing its charisms to life through their example. Other adults in the school community support this notion as Campus Ministry Participant #4 recounted how their "principal might come in and just speak to what it means to be a leader and a role model on campus." And Campus Ministry Participant #9 believed that students should be aware of the expectation that they should "be a leader all the time. Not just in our classroom, not just when you're in front, but on the quad during lunch, outside of class (and) during the weekends." Role modeling was shown to be a critical piece of how student leaders are received as well as perceived.

Student leaders also foster relationships. Bowers et al. (2016) proposed a framework for youth leadership development where relationships are the foundation for leadership growth. In a study of athletics in secondary schools, Pierce et al. (2020) found that care for others and satisfying their needs was best served through relational leadership. Research participants expected student leaders to reach out to other members

of the school community with hospitality and welcome. They saw this as an exercise that created value not only for student leaders, but the school community. This occurs in the variety of interactions student leaders have with others. Campus Ministry Participant #8 believed that student leaders need to be able to “hold a conversation and make people feel welcome and included.” Student leaders achieved desired results by modeling behavior consistent with the school’s mission and charisms and helping others feel welcome and included.

Theme #7: Student Leaders follow through on the commitment to lead.

Accepting a leadership role requires accepting the responsibility to follow through on the commitment to lead. Larson et al. (2019) studied the developmental value of leadership roles for youth and found that young people experienced self-doubt and wavering commitment. Participants in this study expressed an expectation that student leaders follow through on their commitments. Students demonstrated a commitment to leadership by completing their tasks and responsibilities and being present when required. Participants stated that commitments are realized when student leaders meet deadlines and show up when they said they would. Campus Ministry Participant #2 reported that “commitment is something that I really want to instill in the students.” This is not an easy task. For Student Activities Participant #6, “the hard part of student leadership is, you know, really putting the onus on them to make it happen.” The best evidence of students who were dedicated to practicing and growing in leadership was found in the quality of their presence and their commitment. But because of their youth, student leaders may have trouble with their sense of commitment. In response to this, Campus Ministry Participant #3 posited that “part of being a leader is saying yes. And you're agreeing to

something. You're not just thrown into it.” Leadership educators guide and support student leaders as they come to understand the consequences when follow through is lacking.

Category 2: Implementation

In this second category, interview participants identified three themes for the implementation of student leadership development. Participants used these to grow students' capacity as leaders. Table 7 provides an overview of this study's themes as they pertain to the implementation of student leadership development.

Table 7

Themes from Category 2: Implementation

Category 2: Implementation	Participants Coded (N=15)	Total References
Theme #8: Providing multiple leadership opportunities	15	33
Theme #9: Facilitating student leadership formation activities	12	21
Theme #10: Coaching and mentoring student leaders	8	12

Theme #8: Providing multiple student leadership opportunities.

Secondary schools espouse the value of leadership and are identifying ways for students to learn and exercise leadership in the school community. For example, Atkinson et al. (2019) described the use of a wellbeing ambassador program to promote mental health in the secondary school setting. In their research of Australian Catholic schools, Hackett and Lavery (2011) found that offering a variety of programs led to a multiplicity of leadership roles for students. The paradigm model of youth leadership development that was proposed by Hastings et al. (2011), included invitations to leadership roles from

an adult contributed to their willingness to participate. Participant data revealed that leadership educators in Catholic secondary schools provide a range of leadership opportunities to their students. From this study, the most common student leadership opportunities included ambassadors, ASB, athletic team captains, campus ministry retreat teams, clubs, councils, and internships/senior projects. The slate of leadership opportunities offered depended on the needs and resources of the school. Student Activities Participant #4 listed the leadership roles available at their school:

We have the associated student body, otherwise known as ASB. We have grade level boards...And in addition to that, we have clubs on campus, all of which require a leadership board of, at minimum, a president, vice president, and one other officer. In addition to all that, we offer the National Honor Society, California Scholarship Federation, and then numerous other opportunities for outside leadership through organizations.

Table 8 describes the leadership opportunities available to students in Catholic secondary schools as identified by participants in the study.

Table 8

Student Leadership Opportunities in Catholic Secondary Schools

Leadership Opportunities	Participants Coded (N=15)	Total References
Campus Ministry	10	15
Clubs	10	12
ASB	8	10
Peer Mentors/Tutors	8	12
Ambassadors	7	7
Councils	6	9
Athletics	4	7
Internships	3	5

Providing the breadth of these student leadership opportunities begins with a desire and commitment to develop students whose leadership makes valuable contributions to the life of the Catholic secondary school. It is followed by inviting students to take responsibility for leadership by serving in any number of roles. Participants expressed a belief that every student possesses the potential to succeed as a leader. Student Activities Participant #2 referenced their school's intentions in this regard because "one of the top priorities of our school is developing school leaders." The notion that any student can lead is espoused by other members of the school community. Campus Ministry Participant #4 recollected how one of their school's administrators took the initiative to invite students to become involved in leadership, promising to "connect (students) in some way, shape, or form to a leadership opportunity." Participants' belief that every student can lead in some way was key in Catholic secondary schools making a variety of leadership roles available to students.

Theme # 9: Facilitating student leadership formation activities.

Leadership development occurs when students engage in activities specifically designed to cultivate their understanding and exercise of leadership. Leadership educators select activities and craft experiences intended to increase the knowledge and skill set of student leaders. Hoedel and Lee (2018) studied a classroom curriculum focused on leadership development and character education. Scott et al. (2021), studied student leaders who were trained to facilitate conversation with peers and others. And other studies proposed using a variety of activities to foster leadership development in young people (Allen & Hartman, 2009; Jenkins, 2013; Meyer & Rinn, 2021).

Participants specified that they bear responsibility for facilitating experiences that support students' learning leadership. They reported using different programmatic formats for this purpose including classes, retreats, meetings, and internships/senior projects. For example, Campus Ministry Participant #3 implemented a workshop approach to ensure that the proper application of leadership learning takes place and "to make sure that we're following up and brushing up on those skills." Campus Ministry Participant #4 explained their use of "day long retreats, monthly meetings, and follow up after events" as opportunities to form student leaders. Their experience pointed to a need for time dedicated specifically to leadership formation. Campus Ministry Participant #7 lamented their challenge to develop student leaders due to lacking dedicated time for formation in their school day schedule. Student Activities Participants referenced being assigned a class period during which they can provide experiences focused on leadership development of students.

Apart from time in the school day scheduled specifically for the purpose of leadership formation, participants utilized select strategies in their development of student leaders. Student Activities Participant #5's approach to these strategies is "very hands on" and "really depends on what your leaders are doing." Small group work and journaling were activities identified as commonly used in student leadership formation. Working in groups was seen as a strategy that fosters leadership learning. Participants reported placing students in work groups to engage in learning and accomplish tasks. Student Activities Participant #4 believed that small group work is "allowing them to practice what we just taught." Small groups also developed the ability of student leaders to form effective working relationships with peers. Campus Ministry Participant #5 used

the strategy of rotating student leaders' group participation by having them "break up into different groups and committees" so student leaders could not only develop peer relationships and skills for collaboration but also be introduced to new opportunities to apply leadership.

Critical reflection was a valuable leadership skill identified by participants in the study because it served as a tool for evaluating the effectiveness of events and initiatives as well as the performance of student leaders. Participants used journaling as a strategy for developing this skill in student leaders. Campus Ministry Participant #7 expressed that reflection is essential to a leader so they can "see how the activity or the theme relates to their personal experience in some way." The creation of a proper environment in which reflection takes place is a key element in employing this strategy. Campus Ministry Participant #6 recounted the use of jazz music as a creative approach to spark reflection and journaling in their student leaders. For them, proper reflection required a space and "time for free thought so they can write down whatever they want."

In addition to determining programmatic formats and leadership development strategies, such as providing meaningful experiences of reflection, the sequencing of formation activities helped student leaders engage in learning. Participants pointed to the use of scaffolding as an approach to foster leadership growth in students. Selecting activities first then deciding in what order they should be offered is the responsibility of leadership educators. Campus Ministry Participant #4 described how their school used this approach to determine when in the school day they should offer a class for their ASB. The class was scheduled the period before lunch break, which enabled the students in the ASB class to spend time learning before applying what they learned to the

activities they offered during lunch. Student Activities Participant #3 saw that scaffolding benefitted student leaders by giving them time to plan, prepare, and then implement a particular strategy or activity.

Participants reported that they, as leadership educators, bear responsibility for facilitating student leadership formation activities. They described their use of different program formats to deliver leadership learning. They used the technique of scaffolding to sequence activities within a learning experience and maximize their effectiveness. They engaged students in work groups to foster cooperation and collaboration. And they offered journaling as means to encourage student leaders' reflection on their experiences.

Theme #10: Coaching and mentoring student leaders.

The relationship between leadership educators and their students is an important factor in the development of student leadership. Redmond and Dolan (2016) noted that access to a mentor contributes to the development of student leaders. Hackett and Lavery (2011) found that adult educators provided mentorship and guidance to student leaders. And Johns et al. (2017), proposed student-centered debriefings to encourage the transfer of leadership learning. Participants identified coaching and mentoring as strategies they rely on to build relationships with student leaders. They stated that these interactions took place one-on-one and in group settings. Participants described the purpose of check-ins to provide constructive feedback to student leaders. Student Activities Participant #4 noted that their role as a leadership educator is “to check in to make sure students understand where they're going and also making sure that the student isn't overwhelmed and burnt out.” Student Activities Participant #6 recounted different methods of checking in with student leaders including scheduled one-on-one meetings, interactions in a leadership

learning session, and using technology to monitor progress and provide constructive comment on student progress.

