THE GENERATIONAL SHIFT: AN EXPLORATION OF LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS OF SENIOR STUDENT AFFAIRS OFFICERS THROUGH A GENERATIONAL LENS

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The purpose of this quantitative study was to identify and compare differences in leadership behaviors of senior student affairs officers (SSAOs) based on their generational cohort (Baby Boomer, Generation X, Millennial). The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) was used to measure nine leadership behaviors and three leadership outcomes.

Surveys were administered electronically to 3,361 individuals identified as a chief student affairs officer or director of student affairs in the Higher Education Online Directory (2014). The 449 respondents included 246 Baby Boomers, 192 Generation Xers, and 11 Millennials. Due to an uneven sample size, the Millennial group was removed from the data analysis. The total respondents consisted of 215 male and 219 female SSAOs with 260 employed at four-year private institutions and 170 employed at four-year public institutions. A MANOVA was utilized to determine whether or not statistical differences existed between the nine dependent variables (leadership behaviors) and independent group variables (generational group).

The findings showed that whereas Generation X SSAOs exhibited more transactional leadership behaviors, Baby Boomer SSAOs were more transformational. The results of this study have implications for the field of student affairs in that research and practice support the need for more transformational leaders in senior administrative positions in higher education. If Generation X SSAOs who represent the next generation of administrators are more transactional in their leadership, college presidents and professional associations may need to develop a new, more transformational generation of SSAOs to replace Baby Boomers as they retire.
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by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Leadership within our society is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena in all industries (Burns, 1978). As it relates to the field of education, Birnbaum (1988) argued that while there are thousands of research studies and scholarly articles on the topic of leadership, “little is actually known about the phenomenon we refer to as leadership” (p.22). Nevertheless, many agree that leadership in a higher education environment plays a prominent role in success and improving the quality and performance of all higher education institutions (Bryman, 2007; Gibbs, Knapper, & Picinnin, 2009; Hesburgh, 1988; Martin, Trigwell, Prossner, & Ramsden, 2003; Osseo-Assare, Longbottom & Murphy, 2005; Scott, Coates, & Anderson, 2008).

The role of leadership in higher education has implications for the position of the senior student affairs officer (SSAO), a position that requires leadership that is visionary, persuasive and invaluable (Bass, 2006). The person in this position is an integral member of a higher education leadership team that manages various critical functions of the campus community, as they relate to students (Schuh, 2002). Therefore, student affairs professionals who seek the position of SSAO must have the capability to develop leadership abilities that facilitate learning and challenge students while helping to develop relationships that influence and foster institutional change (Cherrey & Allen, 2011).

It is imperative that SSAOs understand the leadership skills and quality experiences required to thrive in a position of leadership within an institution of higher education. Randall and Globetti (1992) stated that college presidents desire SSAOs with integrity, conflict resolution skills, and decisiveness in their roles as campus leaders. In addition, Woodard, Love, and
Komives (2000) stated that leaders in student affairs must support coalition and collaboration in an effort to build a system of effective change in the organization. Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky (2009) argued that leaders “must develop next practices while excelling at today’s best practices” (p. 65) which supports innovation by SSAOs. In addition, according to Smith, Lara, and Hughey (2009), leadership in student affairs can be one of the most critical determinants of ultimate success within the entire higher education sector. In the present day, new leaders in student affairs are bringing new leadership skills and behaviors that have been influenced by global awareness, technology, and inclusiveness that will assist in propelling higher education into the future (Ellis, 2011). Furthermore, Kruger (2014), the president of the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), argued that American higher education has entered into an era of change that threatens the very landscape and future of our way of life, an era requiring exceptionally strong leadership from the SSAO. Thus, it can be argued that the field of student affairs has a responsibility to understand the leadership behaviors of those that have been entrusted with the position to direct and manage these organizations.

One example of changes in the higher education landscape pertains to the Baby Boomer generation which is known to be the largest working generation in the workforce currently. Leubsdorf (2006) argued that within the next decade Baby Boomers will continue to vacate campus leadership positions, including student affairs. As these positions are vacated, Generation X and Millennials will bring their own leadership behaviors to the position of SSAO. The change from Baby Boomer to subsequent generations will impact the staff, campus communities, and stakeholders of colleges and universities. As a new generation of SSAOs assumes positions of authority within higher education, it is important that they have the leadership and management skills to succeed. As Baby Boomers retire, it will be important to understand
whether or not the Generation X and Millennial populations will be motivated by different leadership behaviors as higher education professionals are assuming such top-level administrative positions for the first time (Carry & Keppler, 2014).

Statement of the Problem

The Baby Boomer generation, born between 1946 and 1964, has been one of the largest contributors to the American workforce totaling over 70 million people (Colby & Ortman, 2015). However, this large contingent of Americans has begun and will continue to retire in the foreseeable future. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimated that between 2004 and 2014, over 6,000 administration positions within postsecondary educational institutions would become vacant (Leubsdorf, 2006). With a large number of Baby Boomers retiring from these positions, the next two largest generation groups: Generation X, born 1965 to 1980 and Millennials, born 1981 to 2002, will transition into positions of authority within the higher education environment. As new generations are transitioning into SSAO roles, it is important to understand their leadership behaviors in order to plan for their professional and personal growth and to comprehend the impact their leadership behaviors will have on higher education, student affairs, and the campus community. Hefferman (2011) stated that new leaders in the higher education sector must include those that have attained a diverse and complex platform of skills, characteristics, and experiences. However, with the expected retirement of Baby Boomer Senior student affairs officers (SSAOs), Generation X and Millennial Senior student affairs officers (SSAOs) could be assuming many of these roles, and little is known about their leadership.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify and compare differences in leadership behaviors between the Baby Boomer, Generation X, and Millennial generational groups of SSAOs. As the
literature suggests, the Baby Boomer population has dominated many student affairs administrative positions (Leubsdorf, 2006). As these positions become vacant, some will be filled by SSAOs from Generation X or Millennials who may or may not have differences and/or similarities in their leadership behavior to their Baby Boomer counterparts. The goal of the study was to formulate an understanding of the leadership behaviors of a multigenerational group of SSAOs and how study findings can have an impact on campus culture, governance, and the field of higher education and student affairs.

Significance of the Study

Over the course of the last several years, the American workforce has begun to change with the retirement of the Baby Boomer generation (Hannay & Fretwell, 2011). In 2013, the Baby Boomer generation compromised approximately one-third of the American workforce (Harter & Agrawal, 2014). As Baby Boomers continue to retire, it can be foreseen that this population within the workforce will decrease as well. In our nation’s history, the Baby Boomers who have held many of these leadership roles within higher education and other fields have been characterized as being dedicated to their work (Gibson, Greenwood, & Murphy, 2009; Kaplan & Taoka, 2005; Gibson, 2009; Lancaster & Stillman, 2003), embracing change (Crampton & Hodge, 2007; Smola & Sutton, 2002) and practicing personal, face-to-face, communication (Gibson, 2009).

Due to differing generational characteristics and the impending retirement of many of our current SSAOs, this study can help comprehension of the leadership behaviors of SSAOs from a generational perspective. The results of this study will aid the field of higher education, including student affairs professional organizations, to understand the leadership behaviors of a new generation of SSAOs in comparison to their Baby Boomer peers that have historically assumed
these roles. These results will add to the breadth of knowledge on the topic of SSAOs while assisting the field of student affairs to prepare for their development and growth as senior campus administrators.

Definition of Terms

*Baby Boomer.* The largest generational group of individuals born from 1945 to 1964 (Pew Research Center, 2014).


*Leadership.* “The relational process of people together attempting to accomplish change or make a difference to benefit the common good (Komives, Lucas, and McMahan, 1998, p. 68).

*Leadership behavior.* The pattern of behavior that reflects the actions, decisions and influence of leaders (Bass & Bass, 2008).

*Millennials.* The generational group also known as Generation Y who were born between 1981 and 2002 (Pew Research Center, 2014).

*SSAO.* The position of Senior student affairs officer is one that oversees a Division of Student Affairs/Student Services at their respective institution in higher education.

*Student Affairs.* The department or divisional unit at a college or university that oversees and fosters the outside-of-the-classroom, co-curricular learning experiences for college students.

Theoretical Framework

The full range leadership model (FRL) served as the framework for this study. Avolio and Bass (1991) introduced the model detailing leadership factors of transactional and transformational leadership as components for leadership activity and effectiveness. Later they added “laissez-faire” to complete the full range leadership model. The model describes five
transformational leadership behaviors: idealized influence-attributes, idealized influence-behaviors, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration; three transactional leadership behaviors: contingent reward, management-by-exception, management-by-passive; and the bottom of the model continuum, laissez-faire or the avoidance of leadership (Avolio & Bass, 1991).

Figure 1. The Full Range Leadership Model

Bass (1985) further explained that the goal of the full range leadership model was to move the organization towards transformational behaviors instead of transactional and laissez-faire behaviors. He held that to accomplish this goal, organizations should: (a) nurture the recognition of group goals, (b) articulate a vision, (c) offer support of others, (d) provide intellectual inspiration, and (e) set high performance expectations. By moving towards transformational leadership within the full range leadership model, organizations have the capacity to raise the level of expectation to the highest level through the leader-follower relationship.

For the purpose of this study, the Avolio and Bass (1991) full range leadership model was the framework I used to answer the research questions and investigate the leadership
behaviors of SSAOs from a generational perspective. Additionally, the Bass and Avolio (2000) Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) was utilized to measure the leadership behaviors of SSAOs.

Research Questions

The following questions were designed to identify and compare the leadership behaviors of SSAOs who were classified as Generation Xers, Millennials, or Baby Boomers:

1. Is there a statistically significant difference in leadership behaviors between SSAOs classified as Generation X, Millennial, and/or Baby Boomer?
2. If there is a statistically significant difference in leadership behaviors based on SSAO generational membership, which leadership behaviors differ?

Independent and Dependent Variables

The following variables were utilized throughout this study of leadership behaviors of SSAOs through a generational lens:

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Range</th>
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<td>BB</td>
<td>Categorical</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Generation X</td>
<td>GX</td>
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<td>Independent</td>
<td>Millennial</td>
<td>MM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dependent</td>
<td>Idealized Influence: Behaviors</td>
<td>IB</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>0-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent</td>
<td>Inspirational Motivation</td>
<td>IM</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>0-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent</td>
<td>Intellectual Stimulation</td>
<td>IS</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>0-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent</td>
<td>Individualized Consideration</td>
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Limitations

The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) was selected to measure the leadership behaviors of SSAOs. However, the MLQ, while valid and reliable, measures nine leadership factors and three leadership outcomes of transformational, transactional, and non-leadership behaviors. It does not measure the infinite and diverse number of leadership behaviors that could be identified using other theories or models. Thus, the findings for this study were limited to illustrating the leadership behaviors within a theoretical framework of the full range leadership model (FRL). Data collected from SSAOs were self-reported and cannot be verified with regard to accuracy. Additionally, due to an insufficient number of Millennials cases in the sample, they were not included in the data analysis. Therefore, only Baby Boomers and Generation X SSAOs were included in this study of leadership behaviors. Also, due to low effect size and moderate power of this study, it is difficult to generalize this study to the entire population of SSAOs from a generational comparison.

Delimitations

This study was limited to senior student affairs officers at four-year higher education institutions, both public and private. All community college and/or two-year institution SSAOs were purposely excluded from this study. Only SSAOs classified by age as Baby Boomers or
Generation Xers were included in this study. Millennials were removed during data analysis due to an uneven sample size. Furthermore, the study was a cross-sectional design in which data were collected from the population of SSAOs during one specific point in time which was February-March 2015.