In terms of providing feedback, Student Activities Participant #2 suggested that it is critical to the process of learning leadership because students “are planning and then they execute. And then there's the debrief with the feedback.” Student Activities Participant #5 believed that check-ins also gave leadership educators the chance to help students understand that “if an event doesn't go as planned that they can still take what they learned from it and know that they worked hard and did well, and that the next time it will be better.” Check-ins allowed an opportunity to help students deal with challenges or failures since, as Student Activities Participant #3 stated definitively, “student leadership is not perfect, ever.” The use of regular check-ins provided a venue for leadership educators to offer coaching and mentoring to student leaders, time for receiving real-time feedback on their performance, and support for learning from moments of failure.

Category 3: Criteria for Effectiveness

The third and final theme that emerged from participant interviews was criteria for effectiveness. Participant data revealed two themes that helped to determine the impact of leadership educators' efforts to develop student leaders. Table 9 outlines the themes found in this category.

Table 9*Themes from Category 3: Criteria for Effectiveness*

Category 3: Criteria for Effectiveness	Participants Coded (N=15)	Total References
Theme #11: Impact of student leadership	9	16
Theme #12: Increasing students' capacity to lead	4	8

Theme #11: Impact of student leadership.

Student leadership has a significant effect on Catholic secondary schools. Belmonte and Calleja (2020) reported that student leaders charged with helping younger students had a profound impact on them. Larson et al. (2019) found that youth in leadership roles felt an obligation to their peers and rely on others to help move toward achieving collective goals. Hine (2017) noted that leadership in Catholic secondary schools is practiced at the personal, school, and community levels in pursuit of the good. Participants reported that student leadership has an impact on the members and experience of the school community, particularly as they animate their peers' participation in school activities. For example, Campus Ministry Participant #4 highlighted an app created by a student leader that led to easier access to information on available volunteer/service opportunities. Campus Ministry Participant #5 acknowledged that "if these lessons are working or if they're effective I think partly is the response by the student body." This theme involved an interpersonal and communal dynamic that goes beyond the individual student leader.

Since effective student leadership required involving and engaging others, student leaders needed to exhibit traits that cultivated positive interactions. Student Activities

Participant #2 described the mindset required to achieve this as “being brave and courageous and not necessarily always following the status quo and knowing that there are students who don't have a voice.” Participants expressed that a heightened awareness of the situation of peers reinforces the notion that leadership is about the needs of others. Additionally, an “authentic presence” that is “outward-looking” offers student leaders chances to serve as agents of change and advocates for others. In these ways, student leadership has an impact on all members of the school community, and sometimes, can go beyond it.

Theme #12: Increasing students’ capacity for leadership.

Catholic secondary schools engage in student leadership development as an educational pursuit. A commitment to such development produces desirable outcomes for individual student leaders and the broader school community. As such, it is important to understand how leadership educators determine whether their efforts to form student leaders are effective. Hine (2013) found that individual growth was one of the benefits of student leadership in a Catholic secondary school. In their study of existing leadership literature, Heibel et al. (2024) discovered that student confidence and skill in their leadership was one of the short-term impacts of youth leadership development programs. And Allen and Hartman (2009) noted that students preferred formation that emphasized personal growth and leadership skills. Participants cited students’ use of one’s own gifts and talents as a measure of students’ capacity to lead. Students’ discovery and application of new skills contributed to this sense of progress as a leader. For Campus Ministry Participant #5, leadership formation provided students with the chance to “recognize their own gifts and talents and their own limitations.” Campus Ministry Participant #1

extended this point, noting that such formation involves “giving them an opportunity to use gifts they may not have discovered yet.” Leadership educators in this study observed students experience improvement even by trial and error. They conducted written, one-on-one, and peer assessments to gather feedback on student performance. Some even created behavioral standards, such as exhibiting compassion or demonstrating commitment, which they would use to determine how well a student was developing as a leader.

In addition to personal abilities and skills, participants reported that the effectiveness of leadership formation was evident in students’ demonstration of personal growth exemplified by self-confidence, self-awareness, and a belief that they are competent leaders. Campus Ministry Participant #3 noted that as a leadership educator, they are “trying to break through those walls to help build the confidence they need to move forward” as students often accepted leadership roles without understanding the demands on leaders. But when students began to recognize that their leadership capacity had increased, confidence and competence grew. As did students’ ability to effect change for the better.

Sometimes this recognition contributed to a student’s success as their leadership continued to evolve after graduating from a Catholic secondary school. Student Activities Participant #5 provided a personal experience describing how leadership development affected students:

I’ve even heard from students, this one student who was very much kind of this introverted person sent me an email five years after graduating and said that ASB

was one of the best experiences he's ever had and prepared him the most for life because of some of the things that would happen that they would get thrown into.

Catholic secondary schools' leadership formation efforts were shown to benefit students as they identified and contributed their gifts and talents, applied new skills, and exhibited growth in their capacity to lead. Regarding this theme, participants described that individual student leaders grew through their exercise of leadership which, in turn, manifested benefits for the wider school community.

Summary

This chapter provided a comprehensive review of the themes emerging from the research. The purpose of the study was to identify practices used by leadership educators to develop student leaders in California Catholic secondary schools. As a result, the study identified three categories and 12 themes related to student leadership development. The themes are supported by data gathered through interviews with leadership educators in student activities and campus ministry.

The first category focused on practices. Participant interviews surfaced seven themes. These include developing students' skills for leadership; fostering a servant leadership mindset in students; building relationships of trust among leadership educators, student leaders, and members of the school community; promoting a Christian dimension of student leadership; student leaders serving with and for others; student leaders being role models in the school community, and student leaders follow through on the commitment to lead. These themes are the actions taken by leadership educators, student leaders, and school communities to foster the development of student leadership.

The second category looked at implementation. Participants noted three themes related to the implementation of student leadership development. Providing multiple student leadership opportunities, facilitating student leadership formation activities, and coaching and mentoring student leaders were found to be ways that the interview participants engaged students in the effort to develop their capacity for leadership.

The third and last category contained criteria used by participants to determine the effectiveness of student leadership. Two specific themes were identified. The first is the impact of student leadership on peers and the school community. The second is increasing students' capacity for leadership. Participants expressed that these themes were the evidence they cite to demonstrate that efforts to develop student leaders are effective.

The themes identified in this chapter serve a larger framework for student leadership development in California Catholic secondary schools. This framework is the subject of and will be examined in Chapter Five of this study.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Developing the leadership capacity of students continues to be a focal point of education in Catholic secondary schools. This study sought to understand how the process of student leadership development occurs by identifying specific practices for this purpose. It also provided the opportunity to describe how the process of student leadership development takes place in the Catholic secondary school. Leadership educators in Catholic secondary schools can engage this effort in a strategic and intentional manner by implementing findings from this study. Similarly, Catholic secondary schools can articulate their vision and approach to student leadership development, becoming more adept at forming student leaders. Pursuit of this endeavor can improve the quality of student leadership as well as the experience of the school community.

This chapter reflects on the findings of this study. It begins by revisiting the purpose and aim of the study. Then it presents conclusions from the findings viewed in the context of existing literature. The chapter continues by proposing a recommended solution that Catholic secondary schools can employ to create a robust approach to student leadership development. It then moves to practical implications of the study suggesting areas for further research and implications for leadership theory and practice. Finally, the chapter concludes with a reflection on the researcher's experience of the Dissertation in Practice.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative exploratory case study was to identify the practices used by educators in Catholic secondary schools to develop student leaders. Specifically, this study identified the practices by which the leadership capacity of student leaders in Catholic secondary schools is increased.

Aim of the Study

The aim of this study was to propose a framework for student leadership development based on practices used by educators in Catholic secondary schools. By conducting this study in the context of Catholic education, it can be shared with Catholic secondary schools located throughout the United States, taking a step towards greater understanding of what constitutes effective student leadership development in that setting.

Conclusions

The findings presented in Table 4 from Chapter Four identified 12 themes in three categories: practices, implementation, and criteria for effectiveness.

Table 4*Emergent Themes from this Study by Category*

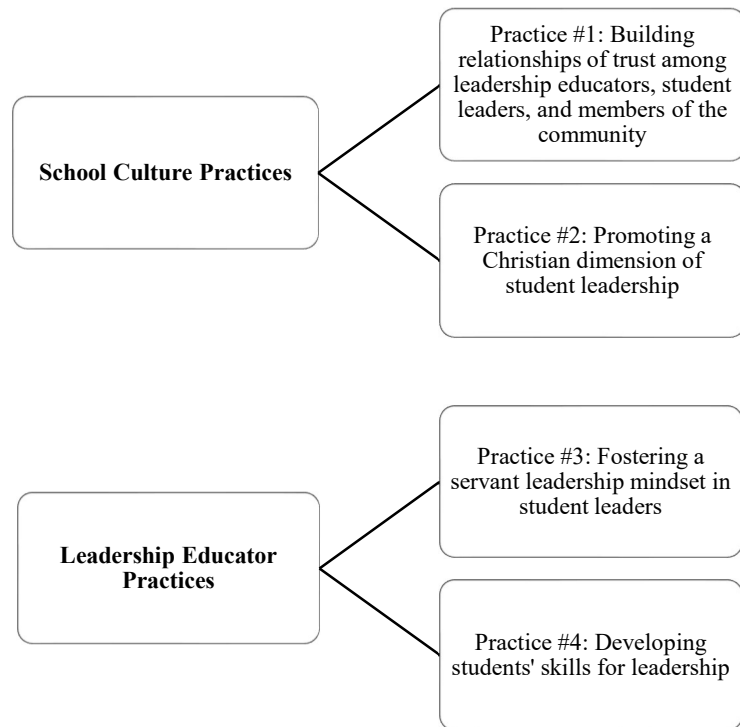
Category 1: Practices	Category 2: Implementation	Category 3: Criteria for Effectiveness
Theme #1: Developing students' skills for leadership	Theme #8: Providing multiple leadership opportunities	Theme #11: Impact of student leadership
Theme #2: Fostering a servant leadership mindset in students	Theme #9: Facilitating student leadership formation activities	Theme #12: Increasing students' capacity to lead
Theme #3: Building relationships of trust among leadership educators, student leaders, and members of the school community	Theme #10: Coaching and mentoring student leaders	
Theme #4: Promoting a Christian dimension of student leadership		
Theme #5: Student leaders serve with and for others		
Theme #6: Student leaders are role models in the school community		
Theme #7: Student leaders follow through on a commitment to lead		

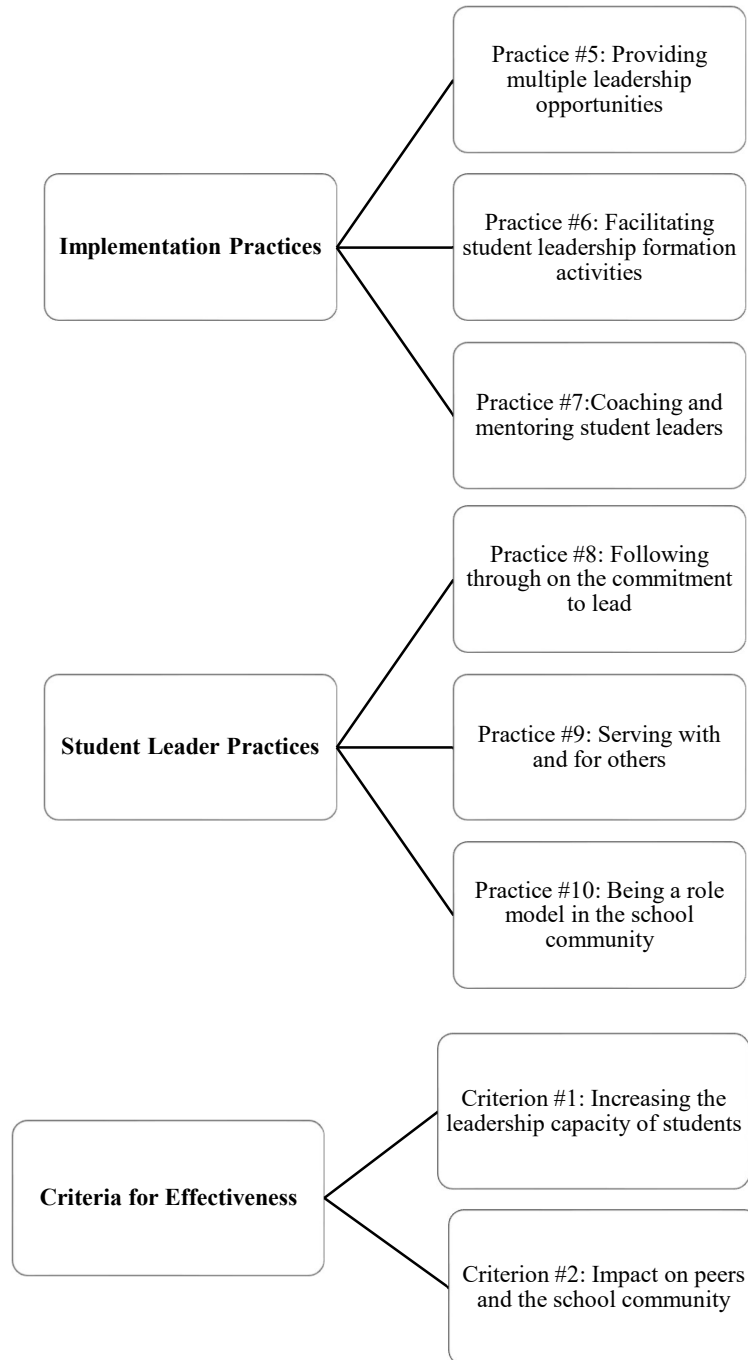
Upon further examination, these themes revealed 10 practices and two criteria for effectiveness of developing student leaders. The stakeholders bearing responsibility for developing student leaders include administrators, faculty, staff members, and other students. When seen through this lens, the practices and criteria can be grouped in five sets, revealing a framework for student leadership development. These groupings provide the structure for the conclusions presented in this chapter.

The key to the framework is the dynamic relationship and exchange between student leaders and their leadership educators. Leadership educators are responsible for imparting their Catholic secondary school’s mission and charisms to student leaders who apply their learning to actions of leadership within the school community. Their actions have an impact on the experiences of all the members of the school, playing a significant role in shaping the quality of life within the school community. It is important to note that the way each school develops student leaders is unique to the individual school. However, the study revealed the most common practices and criteria utilized by leadership educators from different Catholic secondary schools to develop student leaders. This effort resulted in the creation of the student leadership development framework. Figure 1 provides a visual representation of this framework.

Figure 1

Student Leadership Development Framework





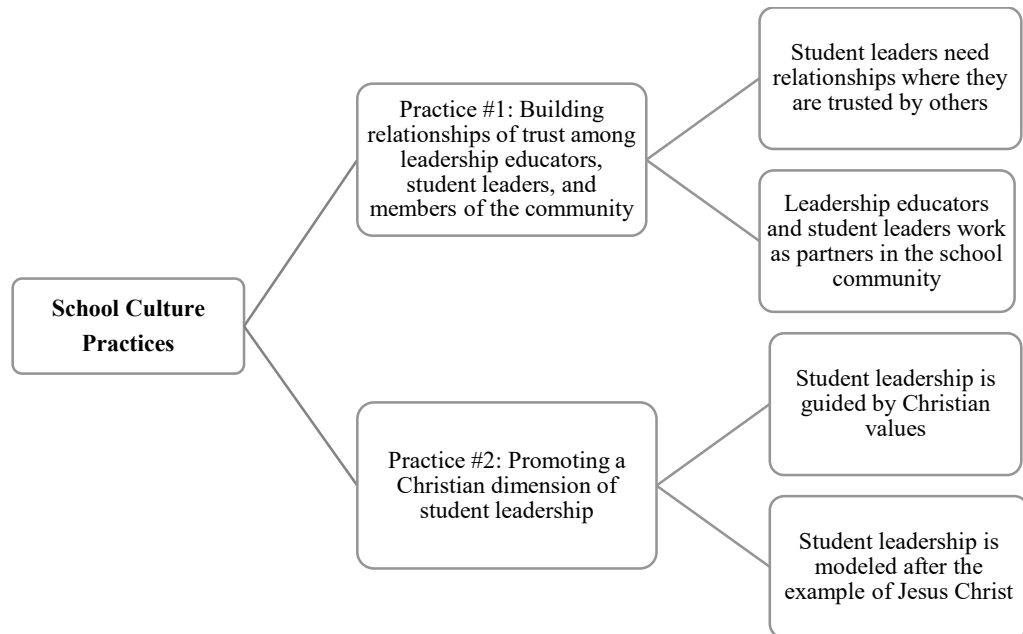
School Culture Practices

Despite the differentiation of roles, approaches, and structures present in individual schools, two practices of school culture reside at the center of student leadership development in a Catholic secondary school. For example, there will be

variation in school cultures depending on the students they serve or the religious charisms they espouse. In other words, leadership development within a single gender school will have some differences from coeducational schools and similarly, there will be differences among Lasallian, Franciscan, Jesuit, Marianist, and (Arch)Diocesan schools. However, practices of school culture are the emphases upon which the process of developing student leaders is built (Lavery & Hine, 2013). They qualify the kind of relationships at the heart of student leadership development and the expectations about the way student leaders act as representatives of the mission, charisms, and values of their respective school. Figure 2 shows the practices of school culture that create an environment conducive to student leadership development.

Figure 2

School Culture Practices



An essential feature of student leadership in the Catholic secondary school setting is its emphasis on relationships. Given the levels of organization found within school

communities, the influence of leadership depends on how well its members interact with one another (Hastings, 2011; Hine, 2013; Schneider et al., 2002). In the case of student leadership development, the quality of these relationships is characterized by two elements. First, that members of the school community trust their student leaders (Holquist et al., 2023). And second, that a sense of partnership exists between leadership educators and student leaders. These elements provide the foundation for student leaders to develop and thrive in Catholic secondary schools.