Organization of the Study

This study on the leadership behaviors of SSAOs from a generational lens is presented in five chapters. Chapter I includes the introduction, background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study, key terms and definitions, the theoretical framework of the study, research questions, limitations, delimitations, and summary.

In Chapter II, a comprehensive review of literature is presented which includes a summary of literature related to generational cohorts along with a historical evolution of the study of leadership including various theories and models. Further, a review of the position of the SSAO is presented with key findings related to leadership behaviors of SSAOs.

In Chapter III, the methodology that was used in this study is discussed. A quantitative methodology is explained along with an explanation of the selection of participants, chosen instrumentation (Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire: MLQ), data collection, and data analysis procedures.

In Chapter IV, the findings of the study are presented with a thorough discussion of the demographics of the SSAOs that participated, answering the research questions, along with presenting the results of the employed data analyses.

Finally, Chapter V, presents a discussion of the study and summarizes the findings, implications for student affairs and higher education and recommendations for future research related to the topic.
CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

For more than three centuries, college administrators have provided the leadership and innovation to help create the mass education society that is today. In present time, it is imperative that student affairs divisions at college and universities are led by highly effective leaders (Culp, 2011). However, to purposefully illustrate the construct of being an effective leader for future generations, one must first explore the phenomena and literature surrounding leadership, history and advancement, leadership behavior, and generational differences. In addition, it is important to explore the position of the senior student affairs officer (SSAO) and its own evolution in order to understand the context of the position. This review of literature investigates these topics to help support the argument for exploring the leadership behaviors of a new generation of SSAOs.

First, this study sought to investigate the topic of generational membership and potential differences in the workforce that the literature suggests. Second, a review of the literature related to the evolution and history of leadership will be explored introducing a number of theories of leadership, models and innovations. In addition, a review of the literature within the context of leadership behaviors, including but not limited to the field of higher education, is examined. Next, I trace the development of the SSAO position, beginning with the first higher education institutions to the present. Finally, a comprehensive review of the literature related to effective leadership behaviors and competencies of the SSAO is provided.

Generational Cohorts

The literature related to the differences between generational cohorts is widely noted across a variety of industries. Of special interest has been the Millennial generation as it has
begun to influence the workforce. However, many of the published studies have focused on the subjective perceptions and qualitative research conducted with individuals that represent generations (Macky, Gardener, & Forsyth, 2008). Deal, Peterson, and Gailor-Loflin (2001) argued that little empirical research exists to confidently validate generational differences in the workplace. In addition, such empirical research related to Millennials is often confusing and contradictory as noted by Deal, Altman, and Rogelberg (2010). However, the literature on generational differences as it relates to Baby Boomers, Generation Xers, and Millennials is diverse and expansive across the United States labor force which was of importance to this study.

Meriac, Woehr, and Banister (2010) conducted a quantitative study to examine generational differences in the dimensions of work ethic of Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials and found significant differences in respondents’ work-related attitudes and behaviors. Utilizing the multidimensional work ethic profile (MWEP), data was collected from 1,860 participants over a 12-year timeframe from 1996 to 2008 from a large database at a large southeastern university and combined with a previous dataset developed by Miller, Woehr, and Hudspeth (2002). The most contrasting differences in the study were between Baby Boomers and the Generation X/Millennial cohorts who were significantly higher on all MWEP dimensions with the exception of leisure. Other comparisons by researchers suggested that Generation X maintained the lowest level of work ethic among all generational cohorts. The study suggested that there are differences related to generational membership which has an impact on the current study related to differences in leadership behavior.

Additionally, Zemke, Raines, and Filipczak (1999) found that generational cohorts differed in their attitudes, values, and beliefs and that this difference influenced their leadership preferences. This finding was a result of over twenty years of interviews, surveys, and focus
groups with managers, supervisors and supervisees across all generations. They identified various leadership styles for each generation: (a) collegial for Baby Boomers; (b) egalitarian for Generation X, and (c) collective action for Millennials. Additionally, Sessa, Kabacoff, Deal, and Brown (2007) conducted two studies on leadership behaviors of managers using different samples and instruments. The first study was drawn from the Center of Creative Leadership database of 4,810 managers from various organizations around the world resulting in a total sample of 447 participants. Using The Leadership Descriptives Sort, a 20-minute online survey consisting of questions related to lifestyle, work patterns, employee attitudes, developmental areas, training options, and leadership attributes. The second study sample was drawn from 20,640 business professionals from 6,000 North American companies. The participants in this study completed the Leadership 360 Degree questionnaire, a behavioral oriented instrument which provides scores on 22 dimensions of leadership behaviors in six functional areas. Their findings from both studies suggested that differences existed in managers’ leadership attributes across generational cohorts. These researchers stated that more research was needed to help clearly define the differences between generations and the impact such differences could have on organizational culture.

Collins, Hair, and Rocco (2009) argued that the overall workforce is growing older as an increase of younger supervisors is becoming more abundant. These researchers sought to identify the leadership behaviors of younger supervisors and the perceptions that Baby Boomers have on younger generations. Over 1,500 individuals were invited to participate utilizing the Leadership Expectations Inventory (LEI) with 566 respondents completing the questionnaire. The LEI asks respondents to rate their supervisors on (15) five-point Likert scale items. The findings of this study showed that older workers rated their younger supervisor’s leadership behavior lower than
younger workers rated their younger supervisor. The researchers stated that the study has considerations for human resource departments to value career development training to build more effective leadership capacity in a younger generation of leaders. Such considerations were important to current study to help in understanding the possible professional development needs of a younger generation of SSAOs.

Dols, Landrum, and Wieck (2010) sought to identify generational differences of nurses as they relate to the job satisfaction, work environment and expectations of managers. Utilizing two focus groups, the researchers collected data from a total of 25 nurses. Their experience ranged from three months to thirty years, and they were from six urban, rural, and suburban hospitals within the southern United States. Based on the participant responses, five themes emerged: (a) transitioning from student to nurse, (b) managing difficult staff conditions, (c) maintaining morale, (d) dealing with safety matters, and building relationships that enhance teamwork. The researchers also argued that managers need the capacity to be given knowledge, power, and resources so they can serve as effective leaders and mentors.

Rodriguez, Green and Ree (2003) also sought to quantify the generational preferences of leadership behavior due to the changing market competition and demographic changes to the U.S. labor force. These researchers surveyed management leaders from a telecommunications company in four different regions of the United States by sending out 1,000 questionnaires with an 81% response rate which led to a sample size of 805 (384 Baby Boomers and 421 Generation Xers). The researchers utilized a MANOVA to compare leadership behavior associated with generational themes of fulfillment, flexibility, technology, monetary benefits, and work environment as dependent variables. The independent variables were: generation, ethnicity, and education. The study showed significant differences in all leadership behaviors between Baby
Boomer and Generation X. The researchers argued that such findings may require a shift in company leadership philosophy, policy, and implementation because the results suggested that Generation Xers have different work environment preferences. The researchers also questioned whether or not leadership behavior would accommodate a paradigm shift because previous studies have identified transformational leadership as most abundant in organizations based on output by Baby Boomers (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1994). They argued based on generational differences, that Gen Xers could be motivated by such a leadership style. This study was important to note because it utilized similar statistical methods and supported findings related to difference in leadership behavior based on generational membership.

Yu and Miller (2005) conducted a study of 20 higher education institutions and 148 machine manufacturers in Taiwan to identify differences in leadership styles between Generation X and Baby Boomers. A questionnaire was developed based on work values, work attitudes, and work characteristics and consisted of 38 questions on a five point Likert scale. Utilizing a MANOVA, the researchers found differences in leadership styles and work characteristics of machine manufacturer workers, but did not find any differences in preferred leadership styles and work characteristics of educators in higher education across generational cohorts. Much of the research of generational cohorts and differences is directly tied to the work-related attitudes, behaviors and traits of a multi-generational workforce not only in higher education but also in various other industries.

Costanza, Badger, Fraser, Severt and Gade (2012) sought to assess the research on generational differences through meta-analysis, based on 20 studies, addressing job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and intent to turn over. Their findings suggested that relationships between generational membership (Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation Xers,
Millenials) and work-related variables do not exist and were likely attributed to other environmental factors. This finding is in contrast to other studies showing relationships.

Twenge (2010) reviewed time-lag and cross-sectional studies to determine if generational differences existed in work attitudes. The researcher found that Generation Xers and Millennials valued work/life balance, leisure, and expressed a weaker work ethic in comparison to Silent Generation (born between 1925 and 1945) & Baby Boomer generations. Additionally, Generation Xers and Millennials had higher extrinsic work values, but there were no generational differences related to altruistic work values. The researcher also identified that Generation Xers and Millennials were more related to individualistic traits compared to Baby Boomers and the Silent Generation which is consistent with previous research related to generational differences.

To further support generational differences related to work attitudes Kowske, Rasch, and Wiley (2010) examined attitudes related to job satisfaction, job security, and turnover intentions utilizing survey data collected over eighteen years. Their findings indicated that work attitudes differed across generations; however, the researchers noted that such differences were minimal with small effect sizes which led the researchers to argue that generations were more similar than different related to work attitudes. Similar findings were illustrated by Real, Mitnick, and Maloney (2010) when investigating generational differences among skilled workers within a construction trade union. The researchers found few quantitative differences related to generational work beliefs, job values, and gender beliefs. However, they did find significant differences in some responses in which Millennials scored higher in tendencies related to hard work, centrality of work, leisure, self-reliance, and delay of gratification while scoring lower in
morality/ethics and wasting time than did Baby Boomers. Interestingly, the researchers found no difference between Millennials and Generation Xers.

Sparks (2012) surveyed 451 registered nurses employed at five hospitals in West Virginia to compare generational differences between Baby Boomers and Generation X related to psychological empowerment and job satisfaction. She found that these generations differed significantly on psychological empowerment, but found no significant difference related to job satisfaction. Sparks stated that Baby Boomers have higher psychological empowerment from which they find meaning to their work environment. This satisfaction is also a predictor of job satisfaction, an important element for the retention of nurses.

These studies illustrate that while differences may exist across generations, work attitudes are more similar than different. The current study sought to identify whether or not such differences existed related to leadership behaviors which could be an important topic within the workplace setting as many Baby Boomers retire. Additionally, the studies and findings of Meriac et al. (2010), Rodriguez et al. (2003), Sessa et al. (2007), Yu and Miller (2005), and Zemke et al. (1999) were of important consideration on the current study due to similar methodologies and their investigation of generational differences.

An Overview of Leadership

Leadership has been defined, redefined, and explained by thousands of practitioners and researchers in numerous contexts and frameworks (Bass, 1990; Stogdill, 1974). Birnbaum (1988) stated that there is not a clear understanding of a definition, measurement, or assessment linked to outcomes on the topic of leadership. Komives, Lucas, and McMahon (2007) defined leadership as a relational process through which people work together to accomplish positive change that will benefit the common good. In comparison, Heifetz and Laurie (1997) defined
leadership as the process of facing adaptive challenges by collective efficacy through people within the organization. These are only two of the many definitions found of leadership. More importantly, empirical investigations on the topic of leadership have not provided clear insight into distinguishing leaders from non-leaders and effective from ineffective leadership (Bennis & Nanus, 1997).

As our society has evolved, so too has the topic of leadership. The two historical eras of leadership are industrial and postindustrial (Rost, 1991) and are important frames of reference to understand how leadership has and continues to evolve. The study of leadership is vast and expansive; therefore, it is important to discuss the chronological development and advancement on the topic to understand current leadership trends in society.