There is a measure of reciprocity in the relationship between leadership educators and student leaders (Bowers et al., 2016; Monkman & Proweller, 2016). When they see each other as sharing similar experiences and establish deeper connections with one another, student leadership development occurs. Student leaders become more receptive to the guidance and support of their leadership educators. The quality of partnership between student leaders and leadership educators is of significance to student leadership development (Kagay et al., 2015; Shera & Murray, 2016). Leadership educators are responsible for creating the kind of environment in which students can learn, apply, and reflect on leadership as well as succeed as leaders (Belmonte & Calleja, 2020; Coffey & Lavery, 2018; Hackett & Lavery, 2011). They must value and understand each student leader if they are to exercise leadership that impacts their peers and the school community. This requires an authenticity of partnership where trust and interaction allow each student leader to be seen and treated individually (Griffith et al., 2018; Griffith & Larson, 2016; Shek et al., 2023). Leadership educators respond accordingly, helping students to seek growth starting with their unique talents and skill sets. And it is essential that partnerships with student leaders begin with building quality relationships (Eva et al.

2020; Heibel et al., 2024; Lee et al., 2023). This takes place predominantly in the context of regular interactions during the school day.

The primary missional focus of the Catholic secondary school is a faith-based education that permeates the experiences of its students. There are two specific attributes found in the data describing how student leadership in Catholic secondary schools possesses a Christian dimension. The first is that student leadership is guided by Christian values (Belmonte & Calleja, 2020; Brown & Treviño, 2006; Hackett & Lavery, 2010). These values help to shape the attitudes and behavior of student leaders. Secondly, Jesus Christ is the model student leaders should follow if they wish to affect positive changes among peers and in the school community (Hine, 2011; USCCB, 2020). Given that Catholic secondary schools are founded on the person of Christ, leadership educators help to foster this understanding among student leaders (Dasrimin et al., 2023).

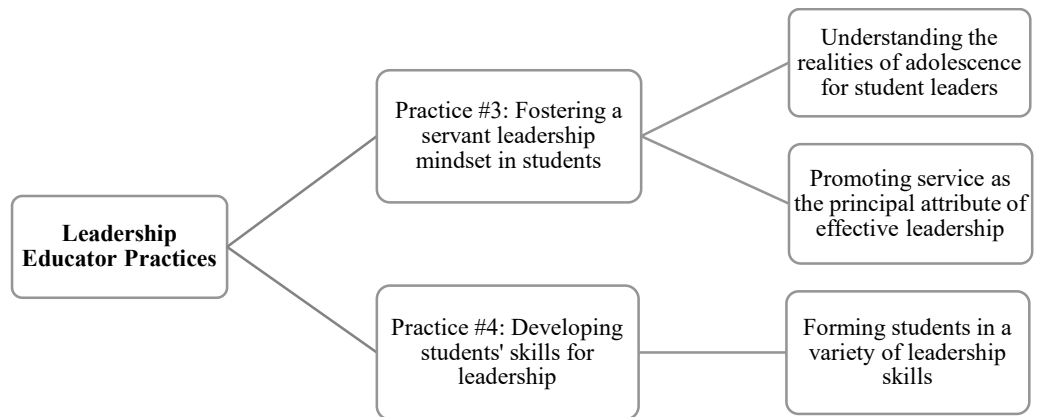
In sum, two practices of school culture that are foundational to student leadership development in Catholic secondary schools have been identified. How well members of the school community, particularly student leaders and leadership educators, develop meaningful connections with one another contributes to the effectiveness of student leadership. These relationships are built on the trust that students can provide leadership beneficial to the school community. Additionally, the nature of the Catholic secondary school as a Christian educational institution provides a basis for their approach to leadership. It is one that relies on both Christian values and the example of Jesus Christ as a model for servant leadership. Building on these cultural practices, Catholic secondary schools are equipped to determine the roles they offer to students desiring to pursue leadership opportunities.

Leadership Educator Practices

The second set of practices from the research findings pertains to the role of the leadership educator. Their responsibilities require shaping the mindset of student leaders and helping them gain skills for leadership which are applied to their relationships in the school community. Figure 3 outlines the student leadership development practices of leadership educators.

Figure 3

Leadership Educator Practices



Student leaders need these efforts from leadership educators to grow personally as well as lead effectively, creating a positive impact on their peers and the rest of the school community. Given the adolescent stage of life that secondary students experience, it is important that leadership educators attend to their developmental needs (Rehm, 2014). This can prove difficult given the self-conscious nature of adolescence.

Performing service is a benefit to student leaders as they navigate the developmental task of identity formation. It provides them the opportunity to develop a sense of purposefulness. Additionally, service is relevant to the identity of Catholic secondary schools that espouse Christian values and the example of Jesus Christ.

Therefore, it is important for student leaders to find purpose through service. However, the developmental tasks of adolescence can make that process challenging. By understanding that students in Catholic secondary schools are teenagers amid their developing identities, leadership educators can respond with appropriate measures to form leaders who recognize what is needed beyond their own wants and desires. In doing so, student leaders will become more effective in meeting the needs present in their school community.

At the same time, service is promoted as the principal attribute of effective leadership in Catholic secondary schools (Bickett, 2008; Hackett & Lavery, 2011; Lavery, 2008; Lavery & Coffey, 2021). Service holds an important space in the development of student leaders because of the benefits it can create (Shek et al., 2023). It emphasizes the good that is done for another rather than one's own self (Channing, 2020). Service enables student leaders to exhibit empathy, compassion, selflessness, and altruistic love, multiplying the successes of leadership by drawing attention to and acting on real concerns. Fostering a mindset of servant leadership becomes an important practice for leadership educators in Catholic schools (Hine, 2014; Hine & Lavery, 2013; Lavery, 2009; Lavery, 2007).

In addition to promoting service, leadership educators form students in a variety of leadership skills (Allen & Hartman, 2009; Crooks et al., 2010; Shera & Murray, 2016). These skills can be used to create an environment of openness and intimacy. They can help student leaders to advocate for a cause or purpose. Skills can be applied to planning an event, leading a discussion, or offering an informative presentation (Rosch & Nelson, 2018; Wulandari et al., 2019). Leadership educators identify the skills they wish to form

in students and determine the techniques they will utilize to engage students' learning leadership (Meyer & Rinn, 2021). Ultimately, they guide student leaders as they endeavor to apply their skills to the various leadership initiatives they pursue (Hackett & Lavery, 2011).

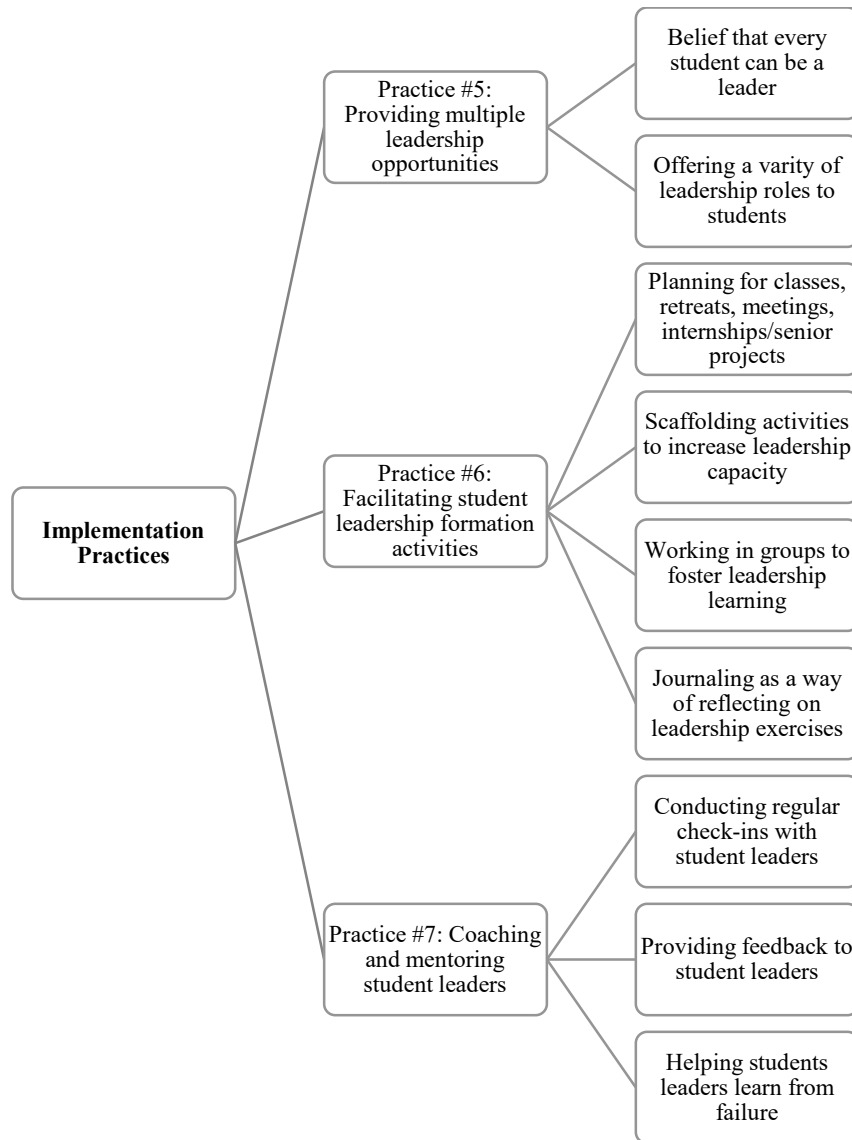
These practices speak to the experiences of leadership educators as they impart knowledge and form students in the skills they need to lead. Leadership educators try to engage student leaders in a service mindset. And they work to broaden the skill sets of student leaders so they can manage and execute the tasks required of them (Heibel et al., 2024). Leadership educators are also responsible for determining the ways that student leadership development is to take place in their respective Catholic secondary schools.