**Industrial Perspectives on Leadership**

Between the mid-1800s to early 1900s the perspectives of leadership were shaped beginning with “great man” theories of leadership. These theories began to explain that leadership was a quality reserved to those in positional roles. However, many of these roles were exclusive to men of great authority such as royalty, generals, government leaders and/or clergy. Due to their exclusivity, many men, all women and anyone not identified as a white man was excluded from this leadership theory (Komives, 2011). In addition, the “great man theory” explained that leaders were born with natural abilities of power and influence with only a rare few exhibiting such attributes (Dugan & Komives, 2011; Komives et al., 2007; Komives, 2011).

As society moved into the twentieth century, the perspective on leadership shifted to the traits and characteristics exhibited by positional leaders in various organizations. Stogdill (1974) trait theory helped identify leaders who were intelligent, self-confident, effective decision-makers, aggressive, modeled integrity, and determined (as cited in Dugan & Komives, 2011).
Such traits were to differentiate their superior ability to lead (Bass, 1990; Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991). It was characterized that many of these “traits” exemplified by leaders were inherited at birth which is consistent with the great man theory from the previous era. Komives et al., (2007) summarized that studies during the time period sought to produce lists of varying traits that would guarantee leadership success, yet such research failed to provide a comprehensive list of traits to used by effective leaders.

With the emerging field of psychology, researchers began to explore and focus on the behaviors of leaders in contrast to the traits that had been identified in positional leaders in the previous era. (Komives, 2011; Komives, et al. 2007; Northouse, 2010). Between the 1940s and 1950s, behavioral theories of leadership began to define leadership as an identified set of human behaviors that exemplify effective leadership (Dugan & Komives, 2011; Komives et al., 2007; Northouse, 2010). In addition, during the behavioral theory era, studies explored varying leadership styles including variances between autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire (Dugan & Komives, 2011, Ronald, 2014). Lewin, Lippit and White (1939) conducted one of the first studies comparing how groups and individuals solve problems. The researchers investigated issues related to group climate, intergroup conflict, and leadership styles with a goal of identifying the way behavior of leaders impacted group influence. Their findings helped identify three styles of leadership that include autocratic leaders who make decisions for themselves, democratic leaders who involve others in the decision-making process, and laissez-faire leaders who have little involvement in making decisions (as cited in Ronald, 2014). Other studies during the behavioral theory era found that behaviors that established a high need for task and relationships were imperative to enhance leadership, and thus created an argument as to whether
or not one true leadership style existed (Komives et al. 2007; Northouse, 2010; Stogdill & Coons, 1957).

Komives et al. (2007) stated that situational/contingency theories are the approaches through which leaders adjust their behavior based on the situation or circumstance. These situational/contingency theories of leadership began to emerge in the early 1970s, in large part due to the “oversimplification of the complex phenomenon that is leadership” (Dugan & Komives, 2011, p. 39). While behavioral leadership theories sought to identify the best leadership characteristics, they did not take into account the role of the environment in various situations. Behaviors that may have been successful in one environment and situation may not be successful when applied to a different environment or situation. Thus, contingency and situational theories helped leaders understand that different environments and situations require differing leadership behaviors and styles to achieve success (Dugan & Komives, 2011).

Postindustrial Perspective of Leadership

Within the twentieth-century, a new era of leadership began with a focus on the influence that leaders exhibit and specifically the leader-follower relationship (Rost, 1991). This new era of leadership, beginning in the late 1970s, ushered in various themes, models, and theories that began to evolve as researchers and practitioners sought to explore the complex phenomenon of leadership. Burns (1978) first coined the term “transformational leadership” to explain the relationship between the leader and followers and the pursuit of common goals. Within his theory, he believed that leadership was a values-based process to develop a mutually beneficial outcome(s) for both the follower and leader. Desired outcomes included advancing to a higher level of morale and motivation that would produce significant change in people and organizations. Furthermore, leaders should have the capacity to empower their followers to
become better leaders in their own right (Dugan & Komives, 2011) which can result in feelings of admiration, respect, and trust of the leader (Bass, 1985; Katz & Kahn, 1978) leading to increased levels of satisfaction and commitment by followers (Yammarino & Bass, 1990). In addition, transformational leaders are charismatic, intellectually stimulated, and express individualized considerations. Transformational leaders attend to each follower’s needs which could include serving as a mentor or coach, (Avolio, Waldman & Einstein, 1988; Bass, 1990) providing inspirational motivation and idealized influence (Barbuto, 1997; Hunt, 1999).

In comparison to transformational leadership, transactional leadership takes a different approach. The leader does not get involved in the development of followers, but instead utilizes a management-by-exception practice with predetermined consequences and rewards for meeting pre-defined objectives or performing duties (Bass, 1985; Bass, 1990; Howell & Avolio, 1993). Both of these leadership theories helped the postindustrial views of leadership to shift the focus from leader-centric to organizational leadership with an emphasis on the relationship of people working collectively for a common purpose and shared goals (Komives, 2011).

Studies Utilizing the Multi-Factor Leadership Questionnaire

The Multi-Factor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) (Bass & Riggio, 2000) was designed to measure leadership styles of transformational and transactional leadership. Since its creation, various industries have utilized the instrument to study various aspects related to leadership. Mary (2005) sought to understand how social workers perceived leaders in formal positions of authority. Utilizing the MLQ (Bass & Riggio, 2000) the researcher sampled 835 members within the membership of the National Network of for Social Work Managers and the Association of Community Organization with 177 completing the questionnaire. The researchers identified that within these professional organizations, socials workers perceived their managers as more
transformational than transactional. Furthermore, there was also a strong correlation between transformational leadership behaviors and leadership success outcomes. They also identified transformational leadership as the preferred leadership style that was congruent with the current definition of social work leadership. In addition, the MLQ was also utilized in a study on leadership style and operational readiness of senior Norwegian military officers. Eid, Johnsen, Brun, Laberg, Nyhus and Larsson (2004) found that the leadership style of transformational leadership was a predictor of situation awareness and interpersonal influence in a sample of 43 senior-level Norwegian officers from the Army, Navy and Air Force.

The MLQ has also been utilized to identify leadership styles that exist between upper-level administrative and middle-management employees. Kent (2003) sought to investigate the perceptions of executive leaders to determine whether or not there was a differential impact on employee attitude and behavior by surveying 29 middle managers and 265 administrators within the state department of parks and recreation. Kent (2003) sought to determine whether or not there was a cascading effect of transformational leadership throughout the organization. However, results from this researcher’s study survey indicated that middle-managers did not exhibit such levels of transformational leadership. Thus, the researcher suggested that executive leadership must take the initiative to develop middle managers who show leadership potential in order to increase levels of transformational leadership throughout the organization. A similar study by Kent and Chelladurai (2001) sought to test the transformational leadership behaviors and leader-member exchange quality of mid-managers and executive level managers at a large Midwestern university athletic department. There were 108 employees who were invited to participate in the study with a total of 75 completing the questionnaire. In contrast to Kent (2003) whose results did show a cascading effect of transformational leadership on the athletic
department as he identified positive links between perceived transformational leadership behaviors and leader member exchange. In addition, the researcher identified a relationship between transformational leadership and organizational commitment.

Doherty and Danylchuk (1996) used the MLQ to examine the leadership behavior of inter-university athletic administrators through a sample of head coaches from the 17 university members of the Ontario Universities Athletic Association (OUAA) and the Ontario Women’s Interuniversity Athletic Association (OWIAA). There were total of 114 coaches that completed the MLQ to measure the leadership style of their own athletic director within their institution. Utilizing a two-way ANOVA with repeated measures the researchers examined the perceived leadership behaviors identified by head coaches of their respected athletic administrators. The coaches in this study perceived their athletic directors or assistant athletic directors to have more transformational leadership behaviors in contrast to transactional and laissez-faire leadership behaviors. The researchers confirmed that this finding supported a transformational leadership style by leaders within athletic department environment to be creative and visionary during a time of political, social and economic scrutiny related to collegiate athletics.

In another area, Carter (2009) used the MLQ to study the effectiveness, personality, and spirituality of 93 pastors. The findings revealed that transformational leadership showed significant correlations with pastoral leader effectiveness. However, the study determined that only the variable of individual consideration was a significant predictor of pastoral leadership effectiveness. Although, all five transformational leadership scales did show positive correlations with the Pastoral Leadership Effectiveness Scale.
The synopsis of the literature of studies that utilized the MLQ helped create a context for the chosen instrument and variables of interest within this study. It also confirmed that the MLQ has been used in a diverse number of studies across various industries.

Leadership Behavior and Higher Education

Tierney and Foster (1989) challenged the notion that leadership is a way of “influencing an organizational culture toward a higher moral plain” (p. 2) and not something that can be described as a science, trait, or skill. Leadership is a social construct and must be examined as such (Komives, 2011). Furthermore, Vinger (2009) argued that leadership behavior should be studied within “particular contexts or in relation to some other constructs/variables” (p. 267).

Much of the literature related to leadership behavior has been focused on transformational leadership in various industries and situations. Additionally, leadership in higher education is different from leadership in many other industries. As Birnbaum (1988) contended, traditional views of leadership and management are not applicable within higher education because leaders are often subjected to more internal and external constraints that can limit their effectiveness.

The influence of various leadership behaviors on the actions and decisions of campus leaders has implications that can influence institutional performance. Smart (2003) conducted a study on the perceptions of the impact of leadership behavior on organizational effectiveness. This quantitative study collected data from faculty and administrators from 14 community colleges in a statewide system. Surveys were sent to 2,723 faculty and administrators from the 14 different institutions with 1,423 completing the survey. The distribution of completed surveys was fairly equal with 54% serving as administrators in comparison to 46% faculty members. Utilizing a MANOVA, the findings of the study identified a strong relationship between leadership behaviors of senior campus administrators and organizational effectiveness. In
support of this finding, Winn and Cameron (1998) found that the influence of leadership behavior on institutional effectiveness was also related to constructs of human resource development, strategic planning, and information management.

Smart (2003) also argued that senior campus leaders can contribute to a higher level of institutional performance through their behavior and actions in their campus leadership positions. In addition, leadership behaviors are important in identifying organizational commitment and job satisfaction. Chieffo (1991) explored this notion by using leadership behavior as the independent variable for presidents at 16 New Mexico two-year colleges. The leadership behaviors of vision, influence, people orientation, motivational orientation, and values orientation were utilized from Roueche, Baker, and Rose (1989) Multi-Factor College Leadership Questionnaire. The findings showed that all five leadership behaviors contributed to both job satisfaction and organizational commitment. More importantly, participants in the study reported the leadership behavior of vision for the institution had a higher level of organizational commitment, thus illustrating the importance of leadership behavior by campus leaders.

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership, which is linked to the full range leadership model (FRL), has been a topic of consideration relating to effective leadership practice in numerous industries including higher education. Tierney and Foster (1989) argued that leaders who are transformative in educational organizations are engaged in defining their organizational priorities, empowering participants within the organization, identifying followers to lead and recognizing the leadership capacity in all people and situations. Filan and Seagren (2003) argued that when academic leaders practice transformational leadership they become a source of inspiration of positive change by empowering followers to affect organizational growth.
Transformational leadership was also found to be the most effective leadership behavior utilized by presidents from a qualitative study of 50 community college presidents (Roueche et al., 1989). Within higher education organizations, transformational leadership has been linked to motivation toward extra effort (Webb, 2007); organizational restructuring and facilitating change (Bass, 1985; Bennis & Nanus, 1997; Vinger, 2009) and producing satisfied employees (Webb, 2009). These studies helped to support an argument that transformational leadership is a tool to be utilized by campus administrators at institutions of higher education.