Implementation Practices

How leadership educators implement student leadership development is the focal point of this third set of practices. Leadership educators are responsible for creating the experiences that form student leaders. This begins with the practice of providing a variety of opportunities for students to take on leadership within the school community (Blanton et al., 2014; Hancock et al., 2012; Rosch & Nelson, 2018). It continues with the choices leadership educators make regarding the specific activities they offer to form students' learning about leadership (Rosch, 2015). And at the heart of the relationship between students and their leadership educators is the provision of ongoing coaching and mentoring to foster students' development in aptitude and skills for leadership. Figure 4 indicates the practices leadership educators implement in the process of forming student leaders.

Figure 4

Implementation Practices



Catholic secondary schools provide a wide breadth of leadership opportunities to their students (Coffey & Lavery, 2018; Hackett & Lavery 2011). From student government to campus ministry team to club leadership to athletic team captains and student ambassadors, schools attempt to involve as many students as they can in some leadership role (Eva et al., 2020; Larson et al., 2019). Leadership educators expressed this

commitment to developing student leaders based on the belief that every student possesses the potential to succeed as a leader (Shek et al., 2023). There is also a sense that leadership can be taught, and students can be formed in it (Channing, 2020). This belief in students as leaders fuels the Catholic secondary school's efforts to provide a multiplicity of leadership options for students. In this way, students gain access to learning leadership.

Leadership educators bear responsibility for identifying the approaches they will use to develop the mindset and skills of student leaders. Catholic secondary schools employ a variety of program formats to plan experiences intended to support student leadership development. Classes are a format often used by leadership educators (Hoedel & Lee, 2018; Knight & Novoselich, 2017)). However, leadership educators in Catholic secondary schools also identified retreats, meetings, internships, and senior projects as options to form student leaders. Depending on the school, these formats may be offered during the school day or outside of regular school hours. Regardless of the format chosen, the intention of helping students learn how to lead remains the same.

Additionally, effective leadership educators implement multiple strategies to buttress students' learning about leadership (Jenkins, 2013). Because they exercise great intentionality in crafting learning opportunities, they won't hesitate to use whatever means is at their disposal to foster growth in student leaders. They understand that the educational process requires the scaffolding of activities, so student leaders gain the most from their learning. Scaffolding involves sequencing learning activities to maximize students' experience of formation. When activities follow a particular sequence, understanding and skill build over time.

The use of group work is a strategy leadership educators utilize to shape student leaders' mindset for service and encourage meaningful relationships among peers (Snell et al., 2015). In this setting, student leaders collaborate with others to set goals, make decisions, and plan activities (Matthews et al., 2018; Swinford et al., 2019). They establish collegial relationships with others to make progress on an initiative. Working in groups encourages learning because it requires that student leaders make use of the skills leadership educators desire to impart on them. And it fosters a commitment to sharing leadership with others.

In addition to group work, leadership educators develop the skill of reflection in students by using journaling as a learning activity (Jenkins & Clarke, 2017; Maellaro, 2013; Moore et al., 2010). Reflection is valued because it allows students to assess their experiences of leadership. In turn, this stimulates personal growth. Reflection also serves as the foundation for evaluating the initiatives student leaders are responsible for. The strategy of journaling is particularly helpful to student leaders as they capture their thoughts and ideas. This record provides them with information they can use as a point of reference for decision-making, planning, and evaluating.

Feedback is critical to the process of learning leadership. Leadership educators serve as coaches and mentors, finding time to provide feedback to students (Channing, 2020; Johns et al., 2017; Redmond & Dolan, 2016). They accomplish this by checking-in with student leaders within and beyond the scope of classes or meetings. The purpose of the check-in is to provide student leaders with real-time feedback on their performance and help them learn from moments of challenge or failure. Successful coaching and mentoring rely on the quality of relationship between leadership educators and student

leaders (Bowers et al., 2016). Because time within a school day is limited, leadership educators find ways to connect with their students. By using regular check-ins, student leaders receive the guidance needed to pursue their goals as well as encouragement to do so. Check-ins create space for leadership educators to reinforce leadership concepts, help student practice skills, and reflect together on the quality of a student leader's performance.

These implementation practices bridge leadership educators with student leadership development. Because they believe any student can lead, leadership educators create opportunities for leadership and invite students into a variety of roles. They plan and scaffold activities for learning leadership, relying especially on group work and journaling to increase students' leadership capacity. And they regularly provide coaching and mentoring, using check-ins to give students feedback and encourage them when they experience failure as a leader. This sets the stage for the object of student leadership development, student leaders themselves. Student leaders engage their own set of practices as they move from formation to application of their learning.

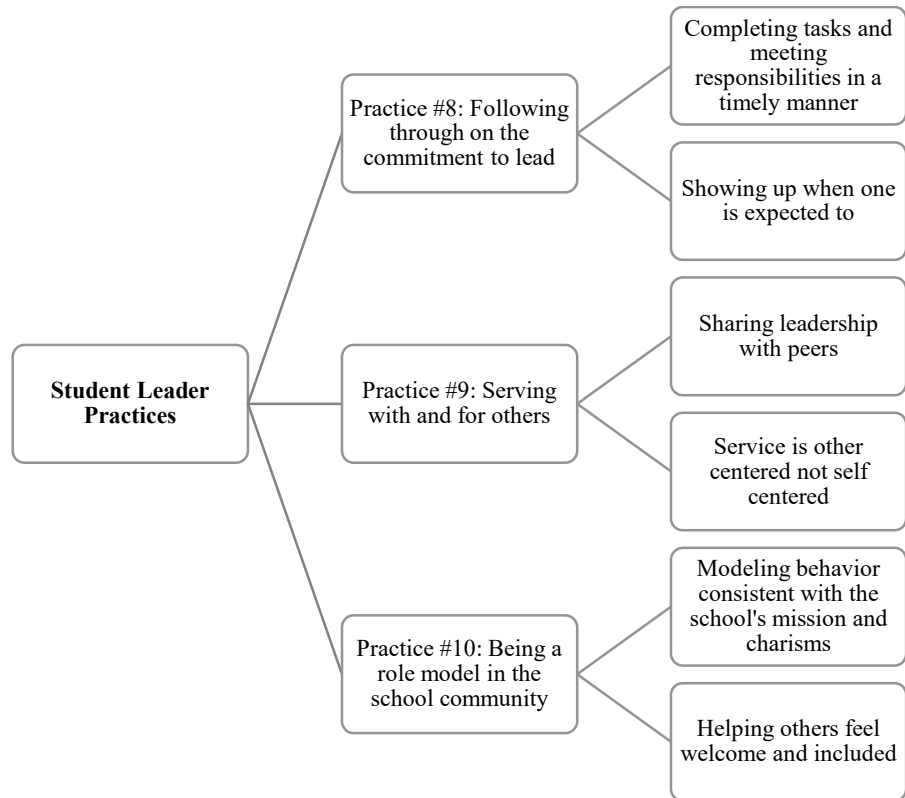
Student Leader Practices

The final set of practices belongs to student leaders and the ways they put leadership into action. Because leadership educators depend on the efforts of students, it is essential that student leaders are committed to meeting the needs of the school community. This informs leadership educators' expectation that students approach leadership with an inclination towards service while modeling desired behaviors. Through these practices student leaders apply their learning and formation to real-time

circumstances. If executed well, their efforts to provide leadership result in favorable outcomes for their peers and the school. Figure 5 presents the practices of student leaders.

Figure 5

Student Leader Practices



Students willing to take on a leadership role are expected to follow through on their commitments. Most leadership roles involve a public dimension, whether it is a student ambassador responsible for leading guests on a tour of campus or ASB members charged with leading a rally to encourage school spirit. As such, it is essential that student leaders take their commitments seriously since not doing so can produce undesirable consequences. Leadership educators depend on student leaders to fulfill their commitments. This is best demonstrated when student leaders meet deadlines while attending to tasks and responsibilities.

Demonstration of an engaged presence by student leaders is critical to the success of student leadership development. In addition to meeting deadlines, leadership educators expect students to show up when required. Without presence, relationships cannot be established or nurtured. This can become an impediment to effective leadership. Therefore, it is essential for student leaders to make themselves available when their leadership responsibilities call for it.

As adolescents, student leaders can forget that service is not for personal gain. And neither is leadership. For Catholic secondary schools, leadership does not belong to a select few. Student leaders develop affinity with others by providing service as the primary expression of their leadership (Lavery & Coffey, 2021). Service is not simply doing something for another person, it also involves serving alongside others and sharing leadership by inviting others to lead (Hine, 2014). Service is a qualifier not only for leadership, but also for the type of connections student leaders make with others in their school community, especially peers. With this as the backdrop, student leaders invest time and energy in bringing others on board to share leadership. Student leadership development possesses an invitational dimension that broadens its influence across the school community.

Student leaders also influence the quality of experiences in their schools. And by virtue of their leadership, students are afforded a certain stature. Thus, the integrity of student leaders is on display both on, and off, campus. Because their application of leadership is subject to critique, student leaders must interact with others as role models and approach others as valued members of the community (Schneider et al., 2002). They are welcoming and respectful, fostering an environment of inclusion. Student leaders

cultivate meaningful relationships and encourage their peers and adults in the school community to do the same (Bowers et al., 2016).