Kezar and Eckel (2008) conducted a qualitative study to identify whether or not transactional, transformational, or combinations of both were the best leadership styles for college and university presidents when implementing a university-wide diversity agenda. Through phone interviews with 27 college and university presidents, themes emerged that the researchers linked to both transformational and transactional leadership when implementing their diversity agendas. However, the researchers also noticed connections that transformational leadership was connected to creating a positive culture of change and promoting a more diverse campus more so than transactional leadership.

Herbst and Conradie (2011) conducted a quantitative study on the accuracy of perceptions of the transformational leadership behaviors of managers within a South African university. There were 137 staff managers and 603 manager subordinates participants in the study that completed the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI). The LPI-Self and LPI Observer measure transformational leadership on 30 items on a 10-point likert scale (Kouzes & Posner, 2001). The findings showed inconsistencies between managers and manager subordinates with regard to self-perceived leadership behaviors and observer ratings. The researchers argued that higher education has embarked upon a pivotal time for an increase in the transformative
leadership of senior campus administrators, and suggested that leadership development programs may needed to facilitate such a change.

The leadership behavior of transformational leadership often characterizes leaders who project confidence in their followers, sets high goals and expectations, encourages innovation through empowerment and reward, and establishes personal relationships with followers (Bass, 1985). Institutions of higher education have the opportunity to be transformative organizations as Eckel and Kezar (2003) found in a study of six of twenty-six institutions that participated in the ACE Project on Leadership and Institutional Transformation. They identified five common themes of core strategies of transforming institutions: (a) senior administrative support, (b) collaborative leadership, (c) flexible vision, (d) staff development, and (e) visible action. Any institution that did not develop at least one of these of strategies often struggled. Further, Tierney (1989) argued that transformational leadership often has the ability to assist leaders in empowering their followers in educational institutions while often actions and decisions related to leadership can put constraints on the organizational culture with academe. Tierney (1989) held that campus leaders that exhibit a transformational style of leadership can empower others to navigate such challenges institutions may face.

These studies on the views of transformational leadership hold important considerations for the study of SSAOs and higher education institutions in general. The review of literature identified transformational leadership as an effective leadership practice that should be utilized by higher education leaders (Astin & Astin, 2000).

**Historical Evolution of the Senior Student Affairs Officer**

The review of leadership throughout the history of higher education revealed the evolution of the senior student affairs officer’s role from that of oversight of students alone to
oversight of complex and diverse organizations (Cohen & Kisker, 2010; Thelin, 2011). The literature compiled from higher education history researchers provided a context for the changing nature and evolution of college administration.

Beginning in the Colonial Era, higher education institutions founded in the Massachusetts Bay Colony provided a pedagogy which was teacher-centered and rigorous that included student oral exams and recitations to prepare men for clergy or public service (Bastedo, 2005; Cohen & Kisker, 2010; Lucas, 2006; Thelin, 2011). During this era, the leadership of the first colleges fell squarely on the faculty who served in a diverse set of administrative and instructive roles (Clement & Rickard, 1992; Cohen & Kisker, 2010; Thelin, 2011). As students were acclimated into colonial colleges, faculty and college presidents embraced the role of in loco parentis by taking on a role of supervision, development, and oversight, including behavior of students. However, there were often tensions between students and faculty due complaints of poor food and dissatisfaction with the curriculum (Thelin & Gasman, 2011). The changing administrative role between the campus administration and students would continue through the next era.

In the Emergent Nation Era, the Yale Report of 1828 cited the purpose of a Yale education to train men to become upstanding leaders and decision makers in an upper class society (Bastedo, 2005). As this new era began, there were numerous issues of student disobedience, upperclassmen hazing, and harassment of instructors escalated. The faculty and president sought to maintain order by threatening suspension or expulsion while students demanded less stringent rules (Cohen & Kisker, 2010; Thelin, 2011). As institutions began to grow so did the demand for more administration with additional responsibilities for a rapid growing student presence and campus life. As enrollments began to expand, college presidents and faculty members grew weary as students were less inclined to respect and honor their
authority (Schwartz, 2010). In addition, faculty members held on to the classic curriculum, and students began to usher in their own curriculum, the “extra-curriculum” which began with the establishment of literary societies that helped complement the skills and knowledge that students were learning inside-the-classroom. However, a number of factors, including the diminishing of religious influence and curriculum, increased enrollments, and the increase in student persistence towards academic and social freedoms led faculty and the presidents to seek reform on how to effectively lead and manage their higher education institutions (Cohen & Kisker, 2010, Lucas, 2006; Schwartz, 2010; Thelin, 2011).

Within the University Transformation Era, the extra-curriculum began to flourish as students participated in a variety of nonacademic activities which included intercollegiate athletics, fraternities/sororities, secret societies and debating/literary clubs. During the era, institutions continued to grow and evolve and beginning at Harvard in 1870, the first student affairs positions were created to assist in the management and supervision of students in dormitories, social events and other various activities of campus life (Cohen & Kisker, 2010; Lucas, 2006).

The title of dean of men was created by Harvard president Charles Eliot because he was regularly burdened with the day-to-day administrative tasks of university administration. To help alleviate such stresses of the job, Eliot appointed two deans to oversee such tasks with one dean overseeing faculty concerns and issues and another managing all student issues. The first dean of men was LeBaron Russell Briggs who would serve in this position at Harvard for over forty years. Soon after, other institutions followed suit adopting the new Harvard administrative model (Schwartz, 2010).
These first positions of authority in student affairs were created out of necessity by presidents of higher education institutions to aid in the control of student behavior issues, and they assumed the responsibility for *in loco parentis* (Thelin, 2011; Schwartz, 2010). These early deans of men and deans of women exhibited the skills of leadership, high values, genuineness, and a general concern for the well-being of students. However, these deans did not have specific duties and responsibilities on their campuses until the position evolved further. President Cloyd Heck of George Washington University was one of the first to define the dean of men position:

The Dean of Men is most free to interpret his position in terms of the modern university life because he is handling problems with adaptation of student life to the constantly changing surroundings. (Barr, Dessler, & Associates, 2000, p. 9)

For many years, the dean of men/students served as the disciplinarian and was often seen as intimidating, utilizing suspension and expulsion to ensure effective student conduct on campus. With no professional associations or training for the first deans of men and women, many were left to use their own discretion with little direction from the President or University trustees. Then in 1919, the first formal gathering of deans of men from around the country met to share ideas and knowledge related to their various responsibilities on their respective campuses (Schwartz, 2010).

As higher education continued to evolve such professional positions also evolved with changing demographics, services, and curriculum offered to students (Thelin, 2011; Cohen & Kisker, 2010). In addition, in 1937 and 1949 the *Student Personnel Point of View* sought to define the role student personnel played in the college experience. In 1937, during a two-day conference, the American Council on Education (ACE) met to discuss issues related to the field of student personnel work and the need for research to determine the future development and
direction of student personnel work on college campuses. During this conference, administrators developed a document entitled, the *Student Personnel Point of View*. This document made a significant contribution to field of student personnel at the time by clearly defining their roles and expectations from administrative and instructional activities while also defining goals and objectives for the future (Higher Education for American Democracy, 1947). In addition, the *Student Personnel Point of View* specified the values on the educational importance of the outside-the-classroom experience, sense of community and service were highlighted (Clement & Rickard, 1992). It set a precedent of the importance of providing services and experiences of holistic education of the student (Dungy & Gordon, 2011).

The era of mass higher education propelled the United States into increased enrollment, finances and institutions following World War II. The Serviceman’s Readjustment Act of 1944 helped higher education enrollment double its prewar enrollment marks by entitling veterans to one year of schooling plus an additional month for each month served (Cohen & Kisker, 2010; Thelin, 2011; Lucas, 2006). The increased access on college campuses also gave way to student activism in the 1960s as the Baby Boomer generation was driven to express itself freely and to challenge societal values (Cohen & Kisker, 2010). These were changes that were predicted by D.H. Gardner, dean of men at the University of Akron and secretary of the National Association for the Deans of Men (NADAM). Gardner proclaimed various changes to the profession at the 1944 NADAM conference stating that wartime students would return to college campus significantly different from before. In addition, Gardner vocalized that the field of the deans position was evolving and changing giving way to the establishment of the student personnel program to help manage the ever changing and evolving landscape would be an integral part of the college experience for all institutions. The professional association of the dean of men soon
became more inclusive with the change of the name of the association to the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators in 1951 (Schwartz, 2010).

As Gardner predicted, the administrative leadership during this time was challenged to control various student demonstrations and protests. Many issues related to student behavior as a result of student activism were referred to various university committees to develop solutions, yet administrators were seldom successful in impacting the campus climate (Cohen & Kisker, 2010). By the end of the Mass Education Era, there were fewer strict rules than in previous eras except for sexual harassment, disobedience, and drunkenness (Cohen & Kisker, 2010; Thelin, 2011).

As institutions experienced a continued increase in size and enrollments, demands for new services were rising as well. The new management of bureaucracy within higher education allowed professors and instructors to focus on their duty of teaching and research and freed of the minute tasks of university administration including student discipline and conduct. In addition, full-time administrators were now overseeing various academic and non-academic areas of campus life including student affairs, athletics, facility management, custodial functions, development and other operations. This top/down hierarchical structure which had been a staple of business now was introduced to higher education with the President and board of trustees serving at the top and administrators as subordinates below (Lucas, 2006). However, with greater size came more complexity in the management of these institutions. To combat this issue, institutions divided their administrative structure into three units: academic affairs, business affairs and student affairs. These first administrative leaders in student affairs sought to manage the areas of housing, food service, counseling, health services, student organizations, and student conduct (Cohen & Kisker, 2010) which still exist today. Just as in the previous eras, the
president’s role within the governance of the institution evolved into that individual becoming the manager of bureaucracy (Cohen & Kisker, 2010; Lucas, 2006).

As the Consolidation Era began in the mid to late 1970s, higher education institutions continued to expand, none more so than community colleges with over 37% of all college goers enrolling in these institutions by 1993. In addition, with the virtual abandonment of *in loco parentis* and more students on college campuses, student conduct administrators struggled to maintain control and order. Various incidents related to hazing and rampant alcohol abuse by fraternities and sororities on college campuses led many student affairs units to redefine their relationship to establish and enforce rules of conduct (Cohen & Kisker, 2010). It was estimated that in 1971, there were over 1,000 incidents on college campuses around the nation. During such times of unrest, college leadership struggled to maintain and control order but as the Vietnam War ended a new wave of collegians ushered in a new era on the college campus as generations had before (Lucas, 2006).

In today’s higher education, the goals established by the *Student Personnel Point of View* are still evermore present within the field of student affairs. However, the first deans of men and women positions have now evolved into the more complex Senior student affairs officer. At institutions of higher education throughout the nation, this position has the ability and authority to lead the strategic mission and vision of the extra-curriculum (Brodzinski, 1984). The field of student affairs has evolved with a number of professionals that entered the field through their involvement in various undergraduate leadership opportunities on their respective campuses. The most common entry level position for most student affairs professionals has typically been departments and programs such as residence life, student activities,
fraternity/sorority advising and student activities. Some of these new professionals will then aspire to become SSAOs (Blimling, 2002).