Many of the leadership educators in this study highlighted the charisms their respective schools seek to embody. All members of the community are obligated to carry out the missional dimension of their Catholic secondary school. Student leaders share in the responsibility of bringing their school's mission to life by modeling its values and charisms (Belmonte and Calleja, 2020). Their behavior embraces the school's identity and demonstrates its charisms through their expression of leadership. Student leaders are active in promoting these aspects of their school.

In this set of practices from the framework, student leaders are responsible for their application of leadership formation. They must follow through on their commitment to lead which is accomplished in two ways. First, by attending to their tasks and responsibilities while meeting deadlines. Second, by showing up when their presence is required. Student leaders also serve with and for others by focusing their attention beyond themselves and sharing leadership with peers. Finally, student leaders are expected to be role models whose behavior espouses the mission and values of their school. They help others feel welcome as their leadership takes on an inclusive character, particularly as they share leadership with peers. When student leaders enact these practices, there is greater potential for effectiveness and impact.

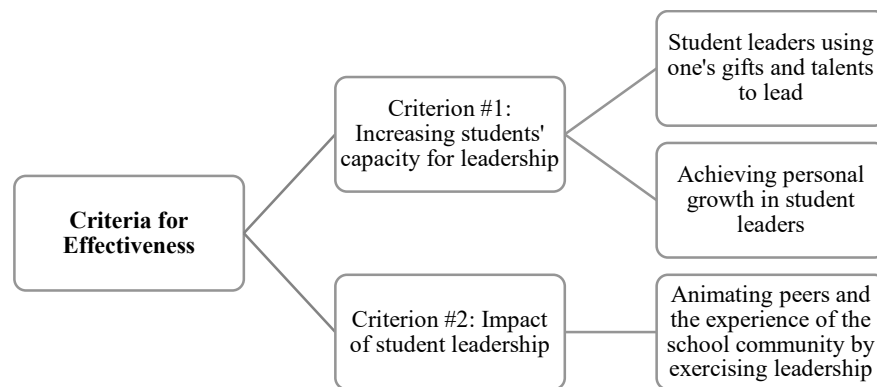
Criteria for Effectiveness

The final aspects emerging from this study form a set of criteria for the effectiveness of student leadership development in Catholic secondary schools. How do leadership educators know that their efforts to develop student leaders make a difference?

This occurs in two ways. The first criterion relates to the impact that the application of leadership has for student leaders. Student leaders put their learning into action and receive the benefits of personal growth and increased leadership capabilities. The second criterion has to do with the students' exercise of leadership and its effect on their peers as well as the school community. Figure 6 outlines the criteria for effectiveness of student leadership development.

Figure 6

Criteria for Effectiveness



This study found that growth occurs during the process of forming student leaders. Leadership educators employ the practices of student leadership development to cultivate students' capacity to lead (Allen & Hartman, 2009; Jenkins, 2013). Leadership educators then place the responsibility for leadership into students' hands with the expectation that they will apply their learning as they implement school events and programs. This application engages students in using their unique abilities for leadership. Their exercise of leadership also enables individual students to grow personally (Hine, 2013; Rosch & Nelson, 2018; Simonsen et al., 2014). This is evidence that the practices of student leadership development are working and effective.

The process of leadership formation provides an opportunity for student leaders to identify values that characterize successful leaders. The application of these values heightens an outward awareness of the people and situations that student leaders encounter. Although leadership educators strive to develop and improve students' skills for leadership, each student leader brings their own personality and expression of leadership. Melding one's own gifts and talents with learned behavior and skills results in a variety of student leaders, each of whom contributes their way of leading for the good of others and the community. This leader emergence results in effective influence on others and in the community (Eva et al., 2020). Student leadership development is also effective when students achieve a sense of personal growth exemplified by self-confidence, self-awareness, and a belief that they are competent leaders (Heibel et al., 2024).

While one criterion for the effectiveness of student leadership development is the personal benefit students receive from practicing leadership, another comes in the results achieved with others and the community. Student leaders perform a myriad of tasks, from planning events to advocating for causes to raising school spirit to collaborating with adults and peers. The cumulative impact of their work shifts attitudes and culture in a school community. Some of these impacts are profound but most are small efforts that, when multiplied, provide tremendous benefits for the Catholic secondary school.

The experience of their fellow students is a product of leadership. Student leaders make decisions and take actions intended to bear positive interactions with others. They encounter opportunities to collaborate with other individuals and groups that are part of the school community. As student leaders become more community-minded, their sense

of creativity can lead to possibilities that enhance the school. As such, the experience of the school community benefits from the efforts of its student leaders (Rehm & Selznick, 2019). In these cases, leadership is a conduit for improvements in the life of a Catholic secondary school (Belmonte & Calleja, 2020; Hine, 2013).

The criteria for effectiveness highlight the purpose of student leadership development to make a difference for good. In the context of the Catholic secondary school, student leaders serve the good of their peers and school community. This begins with the growth of leadership within students. They learn skills, gain perspective, and realize the potential they hold for effecting changes that are beneficial to many. Their leadership animates others as they share their abilities, apply their leadership to meet needs, and invite others to support and join their efforts. The effectiveness of student leadership development ultimately shows up in the quality of relationships and the collective experience of the members of the Catholic secondary school community.

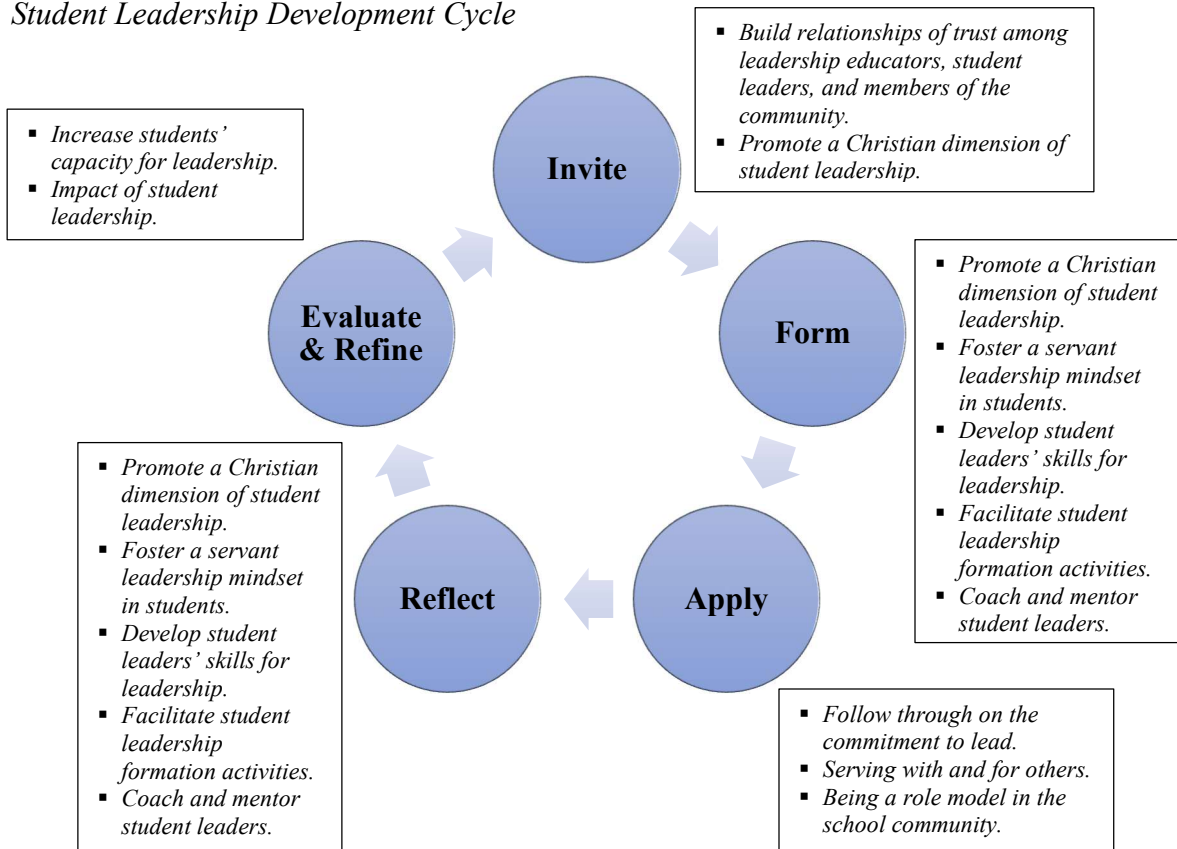
Summary of Conclusions

The conclusions presented here demonstrated that the practices and criteria for effectiveness identified by this study resonated with existing literature. It presented a framework for student leadership development in Catholic secondary school that is dependent on the relationships present within the school community. The primary relationship is between leadership educators and student leaders. Relationships with others are engaged as student leadership is applied to various situations and initiatives. It is within this context of relationships that the practices and criteria can be organized into five sets. Each set belongs to a certain group of stakeholders in the school community who bear responsibility for the development of student leaders.

School culture practices qualify as essential components of student leadership development in a Catholic secondary school setting because they provide a foundation for such an undertaking. Leadership educator practices give direction to the student leadership development efforts taking place in the school community by articulating what should be included. Implementation practices are the purview of leadership educators as they discern the ways that knowledge and skills for leadership are passed on to students. Student leader practices focus students' application of formation experiences on the provision of meaningful leadership within the school community. And finally, the criteria for effectiveness seek evidence that student leadership development provides desirable outcomes for individuals as well as the broader Catholic secondary school community.