Through a historical trace of the SSAO position beginning with the first deans of men, the position has grown and expanded significantly over more than one hundred years. The literature of the SSAO position indicated that effective leadership competencies, skills and behaviors are means to guide the SSAOs in their positions on the college campus (Barr & Alright, 1990; Clement & Rickard, 1992; Lovell & Kosteen, 2000; Smith et al., 2009; Woodard et al., 2000). Sandeen (1991) stated that the SSAO should be one who serves as an effective leader with the ability to communicate effectively to diverse constituents. In addition, the position of the SSAO has the ability to set goals and provide the effective leadership to attain them (Brodzinski, 1984). Furthermore, such leaders must be competent and informed about their organization due to the diverse needs of higher education institutions. Smith and Wolverton (2010) conducted a study of three groups of college administrators of which 123 were identified as SSAOs. The study identified competencies needed for effective leadership by university administrators. The results showed that SSAOs should exhibit particular competencies to be effective leaders. These included: “integrity, personal achievement, the good of the community, safety, tolerance, respect of the law, self-discipline, self-fulfillment, work ethic, compassion, democracy, confidentiality, accountability, teamwork and interdependence” (p. 69).

These leadership competencies often served as important catalysts in the work of SSAOs and were essential for these individuals to utilize and practice on a daily basis. More importantly, our society and higher education is reaching a critical time in which new leadership must be identified given the reality of retirement of many campus administrators. As the Baby Boomer
generation departs the American workforce, a void has been created that will be filled by new generations of SSAOs (Leubsdorf, 2006).

Effective Leadership in Student Affairs

Schuh, Jones, and Harper (2011) articulated a question that was an important area of dialogue related to this study. The question asks: what makes an effective student affairs educator or administrator? In addition, various researchers have also sought to describe the qualities, competencies, strengths and abilities of effective leaders (Bennis, 1989; Bolman & Deal, 1997; Brown, 1997; Clawson, 1999; Kerr, 1984; Kerr & Gade, 1986). The review of literature cited numerous studies of the field of student affairs and related effective leadership behaviors exhibited by SSAOs. These behaviors help guide the SSAO in the practical day to day and long term oversight of student affairs organizations.

Clement and Rickard (1992) conducted a qualitative study of SSAOs and student affairs directors, and through their interviews identified a number of effective leadership themes that student affairs practitioners should utilize to be successful. They also stated that:

Leadership is essential to the creative improvement of services and programs for our increasingly diverse student population. Nevertheless, leadership in student services must also go beyond improvement of direct services to bring about an impact on larger issues of institutional concern. (p. 3)

To be effective in the role of the SSAO, the leader must exemplify the value of personal integrity and commitment (Clement & Rickard, 1992; Saunders & Butts, 2011). Thomas (2002) compiled stories and experiences of seasoned SSAOs that focused on the theme of integrity and leadership. He argued that SSAOs must often exemplify their roles as leaders by holding personal convictions about what may or may not be good and worthy. This value of integrity is
inherently learned through reflective and practice through the use of moral and ethical considerations during decision-making. Thomas (2002) also argued that as a professional in the field of student affairs one must practice ethical behavior by using moral behavior as a framework while Starratt (2004) suggested that school leaders should provide an ethic of care, ethic of justice, and ethic of critique all of which comprise a comprehensive dimension of ethical leadership. More importantly, such values aid a leader in times when difficult decisions are made. According to Starratt, values of integrity, respect for others, ethics and compassion will guide one as a student affairs leader.

Smith et al., (2009) conducted a study to identify the leadership characteristics of SSAOs at four-year institutions in the Southeast. They found that SSAOs exhibited high visibility, motivation, honesty, trustworthiness, empowerment, collaboration, diversity, and a heightened emphasis on relationship building as they sought to ascertain the traits of the most effective senior student affairs officers. Collaboration within the student affairs environment can be an important part of success within and beyond institutions as Gardner (1993) argued that skills and competencies of leaders can be limited yet by involving others success is more likely to occur. The skills of collaboration were cited in numerous studies throughout the literature as important practice of successful SSAOs (Culp, 2011; Schuh, 2002; Lovell & Kosten, 2000; Smith et al., 2009).

Smith et al. (2009) contributed to the literature related to effective leadership when they found that SSAOs have diverse leadership behaviors with no consistent leadership style/profile of SSAOs. This statement is consistent with Culp (2011) who through an investigation of community college faculty, presidents, and staff found that highly effective SSAOs shared such traits as understanding, that no one student affairs models exists, connecting student affairs to
learning, comprehending competencies and knowledge of student affairs, creating partnerships with academic affairs, building teams through effective trust and communication, and continually changing and evolving leaders within the college community. The literature related to leadership of SSAOs supported this study as it did not seek to identify a specific leadership style of SSAOs but sought to understand the diverse leadership behaviors of a new generation of SSAOs (Generation X and Millennial) when compared to Baby Boomer SSAOs.

Schuh (2002) explored the topic of successful leadership in student affairs by interviewing experienced SSAOs with over 30 years of higher education experience who could be classified as administrators within the Baby Boomer generation. From this study several themes emerged including the value of collaboration with staff, a vision for the future of student affairs, identification of personal leadership behavior and philosophy, and possession of integrity. The participants also advised aspiring student affairs leaders to find a mentor, identify one’s leadership style, and understand one’s values and beliefs. The leaders stressed the importance of having a clear vision and developing relationships with others to their success as an SSAO.

Effective SSAO leaders perceived communication and personnel management as their most important skills used in performing their jobs (Fey, 1991; Kane, 1982; Roberts, 2005; Roe, 1981; Smith & Wolverton, 2010). In addition, Blimling (2002) compiled the written reflections of SSAOs with a one year timeframe and found that SSAOs exemplified a passion for students and maintained a balance of their personal lives while understanding their strengths and weaknesses. In further support, Fey and Carpenter (1996) conducted a study of 177 mid-level student affairs administrators in Texas. The results of this study identified that leadership was the
second most important attribute needed for success in field closely behind personnel management.

This current study sought to explore the effective leadership behaviors of SSAOs through a generational lens. For the last 30 years, various studies have sought to explain the phenomenon of leadership in student affairs environment. Lovell and Kosten (2000) pursued this explanation by conducting a meta-analysis of literature from a 30 year period to identify the skills and competencies needed for success as a student affairs administrator. The skills and competencies that emerged were administrative and management (83%) and human facilitation (78%). As it related to this study, the category of “leadership” was only identified in ten studies (43%) which could indicate that further research on the topic is needed. However, Parrish (2011) argued that effective leadership entails appropriately employing various leadership practices which may vary related to the circumstance or situation. These studies, among others, have helped to characterize the SSAO positions that have been assumed by leaders from the Baby Boomer generation. Furthermore, researchers argued that whether these same competencies will remain or evolve over time which has a bearing on this current study. Under Secretary of Education Kanter (2010) called upon institutions of higher education within the student affairs sector to assume the leadership necessary to ensure that students are prepared for the future. Kanter also claimed that institutions must foster organizational change as the student population continues to change. Such changes in the organizational culture of student affairs call for individuals that are competent and effective leaders at the top of the organizational hierarchy.

Summary

Those that have been given the authority to lead our institutions of higher education continue to have a complicated task in the twenty-first century. Within the literature, Burns
proclaimed that leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena within our society. The topic of leadership has evolved and will continue to evolve within our nation and throughout the world (Rost, 1991). This is evident in tracing of leadership from industrial perspectives which included various trait theories to contemporary views including, but not limited to, transformational leadership.

The literature related to generational cohort and perceptions has been subjective and qualitative (Macky et al., 2000). Additionally, Deal et al. (2001) argued that little empirical research has validated generational differences in the workplace which was consistent with the literature review in this study. However, a literature review related to generational differences and leadership found studies from Meriac et al. (2010); Rodriguez et al. (2003); Sessa et al. (2007); and Zemke et al. (1999) who found differences in leadership based on generational cohorts while Yu and Miller (2005) did not find any differences in leadership styles of higher education educators but did find differences related to machine workers based on generational membership. These studies provided context for the current study related to differences and similarities of generational groups which was of interest to the researcher related to leadership behaviors of SSAOs. Additionally, many of the studies noted within this literature review used methodology similar to that of the current the study by using a quantitative survey to identify leadership behaviors. However, there were noticeable gaps in the literature with few studies on the topic of generational cohorts within the higher education setting. Additionally, the findings of this study could add to the breadth of knowledge on the topic of generational membership.

There are research data that show a relationship between leadership and institutional performance (Smart, 2003), institutional effectiveness (Winn & Cameron, 1998), and job satisfaction and organization commitment (Chieffo, 1991). The leadership behavior of
transformational leaders led to motivation (Webb, 2007), effective organizational change (Bass, 1985; Bennis & Nanus, 1997; Vinger, 2009) and is the most effective leadership exhibited by Presidents (Rouche et al, 1989). More importantly, Herbst and Conradie (2011) argued that colleges and universities are beginning to see an increase of transformational leaders while Astin and Astin (2000) stated that campuses should utilize such leaders in a time of change for higher education organizations.

The Multi-Factor Leadership Questionnaire (Bass & Riggio, 2000) was designed to measure transformational and transactional leadership. The review of literature identified several studies across various industries which have utilized the MLQ to measure transformational leaders within organization members. It has been utilized to measure leadership in social workers (Mary, 2005), military officers (Eid et. al, 2004), parks and recreation staff (Kent, 2003), college athletic department staff (Kent & Chelladurai, 2001; Doherty & Danylchuk, 1996) and clergy (Carter, 2009). These studies helped provide a background and context for the MLQ as the chosen instrument for this study which measures leadership behavior that spans a diverse number of industries within the workforce.

The position of the senior student affairs officer (SSAO) has evolved over the course of the last several hundred years from servicing in absence of the parent (in loco parentis) to managing complex organizations, hierarchies of control and multimillion dollar budgets and reduced state financial support. To effectively lead these organizations, SSAOs must move beyond improvement of student services to larger issues that affect a changing student demographic (Clement & Rickard, 1992). In addition, during the twenty-first century, the SSAO must lead effectively and must have the skills, behaviors and competencies of integrity (Clement & Rickard, 1992; Saunders & Butts, 2011; Thomas, 2002), ethical leadership (Starratt, 2004),
collaboration (Culp, 2011; Gardner, 1993; Lovell & Kosten, 2000; Schuh, 2002; Smith et al., 2009), communication & personnel management (Fey, 1991; Kane, 1982; Roberts, 2005; Roe, 1981; Smith & Wolverton, 2010). This literature has provided a context of understanding of a generation of effective leaders within the field of student affairs. However, throughout the literature, no one model of leadership style exists (Culp, 2011). This is also supported by Smith et al. (2009) who argued that the SSAO must demonstrate a diverse set of leadership behaviors yet there in no consistent style amongst SSAO leaders.

These findings gave support and a foundation for exploring the leadership behavior of a new generation of leaders within student affairs. Much of the literature related to effective leadership behaviors of SSAOs sought to explore leaders with years upon years of experience within the field which could be argued are characterized as Baby Boomers and are leaving the field of higher education at a high rate (Leubsdorf, 2006). With the influx of retirements within the field of higher education and beyond, this study sought to compare and contrast leadership behaviors of a multi-generational population of SSAOs and potential implications for the future of higher education and student affairs administration. In addition, as argued by Astin and Astin (2000) and Herbst and Conradie (2011), there is a growing need for senior campus administrators to practice transformational leadership within the field of higher education. The question arises, however, as to whether or not Generation X and Millennials exhibit the influence and characteristics of transformational leaders to effectively lead their student affairs organizations.

The literature related to generational cohorts offered a review of various differences and similarities of generational membership in diverse workplaces in our society. However, there were considerable gaps in the literature with very few studies that concentrated on generational
differences in the higher education workplace and even fewer related to student affairs. As stated previously, leadership has been studied thoroughly within the field of student affairs and higher education although few studies have drawn comparisons between leadership behaviors and generational membership within the student affairs environment. The findings of this study could add the breadth of literature on student affairs administration, leadership, and generational membership. Additionally, this study comes at a critical time as a generation of Baby Boomers begins to depart the workforce and younger generations begin to serve in SSAO positions at colleges and universities. Findings of this study could help campuses and the field of student affairs better understand a new generation of SSAOs that could impact campus culture and governance.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This quantitative study used a survey research design to identify leadership behaviors of persons employed as senior student affairs officers at colleges and universities in the United States. The proposed research study was approved by the Institutional Review Board at the University of North Texas and my employer, the University of Texas at Arlington. Additionally, I received certification in human subjects protection training by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research (Appendix A).

An established survey instrument, the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) (Bass & Avolio, 2000) was utilized to collect data to address the research questions. This survey design was cross-sectional because data was collected at one point in time versus longitudinally (Creswell, 2009). A cross-sectional design seeks to collect data from more than one case on two or more variables for examination of possible patterns of association (Bryman, 2012). This association was of potential interest to compare the leadership behaviors of different generations of SSAOs and the potential impact the results may have to higher education and organizational culture. Furthermore, Creswell (2009) indicated that a survey design in quantitative research helps the researcher identify a “numeric description of trends, attitudes or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population” (p. 145). By employing inferential statistics, generalization can be made related to SSAOs and their associated leadership behaviors through a generational comparison.

The research questions were:

1. Is there a statistically significant difference in leadership behaviors between SSAOs classified as Generation X, Millennial, and/or Baby Boomer?
2. If there is a statistically significant difference in leadership behaviors based on SSAO generational membership, which leadership behaviors differ?

Variables of Interest

The construct of leadership behavior was represented by nine sub-constructs/dependent variables: *Idealized Influence-Attributes, Idealized Influence- Behaviors, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, Individualized Consideration, Laissez-Faire, Management-by-exception-Passive, Management-by-Exception- Passive, and Contingent Reward*. The three independent variables represented the generational classification of the SSAO. The independent and dependent variables are presented in Table 1. As it was expected the nine measures were correlated with each other, a multivariate approach to modeling was preferred when looking at their relationship with the IV generation. Additionally, this chapter includes the instrumentation, selection of participants, procedures for data collection and data analysis utilized to answer the research questions.

Table 1

*Independent and Dependent Variables*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Baby Boomer</td>
<td>BB</td>
<td>Categorical</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Generation X</td>
<td>GX</td>
<td>Categorical</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Millennial</td>
<td>MM</td>
<td>Categorical</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent</td>
<td>Idealized Influence: Attributes</td>
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<td>Continuous</td>
<td>0-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Idealized Influence: Behaviors</td>
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<td>Continuous</td>
<td>0-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent</td>
<td>Inspirational Motivation</td>
<td>IM</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>0-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent</td>
<td>Intellectual Stimulation</td>
<td>IS</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>0-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent</td>
<td>Individualized Consideration</td>
<td>IC</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
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*(table continues)*
Table 1 (continued)

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Dependent</td>
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<td>LF</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>0-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>MBEP</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>0-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent</td>
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<td>MBEA</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>0-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent</td>
<td>Contingent Reward</td>
<td>CR</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>0-4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Survey Instrument

The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) (Bass & Avolio, 2000) was chosen as the data collection instrument which was designed to measure nine leadership behaviors associated with the full range of leadership model (FRL). The full range of leadership model (FRL) which served as the theoretical framework of this study includes the leadership behaviors of laissez-faire leadership, transactional, and transformational leadership (Bass & Riggio, 2006) which were explained previously in detail. The MLQ “is considered the best validated measure of transformational and transactional leadership” (Ozaralli, 2003, p. 338). The MLQ asks respondents to rate their frequency of their own leadership behavior on a 5-point Likert scale (0-4) on 45 standardized items. The nine leadership behaviors associated with the FRL model will be assigned numeric values based on mean responses and serve as the dependent variables of the study. The researcher sought to compare and analyze the transformational, transactional, and passive-avoidant leadership behaviors and amongst SSAOs generational groups.

The MLQ has been completed by over 15,000 respondents and has been utilized by numerous researchers seeking to assess transformational-transactional leadership (Bass & Riggio, 2006). In addition, Bass and Riggio claimed that the MLQ achieved Cronbach’s alpha coefficients greater than .80 which indicates good to excellent internal consistency. Muenjohn &
Armstrong (2008) tested the reliability of the MLQ and found Cronbach’s alpha coefficients higher than .80 which was consistent with findings previously noted by Bass and Riggio (2006). Furthermore, confirmatory factor analyses found that the overall chi-square of the nine-factor MLQ was statistically significant and argued it was the best theoretical construct when comparing to single factor or three factor models. These instances in the literature supports that the MLQ is a valid and reliable instrument in assessing leadership behaviors related to the full range leadership model and made an argument that it was the appropriate measurement for this study. Additionally, demographic information such as participants’ gender, institutional type, level of education, race, and years of professional experience was collected.

Description of the Population

The population for this study was SSAOs listed in the 2014 Higher Education Directory (Higher Education Directory website, 2014). The Higher Education Directory identifies itself as the sole single-source for academic and personnel at accredited, degree-granting institutions while also reporting a 99.9% response rate in updating the directory on a yearly basis (Higher Education Directory Website, 2014). The publication was utilized to send to all represented in the population. Within the Higher Education Directory there were 2,164 individuals categorized as chief student affairs officers at four-year institutions (1484-private; 670 public). Furthermore, there were 1,197 (714 private; 483-public) individuals categorized as director of student affairs with a variety of titles such as assistant vice president, dean of students, and associate vice chancellor who may serve in a SSAO role which were determined by pre-qualifying questions explained later. Therefore, a combined population of 3,361 of student affairs administrators (chief student affairs officers & director of student affairs) was utilized for this study of SSAOs.
Power Analysis

Statistical power is defined as the probability of correctly inferring differences in the population based upon observed differences in a sample. Mathematically, power is defined as $1 - \beta$, where $\beta$ is the probability of failing to reject the null hypothesis when in fact it is true, or committing a Type II error. Therefore, the higher the power, the more likely that findings from a study can reasonably be inferred to a larger population. But higher power requires more data. Power analysis allows the researcher to estimate a necessary minimum sample size in order to attain a fixed level of power. Moreover, power also depends on the magnitude of the differences (effect size) between the groups under analysis and pre-determined alpha level. The latter is referred to as type I error (or $\alpha$) and is formally defined as the probability of rejecting the null hypothesis when the null hypothesis is in fact true. In other words, $\alpha$ is the probability of incorrectly seeing a significant relationship between the IV and the DV. Type I error is by convention fixed at a certain level in all statistical research (usually at .05). All other things fixed, lower $\alpha$ corresponds to lower power.

*A priori* power analysis was conducted using G*Power version 3.1.1 to determine the minimum sample size required to achieved the desired level of power based on effect size and number of variables. The following parameters were established:

- Estimated effect size: 0.02
- Alpha level: 0.05
- Desired power: 0.95
- Number of predictors: 3
G*Power software (Faul et al., 2007) calculated that a minimum of sample size of 750 would be needed to achieve analysis power of 95%, or a less than 5% probability that a Type II error will be associated with the study findings.

Additionally, Raosoft Sample Size Calculator was utilized to determine the recommended number of survey respondents based upon a population of 3,361. To obtain a +/- margin of 5%, a minimum of 345 survey respondents will be needed.

Procedures for Collection of the Data

The researcher composed an electronic invitation to send to the entire population of chief student affairs officers and directors of student affairs at four-year institutions within the 2014 Higher Education Directory (Higher Education Directory, 2014). The invitation email (Appendix C) included the informed consent (Appendix D), a brief description of the problem and purpose of the study and a link to complete the survey. A draft of the invitation email, informed consent, and survey instrument are included in the Appendix. The data was kept safe via researcher password and login through the survey collection software, Qualtrics (Qualtrics, 2005). The researcher also included demographic questions for each participant prior to beginning the MLQ which helped collect data for eligibility for participation (i.e., generational classification; job title; gender; institution type; race; years of experience). Only those participants that identified themselves as Baby Boomer, Generation X or Millennial and who are serving as a senior/chief student affairs officer and/or director of student affairs with the primary responsibility of overseeing the student affairs program/department/division at their respective campuses were included within the generational comparison of the leadership behaviors of SSAOs. Any respondents from the director of student affairs group who do not serve in a SSAO position were
excluded from the study. The respondents had six weeks to complete the survey with reminders sent every two weeks.

After obtaining permission and license to utilize the MLQ, the instrument and pre-qualifier questions were re-created into Qualtrics online survey software (Qualtrics, 2005). The pre-qualifier questions explained in the previous section allowed the researcher to determine if participants meet the eligibility criteria. As an incentive to participate in this study, survey respondents were eligible for one of ten $25 gifts card furnished by the researcher.

Data Analysis

After the data collection process was complete, data were then uploaded into IBM SPSS v. 21 (IBM Corp., 2012). Additionally, the dataset was visually inspected to determine if missing values existed prior to data analysis. SPSS 21.0 offers several methods for dealing with missing data points including case/list wise deletion, mean/median replacement, linear interpolation, and linear trend at point. However, in a methodology study, Downey and King (1998) offered guidelines for managing missing data in Likert scale format. They utilized two mean substitutions methods, person mean (PMS) and item mean (IMS), and studied the impact of each on scale reliability. Their findings suggested that both methods provided more than adequate replacement values when dealing with data sets missing fewer than 20% of cases. Therefore, all surveys missing more than 20% of responses were discarded and the mean series function in SPSS 21.0 was utilized to replace remaining missing values. The commands to perform this function were as follows:

Transform > Replace Missing Values > Select Variables > Select Series Mean Method

Further, factor scores were created that correspond with the nine constructs of the full range leadership model. Haynes & Lamb (2010) stated that principal components analysis (PCA)
is a method of identifying and classifying variables across common themes, or constructs that they represent. The commands to perform this function in SPSS 21.0 are as follows: Analyze > Dimension Reduction > Factor > Select Variables > Scores > Save as variables. The analysis itself was conducted in two sections. First, descriptive statistics were calculated for all variables, including means and standard deviations for continuous variables and frequencies and percentages for categorical ones. Pearson’s correlation coefficients were generated to assess the relationship between the continuous variables. This method helped the researcher determine any inter-correlation between the continuous variables (Urdan, 2010). A MANOVA was conducted to determine whether or not there were statistically significant differences between the nine dependent variables based on the independent group variables. MANOVA allows for examining differences in the means of several continuous variables based on levels of some categorical variable (Stevens, 2002). In addition, MANOVA is a more notable model in comparison to ANOVA as it provides some control of inflated alpha levels and committing a Type I error while also investigating multiple variables helps the researcher capture a more broadened understanding of phenomenon being studied (Meyers, Gamst, & Guarino, 2006).