Proposed Solution

Engaging the practices and criteria of the framework within a cycle of student leadership development is the proposed solution to this study's research question. The five movements contained in the cycle are rooted in the natural ebb and flow of a Catholic secondary school as it graduates a percentage of students and welcomes new ones annually. These events require leadership educators and others involved in the development of student leaders to begin the process of bringing new student leaders on board in preparation for each school year. As the school year progresses, student leadership development is guided by the progression of these movements: invitation, formation, application, reflection, and evaluation and refinement. The completion of one iteration of the cycle moves naturally into the next school year, initiating a new iteration of the cycle. Figure 7 offers an overview of the student leadership development cycle, identifying its movements, and the practices or criteria associated with each movement.

Figure 7*Student Leadership Development Cycle***Movement 1: Invitation**

The first movement in the student leadership development cycle is invitation. The cycle begins with the practices of school culture which provide the foundation for this movement. Leadership educators, administrators, and other faculty and staff, foster an environment of trusting relationship which encourages students' willingness to taking responsibility as leaders in the school community. Catholic secondary schools also promote a Christian dimension to student leadership that is rooted in the school's mission and charisms. These practices help create the culture for student leadership development, inviting students to step into leadership. This entails determining the leadership opportunities a Catholic secondary school will choose to offer. Leadership educators take

responsibility for this practice by identifying potential leadership roles then inviting students to participate in them. The process of invitation will likely vary from school to school as leadership educators might incorporate applications, interviews, or peer elections as ways to surface student leaders.

Movement 2: Formation

The second movement in the cycle is formation. In this movement, the practices of leadership educators take center stage as they work to develop the attitudes, understanding, and skills student leaders will need to achieve positive results. Leadership educators attempt to foster a mindset for servant leadership in their students in this movement. This includes providing formation experiences that support the school's mission and embody its values and charisms, particularly in terms of its Catholic identity and commitment to Christian virtues. Leadership educators also encourage students to develop skills for leadership that will empower them with the ability to make decisions, collaborate with others, and plan initiatives that enhance the life of the school community.

Leadership educators utilize the implementation practices of the student leadership development framework to actualize their formation efforts. They select, sequence, and facilitate activities intended to grow students' capacity for leadership. Leadership educators also provide coaching and mentoring in support of student leaders as they apply their learning and test the new skills they acquire. The actions of this movement allow leadership educators to prepare and monitor students as they begin to exercise leadership in the school community. Formation is the opportunity within the

student leadership development cycle to transfer knowledge and cultivate students' abilities to lead.

Movement 3: Application

The third movement transitions from the efforts of leadership educators to the practices of student leaders. Student leaders take the knowledge and skills gained through their formation and apply them to the activities and initiatives pertinent to their role. For example, members of student council plan and implement a homecoming dance or the campus ministry retreat team leads activities and facilitates small group conversations during a retreat experience. It is through application that student leaders serve with and for others, ensuring the interpersonal dimension of leadership as it relates to peers and other members of the school community. Student leaders also act as role models to fellow students as they exemplify the Catholic secondary school's identity, rooted in its mission, values, and charisms. For leadership to flourish, it requires that student leaders follow through on their commitment to lead and are held accountable in those times when they fail to do so. In the student leadership development cycle, application is the movement where outward signs that students are leading become tangible, evidenced by their practice of leadership.

Movement 4: Reflection

The fourth movement of the cycle sets a time for leadership educators to focus on developing the skill of critical reflection in student leaders. For their part, student leaders learn how to gain perspective on a situation and to exercise discernment as they recount their leadership experiences. The act of reflecting helps student leaders to learn and develop self-awareness, which they can draw upon when encountering new leadership

situations or challenges. The leadership educator practices identified in the formation movement of the student leadership development cycle are reiterated, deepening student leaders' ability to lead. Reflection is the movement where leadership concepts introduced during formation can be reviewed and student learning is reinforced. It also allows for time to practice leadership skills or introduce new ones, which can provide a great benefit to student leaders.

Movement 5: Evaluation and Refinement

The fifth and final movement of the student leadership development cycle is evaluation and refinement. It is in this movement that the criteria for effectiveness of student leadership development are employed. The criteria are used to assess the impact student leadership development has on individuals and the school community. It is an opportunity to determine the level of growth experienced by student leaders as formation and application yield results. It is also an opportunity to determine the impact student leaders' actions had on their peers and the rest of the school community. As part of this movement, one task that leadership educators will need to attend to is creating processes and tools for evaluation. Once evaluation has been completed, the learning can be used to refine specific aspects of the cycle, leading to improvements to the process of developing student leaders. These refinements can then be incorporated as they pertain to any of the movements in the student leadership development cycle.

Summary of the Proposed Solution

The proposed solution to the research question and sub-questions of this study is an implementation of the student leadership framework within the cycle of student leadership development. The student leadership development cycle is set to the rhythm of

the school year and begins with the invitation of students to a variety of leadership opportunities. The cycle continues as leadership educators engage the task of forming students in the understanding and behaviors that foster leadership growth. Then student leaders experience leadership firsthand as they apply their learning to projects and initiatives specific to their role. Once they have been given the chance to lead, time is taken for critical reflection, giving leadership educators and student leaders the opportunity to examine what has transpired in the exercise of leadership. The results of reflection are used in conducting evaluation processes that surface strengths and areas for improvement. Evaluations trigger refinements in the Catholic secondary school's efforts to develop student leaders. Built on the practices and criteria of the student leadership development framework, implementing this cycle of movements provides a comprehensive approach to developing student leaders.

Practical Implications

Beyond this study's results leading to the creation of both the student leadership development framework and the student leadership development cycle, there are additional implications of this research. First, in examining the scope of this study, there are areas for further study and future research that can be pursued to expand the knowledge and understanding of student leadership development. Secondly, there are implications for leadership theory and practice that emerged from this research. This study proposes several practical implications which are presented here.

Implications for Future Research and Areas for Further Study

The study reveals areas for additional research on the topic of student leadership development. Catholic secondary schools make efforts to incorporate student leadership

development as part of their efforts to educate young people (Hine, 2013). Since this study only included Catholic secondary schools in California, its results may not be generalizable to all Catholic secondary schools. According to the National Catholic Educational Association (2024), there are 1,174 Catholic secondary schools across the United States, offering a wide range of schools which could be included in future studies. This also leaves open the question of researching the practices of student leadership development in non-Catholic secondary schools, whether they are faith-based or public institutions.

Studies by Hackett and Lavery (2011) and Belmonte and Calleja (2020) noted that involving student leaders in religious programs of a Catholic secondary school contributed to their personal growth in faith. As such, one area for further study is the role spirituality and/or religion plays in developing student leaders in Catholic secondary schools. Another area for future research is the impact that the missions and charisms of religious order schools might have on student leadership development. Catholic secondary schools sponsored by orders such as the Dominicans, Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, Xaverian Brothers, Sisters of Mercy, Servites, Daughters of Charity, and the Congregation of Holy Cross, hold specific values in line with the charisms of their founders. Depending on the order, these can shape the way in which student leadership is formed.

This study surfaced a series of practices which included identifying leadership educators' particular approach to student leadership development. In the research data, leadership educators identified the use of hands-on learning experiences in their formation of student leaders. Existing literature found that experiential and project-based

learning were practices utilized for student leadership development (Allen & Hartman, 2009; Eich, 2008; Jenkins, 2013). Future study on the role experiential and project-based learning plays in student leadership development in Catholic secondary schools could contribute to a deeper understanding of their effect on leadership formation.

Finally, regarding specific populations of students in Catholic schools, further study might consider how leadership development may be different when addressing a particular age or gender. A continuum of leadership might be built off researching the practices of student leadership development with youth of middle school age as proposed in the work of Coffey and Lavery (2018). Bickett, 2008, Eva et al. (2020), Michael and Mitton-Kükner (2016), and Perets et al. (2023) studied how leadership development impacted the attitudes and experiences of adolescent girls. Future research on the effect gender-based leadership has in single gender Catholic secondary schools may reveal practices that are effective in those settings. A significant implication of this study is that it opens many possibilities for expanding our understanding of student leadership development.

Implications for Leadership Theory and Practice

This study also holds implications for leadership theory and practice. Based on the findings, servant leadership emerged as the primary theory promoted by leadership educators in Catholic secondary schools. Research conducted by Lavery & Coffey (2021) concurred with this finding. But they also found elements of distributed and transformational leadership in their research. Additionally, Brown and Treviño (2006) posited a relationship between ethical leadership and leader effectiveness and noted that some spiritual leaders lead as a response to a divine power or call to serve. Canales

(2014) explored the notion of Christian leadership as a foundational theory guiding the efforts of leadership development in Catholic settings. In their view, the theories of servant leadership, transformational leadership, moral/ethical leadership, and spiritual leadership work together to form a theory of Christian leadership. Specific research on Christian leadership is limited and opens the possibility for future study on the leadership theories that are at work as student leadership development takes place in the Catholic secondary school setting.

In terms of leadership practice, Catholic secondary schools can perform a strategic assessment of the role and value that student leadership holds in their educational missions. This assessment could provide a school with a new or renewed commitment to developing student leaders. As a result, the potential for building, or revising, a student leadership development system emerges. There is also an opportunity to implement measures for evaluating the impact of student leadership in Catholic secondary schools given that such measures were not clearly defined by this study. These efforts can provide direction for intentional analysis of the processes utilized for student leadership development. Ultimately, the impact of this work is improvement in the quality and experience of student leadership for Catholic secondary schools.