Stevens (2002) also mentions four statistical reasons that multivariate analysis is preferred over several univariate analyses: (a) the use of fragmented univariate tests will lead to a greatly inflated overall type I error rate; (b) univariate tests ignore important information, namely the correlations among the dependent variables; (c) although the relationship between the IV and each of the DVs might not be significant individually, jointly the set of variables may reliably differentiate the groups; and (d) sometimes it is advised to pool the DVs into one composite measure and examine the effect of the IV on this new variable. A multivariate model is definitely
superior to this approach for it allows the researcher to see the potentially dissimilar effect of the IV on each of DVs as well as on their pack as a whole.

Much like ANOVA, MANOVA makes the assumption that within-group covariance matrices are equal which if there is an unbalance with the number of observations included in the study then Box’s M test should be utilized to assess the equivalence-of-covariance matrices for each dependent variable. A statistical significant at $p<.05$ indicates heterogeneity or inequality which may require data transformation of dependent variables (Meyers et al., 2006). Furthermore, if the omnibus MANOVA model indicates a statistical significance differences, then post-hoc tests will be run to determine where the difference exist amongst the various groups.

Summary

Within this chapter the proposed research questions were re-stated while also defining the variables of interest to investigate the leadership behaviors of SSAOs. The chosen method of this study was a cross-sectional design to study the variables at one point in time amongst participants and to generalize the results of SSAOs from a generational perspective. Furthermore, it was discussed that a survey-design was chosen to answer the proposed research questions. The instrument that was selected for this study is the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ 5X). The components of the MLQ were discussed that measured the full range leadership model with nine leadership behaviors and three associated outcomes. Additionally, the validity and reliability of the instrument was discussed with over 15,000 respondents completing the MLQ. Furthermore, the selection of participants was introduced which included over 3,300 within the population of SSAOs. Utilizing a power analysis it was determined that 750 was the appropriate number of completed surveys needed for this study to achieve a power level of 95% while a
minimum sample of 345 was needed to achieve a margin of +/- 5%. Utilizing information gathered within the 2014 Higher Education Online Directory, the online survey utilizing the MLQ and supporting demographic questions was sent out via email. The participants had six weeks to complete the survey. Once the data was collected, it was analyzed in two parts that included descriptive and primary analyses utilizing a MANOVA and potential post hoc tests. The results of these analyses are discussed in greater detail in the following chapter.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This chapter presents the findings from the data review and analysis methods outlined in Chapter III. It is noteworthy there were only 11 senior student affairs officers (SSAOs) identified from the millennial generational group. Therefore, after considering this group’s contribution to unequal sample sizes, the decision was made to remove them from the dataset and further analysis. Additionally, utilizing the method for missing Likert data as discussed by Downey and King (1998), there were 68 surveys with more than 20% of item responses incomplete. Therefore, these participant responses were also removed from the dataset leaving a total usable sample size of 438 for the study.

Post hoc power analysis utilizing G*Power 3.1.9.2 (Faul et al., 2007) was conducted to determine the actual power achieved based upon the final sample. Using the same parameters related to effect size (.02), alpha level (.05), number of independent variables (3), and sample of 438, a power level of .715 was achieved. Additionally, based upon a population of 3,361 and sample of 438, the results of the survey have a margin of error of +/- 4.37%.

Frequency distribution tables for the categorical demographic variables are presented in Table 4.

*Frequencies and Percentages of SSAOs*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
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<td>49.1</td>
</tr>
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<td>Female</td>
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<td>50.0</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>438</td>
<td>100</td>
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</table>

*(table continued)*
Table 4 (continued).

Frequencies and Percentages of SSAOs

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Race/Ethnicity</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
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<td>Caucasian</td>
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<td>81.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
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<td>Hispanic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not Listed</td>
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<td>.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer not to answer</td>
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<td>.6</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Generation Group</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Baby Boomer</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>56.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Generation X</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>43.8</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
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<td>Master’s Degree</td>
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<td>26-30 years</td>
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<td>36 or more years</td>
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<tr>
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<td>.3</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td>100</td>
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<td><strong>Institution Type</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>438</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the sample, 246 self-reported as Baby Boomers while 192 were classified as Generation X. The gender of participants was distributed almost evenly with approximately 49%
males and 50% females. The majority identified as Caucasian (81%). SSAOs identified completing a terminal degree by either a Ph.D (35%) or Ed.D (27%) or Master’s Degree (33%). The professional experience varied from 5 to 36 or more years with 21-25 years (23%) as the majority. Finally, private school SSAOs were identified as 59% compared to their public school counterparts (39%).

Table 5

Correlation Matrix- Dependent Variables of Full Range Leadership Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>IA</th>
<th>IB</th>
<th>IM</th>
<th>IS</th>
<th>IC</th>
<th>CR</th>
<th>MBEA</th>
<th>MBEP</th>
<th>CR</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IA</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>.489*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>IM</td>
<td>.495*</td>
<td>.588*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>.510*</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>CR</td>
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<td>.398*</td>
<td>.484*</td>
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<td>.394*</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
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<td>-.216*</td>
<td>-.248*</td>
<td>-.250*</td>
<td>-.201*</td>
<td>-.229*</td>
<td>-.014</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LF</td>
<td>-.275*</td>
<td>-.224*</td>
<td>-.279*</td>
<td>-.213*</td>
<td>-.296*</td>
<td>-.242*</td>
<td>.043</td>
<td>.411*</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 5 presents the Pearson correlation coefficients for the continuous dependent variables. The correlations between the transformational leadership behaviors (IA, IB, IM, IS, and IC) were moderate and positive and statistically significant at alpha .001. The transactional leadership behavior of Contingent Reward (CR) was also moderately and positively correlated (\( p \leq .001 \)) with the five transformational leadership behaviors (IA, IB, IM, IS, and IC). This finding is consistent with previous research by Bycio, Allen, and Hackett (1995) who found Contingent Reward and transformational leadership variables highly correlated. Avolio and Bass (2004) found similar correlations and argued that leaders that exhibit Contingent Reward through
building trust over time by establishing developmental expectations with their followers. The correlation can also be explained through the interactions a leader has with their followers. Antonakis, Avolio, and Sivasubramaniam (2003) stated that Contingent Reward can be a transactional behavior when the leader makes clear expectations to followers of potential material rewards when performance is achieved. However, they also argued that Contingent Reward can be a transformational behavior when the leader gives followers praise which can be psychological. This example provides an understanding of how a transactional behavior such as Contingent Reward can be correlated with transformational leadership behaviors as well.

Furthermore, the leadership behaviors of management by exception passive (MBEP) and laissez-faire (LF) were weak and negatively correlated ($p \leq 0.001$) with the five transformational leadership behaviors and contingent reward. MBEP and LF also showed a moderate and positive correlation ($p \leq 0.001$) with one another. The correlation with each other and the five transformational leadership behaviors could be explained by the fact that at times, MBEP leaders take no action until complaints are received while LF can be described as an avoidance or absence of leadership (Bass & Riggio, 2006). MBEP is considered a transactional leadership behavior yet it may have a negative reaction towards followers as it could be mistaken for a lack of leadership. In contrast, transformational leadership behaviors and contingent reward are quite the opposite while always showing a high need for the actions of their followers. This could explain the positive correlation between MBEP and LF and the negative correlation between the transformational leadership behaviors and contingent reward.

A MANOVA was utilized to determine if statistically significant differences existed between the nine leadership behavior constructs of senior students affairs officers from the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire instrument. An initial interpretation of MANOVA
involves the testing of equality of variances and co-variance matrices. Much like Levene’s test in the univariate case, MANOVA involves a much more sensitive test for equality among the co-variances of the dependent variables. The Box’s $M$ test was statistically significant, $F(45,553617) = 1.415$, $p=.035$, at alpha .05 indicating a violation of the equality of co-matrices variances assumption. However, Field (2009) notes that Box’s $M$ is highly sensitive to data normality, so its outcome may or may not truly reflect equality of the co-variance matrices. Therefore, a visual inspection of the dataset was performed to determine any potential violations of normality. SPSS (IBM Corp, 2012) was utilized to produce Q-Q plots, or a visual depiction of the dependent variables quartiles again the quartiles of a normal distribution. Plots in which the values that fall on or close to a positive 90° diagonal are considered normal (Field, 2009).

Finally, Levene’s tests to check for the equality of variances in each dependent variable were conducted. The Levene’s tests of univariate equality of variances between the groups were not statistically significant and are presented in Table 6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership Construct</th>
<th>$F$</th>
<th>$df'$</th>
<th>$df^*$</th>
<th>$P$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Idealized Attributes</td>
<td>.846</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>.358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idealized Behaviors</td>
<td>.686</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>.408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspirational Motivation</td>
<td>.813</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>.368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual Stimulation</td>
<td>.943</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>.332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Consideration</td>
<td>.528</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>.468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contingent Reward</td>
<td>.706</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>.401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mgmt By Exception Active</td>
<td>2.690</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>.102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mgmt By Exception Passive</td>
<td>.152</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>.697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laissez-Faire</td>
<td>1.424</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>.233</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The descriptive statistics from factor scores of the nine constructs are presented in Table 7. Additionally, raw score data means from the nine constructs are presented in Table 8.

Through a review of each of these tables, there are differences in each group on the scores of
each of the leadership constructs. Additionally, when comparing SSAO raw score means in
Table 9 with the MLQ US Percentiles for Individual Scores (Avolio & Bass, 2004), there are
minimal differences on mean raw scores when comparing generational groups. Both generational
groups scored in same percentile on six of the nine leadership behaviors. Although Baby
Boomers scored in the 70th percentile in intellectual stimulation compared to Generation X which
scored in the 60th percentile. Additionally, Baby Boomers also scored in the 80th percentile in
individual consideration and 50th percentile on contingent reward compared to Generation X who
scored in the 70th percentile and 40th percentile respectively. Interestingly, Generation X had
higher raw score means on transactional leadership behaviors whereas Baby Boomers scored
higher in areas of transformational leadership behaviors. However, results from the MANOVA
will provide a more comprehensive analysis of the study.

Table 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership Construct</th>
<th>Baby Boomer N=246</th>
<th>Generation X N=192</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Idealized Attributes</td>
<td>.10 SD 1.00</td>
<td>-.13 SD .99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idealized Behaviors</td>
<td>.09 SD .99</td>
<td>-.12 SD 1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspirational Motivation</td>
<td>.04 SD 1.03</td>
<td>-.06 SD .96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual Stimulation</td>
<td>.09 SD .97</td>
<td>-.11 SD 1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Consideration</td>
<td>.07 SD .98</td>
<td>-.09 SD 1.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contingent Reward</td>
<td>.05 SD .96</td>
<td>-.07 SD 1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mgmt by Exception Active</td>
<td>-.10 SD .94</td>
<td>.13 SD 1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mgmt by Exception Passive</td>
<td>-.04 SD 1.01</td>
<td>.05 SD .98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laissez-Faire</td>
<td>-.08 SD .94</td>
<td>.10 SD 1.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8

*Full Range Leadership Model- Raw Score Means*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generation Group</th>
<th>IA</th>
<th>IB</th>
<th>IM</th>
<th>IS</th>
<th>IC</th>
<th>CR</th>
<th>MBEA</th>
<th>MBEP</th>
<th>LF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baby Boomer</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generation X</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally, Table 9 presents the results of the MANOVA test while Table 10 includes the results of the nine leadership behaviors between each generational group including F value, significance, degrees of freedom, partial eta squared and observed power from the MANOVA.