Summary of the Dissertation in Practice

Throughout my career as a leadership educator in Catholic youth ministry and Catholic secondary schools, I have supported the desire of hundreds of students to become leaders whose contributions resulted in transformative impacts for their peers and others. I created a variety of workshops, learning sessions, and retreats to foster leadership in young people. I spent countless hours facilitating activities and mentoring students to help them become effective leaders. And while these efforts were often

viewed as successful, I did not fully grasp how the process of developing student leaders really worked. Thus, I began this study with a desire to understand what constitutes student leadership development, how the development of student leaders takes place in Catholic secondary schools, and what criteria should be used to evaluate its effectiveness. As a result of this research, I have a deeper understanding of the ways I, and other leadership educators, can exercise greater intentionality in our practice of developing student leaders.

The Student Leadership Development Framework and Student Leadership Development Cycle work in tandem to provide many benefits to Catholic secondary schools. The framework articulates practices and criteria for effectiveness, and the cycle sets them to a series of movements that correlate with the experience of a school year. Collectively, they support the development of student leaders in the Catholic secondary school setting. Implementation of the practices and criteria through the cycle provides a systemic approach to a school's efforts to student leadership development. From administrators and leadership educators, to faculty, staff, and students, the framework and cycle engage those within the school community in the experience of leadership. Facilitating student leadership development with these tools provides an orderly, comprehensive process for maximizing the influence of student leadership. Most of all, the student leadership development framework and cycle reflect evidence-based approaches supported by past and recent scholarship.

It is my hope that the results found in this study make a valuable contribution to leadership educators in Catholic secondary schools. That they serve to help student leaders by fostering their personal growth and practice of leadership. That students'

application of leadership enables them to improve the experiences of others in their respective school communities. And that Catholic secondary school communities are better equipped to promote their missions and charisms in meaningful ways. Finally, I pray that this effort offers new knowledge and practice to the field of leadership development. But most of all, that future generations of young people will witness the power that their leadership holds for making a difference for good as they mature in personal identity and serve others in community.

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Appendix A

Institutional Review Board Approval from Creighton University



Office of the Provost
Research Compliance

DETERMINATION DATE:	27-Feb-2023
TO:	Stanley Cordero
FROM:	Social / Behavioral IRB
PROJECT TITLE:	Practices for Developing Student Leaders in California Catholic Secondary Schools
REVIEW CATEGORY:	Exempt
RISK LEVEL:	Minimal Risk
SUBMISSION #:	2003829-01
SUBMISSION TYPE:	Initial Application
REVIEW METHOD:	Exempt Review
DETERMINATION:	Approved

Thank you for your Initial Application submission materials for this project. The following items were reviewed with this submission:

- Creighton University HS eForm
 - 2023 0214 IRB Tracked Changes Cordero Invitation to Participate in Research 2003829.docx
 - 2023 0214 IRB Tracked Changes Cordero Research Protocol 2003829.docx
 - Bill of Rights for Research Participants.pdf
 - Cordero Tracked Changes Interview Protocol with Questions.docx
 - Plan for Contacting Principals.docx

This project has been determined to be exempt from Federal Policy for Protection of Human Subjects as per 45CFR46.104(d)(2)(iii).

All protocol amendments and changes are to be submitted to the IRB and may not be implemented until approved by the IRB. Please use the modification form when submitting changes.

If you have any questions, please contact the IRB Office at 402-280-3074 or irb@creighton.edu. Please include your project title and number in all correspondence with this Board.

This letter has been electronically signed in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained in Creighton University's IRB records.

Institutional Review Board

† 402.280.2126 | † 402.280.3200
Dr. C.C. and Mabel L. Criss Health Sciences Complex I
2500 California Plaza Omaha, NE 68178

creighton.edu
creighton.edu/researchservices/rcocommittees/irb

Appendix B

Participant Invitation Letter

Dear Principal,

I am a doctoral candidate in the Ed.D. in Interdisciplinary Leadership Program at Creighton University studying student leadership development. I am conducting a study to explore practices used by educators to develop student leaders in Catholic secondary school. I would greatly appreciate it if you would forward this email to student activities and campus ministry staff who may be eligible.

I will be sending two reminder emails to principals asking that they forward this invitation to staff. If you do not want to receive these reminders, please reply to this email and I'll remove you from the list. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Hello,

I am a doctoral candidate in the Ed.D. in Interdisciplinary Leadership Program at Creighton University. If you have at least two years of experience working with student leaders in campus ministry or student activities, you are invited to participate in a study. This study is designed to explore practices used by educators to develop student leaders in Catholic secondary school.

Participation involves one video interview via Zoom. Each interview will be scheduled at a mutually convenient time, lasting between 75 and 90 minutes. The interview focuses on your experiences of working with and developing student leaders through campus ministry or student activities. You may be contacted afterwards to confirm the accuracy of the interview transcript. Your participation in the study is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time.

We believe this study presents no risks greater than those experienced in everyday life. Loss of confidentiality is a potential risk of taking part in this study. However, we will collect and store interview data using a password protected online service and participants and their schools will be assigned pseudonyms to maintain anonymity. No compensation or direct benefits can be expected from participating in the study. However, your participation may help inform the field of student leadership development, particularly in the Catholic secondary school setting.

If you are interested in participating or would like to learn more, please contact me at 707-529-7130 or via email at stanleycordova@comcast.net. Should you have questions about research participants' rights, please contact the Creighton University Institutional Review Board at 402-280-2126. See the attached Bill of Rights for Research Participants.

Sincerely,
Stanley Cordero, Doctoral Candidate, Creighton University

Appendix C

Bill of Rights for Research Participants

As a participant in a research study, you have the right:

1. To have enough time to decide whether or not to be in the research study, and to make that decision without any pressure from the people who are conducting the research.
2. To refuse to be in the study at all, or to stop participating at any time after you begin the study.
3. To be told what the study is trying to find out, what will happen to you, and what you will be asked to do if you are in the study.
4. To be told about the reasonably foreseeable risks of being in the study.
5. To be told about the possible benefits of being in the study.
6. To be told whether there are any costs associated with being in the study and whether you will be compensated for participating in the study.
7. To be told who will have access to information collected about you and how your confidentiality will be protected.
8. To be told whom to contact with questions about the research, about research-related injury, and about your rights as a research participant.
9. If the study involves treatment or therapy:
 - a. To be told about the other non-research treatment choices you have.
 - b. To be told where treatment is available should you have a research-related injury, and who will pay for research-related treatment.

Appendix D**Interview Protocol with Questions**

Interview Protocol: *Practices for Developing Student Leaders in California Catholic Secondary Schools*

Time of Interview: *To Be Determined*

Date of Interview: *To Be Determined*

Place: *Via Zoom Videoconference*

Interviewer: *Stanley Cordero, Ed.D. Candidate, Creighton University*

Interviewee: *To Be Determined*

Position of Interviewees: *To Be Determined*

Project Description and Introductory Script: *Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed for this research project on practices for developing student leaders in Catholic Secondary Schools. As a doctoral candidate at Creighton University, I am interested in learning from your experiences and perceptions of student leaders. The study seeks to identify practices used to form student leaders in Catholic secondary schools. The aim of this study is to propose a framework for student leadership development based on practices used by educators in Catholic secondary schools. This interview will last approximately one hour. Before we begin, I would like to remind you that your comments will remain anonymous. If you need a break from our conversation, please feel free to ask for one. Finally, do not hesitate to ask me any questions you might have during the remainder of this interview. Are you ready to begin? (Await response)*

Interview Questions:

1. *Please describe your role and its responsibilities for the development of student leaders at your school.*
2. *What leadership roles are available to students at your school?*
3. *How do you define student leadership?*
4. *What do you believe constitutes a successful learning experience for developing student leaders?*
5. *What understandings and knowledge about leadership do you foster in student leaders?*
6. *What leadership skills do you develop in student leaders?*
7. *Please identify and describe the practices you employ to develop your students' knowledge and skills for leadership. How did you come to select/choose those practices?*
8. *Which practices do you believe are most effective in forming student leaders? In what ways are they effective?*
9. *What criteria do you use to determine the effectiveness of the practices used to form student leaders?*
10. *What programmatic formats do you use to develop student leaders at your school?*
11. *Based on your experience, what does a well-formed student leader look like?*
12. *Please describe how your experience of training student leaders has helped them to succeed in meeting their leadership responsibilities.*
13. *Is there a practice for developing student leaders that you hope to implement in the future? Why do you wish to implement this practice?*

14. *What have you found difficult or challenging about developing student leaders?*

15. *Is there anything more about student leadership development at your school that you wish to mention?*

Concluding Script: *Thank you for your time and participation in this interview. May I contact you if there is a need to clarify responses, ask additional questions, or request feedback on my findings? (Await response) I appreciate your cooperation with this research project. Please know that should you have any need to contact me, I can be reached via email at stanleycordova@comcast.net or by cell phone at 707-529-7130. Before concluding, do you have any clarifying questions? (Await response) Then thank you again and have a pleasant day.*

This interview protocol was adapted by Hawkins, P. & Ehrlich, J. from Creswell, J. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. (3rd ed.). Sage Publications, Inc., p.165.)