Table 9

*Hotelling’s Trace- Baby Boomer and Generation X*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>ηp²</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.030b</td>
<td>9.0000</td>
<td>.040</td>
<td>.040</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10

*MANOVA- Leadership Constructs*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership Construct</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>ηp²</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*Idealized Attributes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.08</td>
<td>.014</td>
<td>.014</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Idealized Behaviors</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.06</td>
<td>.025</td>
<td>.011</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspirational Motivation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>.288</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Intellectual Stimulation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.53</td>
<td>.034</td>
<td>.010</td>
<td>.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Consideration</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>.080</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contingent Reward</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>.208</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Mgmt by Exception Active</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.05</td>
<td>.014</td>
<td>.014</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mgmt by Exception Passive</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.362</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laissez-Faire</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>.060</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td>.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analysis of Mean Differences of Leadership Behaviors

A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to determine if statistical significance differences existed between the means of nine dependent variables (leadership behaviors) based on two independent variables (generational groups). The MANOVA revealed a statistically significant Hotelling’s Trace test: $p=.040$ $F(9,428)=.030$, $\eta_p^2 = .040$, at alpha .05 which indicated significant differences of leadership behaviors between Baby Boomers and Generation X. Further analysis of each of nine leadership behavior constructs revealed significant differences at alpha .05, between SSAOs groups related to leadership constructs of idealized attributes $F(1, 436)=6.08$, $p .0145$; idealized behaviors $F(1, 436)=5.06$, $p=.025$; intellectual stimulation $F(1, 436)=4.53$, $p =0.34$; and management by exception active $F(1, 436)=6.05$, $p=0.145$. However, it is important to note that while such significant difference existed between groups the effect size was small with only moderate power. Therefore, further research could be warranted to develop qualitative questions based on the nine leadership behaviors constructs in an interview format with SSAOs to explore whether or not similar themes arise.

The MANOVA successfully answered RQ1 which indicated that a difference of leadership behaviors does exist when comparing SSAO generational groups. Further, RQ2 sought to illustrate which leadership behaviors were significantly different which this study identified as idealized attributes, idealized behaviors, intellectual stimulation, and management by exception. In chapter 5, each of these differences and implications for practice and future research will be discussed in greater detail.
CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION

Introduction

The Baby Boomer generation has dominated industries in the American workforce totaling over 70 million people yet will decline in the foreseeable future due to retirement (Colby & Ortman, 2015). In addition, between 2004 and 2014 the U.S. Department of Labor Statistics estimated that over 6,000 higher education administrative positions would need to be filled annually (Leubsdorf, 2006). The SSAO is one of these administrative positions which requires leadership that is often visionary, persuasive and invaluable (Bass, 2006). The SSAO is an important, integral member of a higher education leadership team that helps to manage various critical functions of the campus community, as they relate to students (Schuh, 2002). As Baby Boomers vacate the field of higher education, it is assumed that a new generation of SSAOs from Generation X and Millennial generational groups will assimilate into these key leadership positions. Therefore, it is important to understand the leadership behaviors of SSAOs along generational lines to assure the future of the field of higher education and student affairs.

This study compared the leadership behaviors of SSAOs based on generational membership. In the previous chapter, the findings of study were reported. This chapter discusses the findings, implications for practice and recommendations for future research. The population for this study was those that identified as a senior student affairs officer or director of student affairs listed in the Higher Education Directory Online (Higher Education Directory Website, 2014). Only administrators that self-identified as serving in the role of the senior student affairs officers at their respective institutions were included in this study. The participants were asked to complete demographic questions as well as the Multi-Factor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)
The findings and noted research questions will be described in greater detail in the following section.

Summary of Findings

Surveys were sent via email to 3,361 from the identified population of SSAOs and director of student affairs with 246 Baby Boomers, 192 Generation Xers and 11 Millennials that agreed to participate. However, due to the unequal sample size of Millennials they were removed from the data analysis.

The following research questions guided this study:

1. Is there a statistically significant difference in leadership behaviors between SSAOs classified as Generation X, Millennial, and/or Baby Boomers?

2. If there is a statistically significant difference in leadership behaviors based on SSAO generational membership, which leadership behaviors differ?

The first research question sought to understand if any significant differences existed between SSAOs based on their identified generational group. Previous research by Sessa et al. (2007) and Zemke et al. (1999) found that generational cohorts differed in their leadership attributes and leadership preferences while Meriac et al. (2010) and Rodriguez et al. (2003) found that leadership styles differed across generations. However, research conducted by Yu and Miller (2005) did not find any differences in preferred leadership styles of educators in higher education across generational cohorts. The results from research question one indicated statistical significance based on results of the Box M’s test $F(45,553617) = 1.415, p = .035$ and Hotelling’s Trace test at alpha .05, $p = .040, F(9, 428) = .030$, partial $\epsilon^2 = .040$ which indicated significant differences of leadership behaviors between Baby Boomers and Generation X. These results are consistent with findings from Meriac et al. (2010); Rodriguez et al. (2003); Sessa et
al. (2007); Zemke et al. (1999) related to the differences of leadership based on generational membership and failed to offer support to the partial findings by Yu and Miller (2005) as they pertained to leadership of higher education educators. However, while the results of the MANOVA did indicate significant differences between Baby Boomers and Generation X, this could have been the result of a small effect size and moderate power. However, the significance of the two groups does have considerations on future research which will be discussed in greater detail later.

The second research question sought to examine which leadership behaviors did SSAOs differed based on generational membership. Previous researchers Herbst and Conradie (2011) and Astin and Astin (2000) argued there was a need for more transformational leaders in senior administrative roles at colleges and universities during such an unprecedented time of change to the higher education environment. The results from the MANOVA of factor scores in Table 9 indicated significant differences on four of the nine leadership constructs which included idealized attributes, idealized behaviors, intellectual stimulation and management by exception active. The characteristics of these four leadership behaviors articulated by Bass and Avolio (2004):

*Idealized Influence. (Attributes and Behaviors)*-Leaders are often admired, respected and trusted while being relatable to the followers which they serve. Additionally, leaders often exercise the needs of their followers over their own while consistently achieving high ethics and morals.

*Intellectual Stimulation.* Leaders encourage their followers to be creative and innovative by not following the status quo to address problems. Additionally, leaders do not publicly criticize or ridicule followers for their mistakes.
Management-by-Exception Active. Leader identifies and creates standards for all followers and holds these individuals accountable for ineffective performance which may include punishment. Leaders closely monitor followers for errors and mistakes and takes action quickly as needed.

Additionally, three of the four of these leadership behaviors (idealized behaviors, idealized attributes, and intellectual stimulation) are classified as transformational leadership behaviors with management by exception active as a transactional leadership behavior. Furthermore, Table 7 depicted a comparison of raw score means on each of the nine leadership behaviors based on generational grouping. The results suggested that Baby Boomer SSAOs were more transformational while Generation X SSAO means were higher in some transactional and all passive/avoidant leadership styles. This finding does not support Herbst and Conradie (2011) and Astin and Astin (2000) who argued for more transformational leaders in higher education administrative roles but suggests that a new generation of SSAOs led by Generation X could be more transactional. Furthermore, transactional leaders less often get involved with the development of their followers and utilize a management-by-exception philosophy with predetermined rewards and consequences for meeting organizational objective and goals (Bass, 1985; Bass 1990; Howell & Avolio, 1993). The results of this study suggested that Generation X SSAOs had more transactional leadership behaviors which could have an impact at institutions of higher education currently and in the future if such a trend continues.

Transformational leaders are often seen as leaders who attend to their needs of their followers by providing charisma, intellectual stimulation, influence, and inspirational motivation (Avolio, Waldman & Einstein, 1988; Barbuto, 1997; Bass, 1990; Hunt, 1999). However, the
findings of this study noted differences between Baby Boomers and Generation X on four of the nine leadership behaviors with Baby Boomer SSAOs being identified as more transformational.

Leaders within educational institutions who are transformational make an impact by identifying organizational priorities, empowering others, mentoring followers, and recognizing the leadership capacity in people (Tierney & Foster, 1998). In addition, transformational leadership have shown to have an impact on institutional job satisfaction (Chieffo, 1991; Webb, 2009), motivation toward extra effort (Webb, 2007), facilitating change (Bass, 1985; Bennis & Nanus, 1997) and was the most effective leadership style utilized by university presidents (Roueche et al., 1989). The findings of this study suggested that Baby Boomer SSAOs have more transformational leadership behaviors in relation to their Generation X counterparts which could have implications for higher education and student affairs.

Implications for Practice

This study sought to identify whether or not differences existed between generational groups of SSAOs and if such differences existed which specific leadership behaviors did the groups differ on. The study instrument was sent to the entire population of senior student affairs officers and director of Student Affairs to attempt gain a representative sample of all SSAOs. While the results of the study noted a small effect size and moderate power the findings have implications for consideration for the field of student affairs, professional associations, campuses, and those that serve or may serve as SSAOs.

Previous literature sought to illustrate the relationship that Baby Boomers have had on the field of student affairs and higher education by characterizing such individuals as transformational leaders in the work they have done and continue to do on college campuses. The results of the study justified and supported previous findings as noted in the summary of
findings. However, there are larger implications on the staff that serve as followers to the SSAO position. The staff of student affairs adhere to the vision of SSAOs who as depicted in this study and previous research of Baby Boomers who are transformational. However, the results of this study suggested that Generation X SSAOs are not as transformational as and more transactional than Baby Boomers. Thus, the staff must understand that with a new generation of SSAOs there may be a learning curve until Generation X and Millennial SSAOs gain the necessary experience and development to be as transformational, if not more transformational than the Baby Boomers.

This study also has implications for professional associations. For example, an e-mail correspondence with NASPA on March 26, 2015 indicated that in a census of 1,100 SSAOs in 2013 and 2014, 63% were Baby Boomers in comparison to 56% for this study. The data collected in this study could add to the scope of information collected from SSAOs as to not only who they are but also how they perceive themselves as student affairs leaders on college and university campuses. Additionally, every two years NASPA offers an institute for new senior student affairs officers. Sharing the findings of this study with the organization could assist in curriculum development, training and professional development opportunities for a new generation of SSAOs. Furthermore, NASPA/APCA Task Force in 2014-2015 has begun to update the *Professional Competency Areas for Student Affairs Practitioners* document. The findings of this study could help inform recommendations toward the leadership competency which could be helpful to assure the continual development of effective knowledge and skills of all student affairs practitioners with some assuming SSAO positions.

The findings have implications on SSAOs currently serving in this role on college and university campuses throughout the nation. Those that identify as Baby Boomer SSAOs have a responsibility to mentor and develop younger generations that are currently serving as a SSAO or
have interest in such a position to assure noted transformational leadership behaviors are
developed appropriately with a new generation of SSAOs. Additionally, Generation X SSAOs
should comprehend the findings of this study so they may seek opportunities to help develop
their leadership behaviors to strengthen areas of weakness related to the full range leadership
model used as the framework of this study.

There are also implications for the university presidents or supervisors of SSAOs.
College presidents desire SSAOs with integrity, conflict resolution skills, and decisiveness in
their roles as campus leaders (Randall & Globetti, 1992). The findings for the study may help
college presidents/SSAO supervisors understand the disparities between Baby Boomer and
Generation X SSAOs leadership styles and behaviors. Additionally, the findings of this study
may assist college presidents/SSAO supervisors in making decisions related to hiring. These
results could also assist university presidents/SSAO supervisors in evaluating the performance,
leadership style, and behaviors of those they supervise to ensure maximum performance of
SSAOs at their institutions.

The findings also could have implications for those that are aspiring to become SSAOs.
As stated by Leusbdorf (2006), there is a growing need both currently and in the future to fill
administrative positions in higher education. As more Baby Boomers retire, Generation Xers and
Millennials are the next generation in line to assume positions at the top of the higher education
hierarchy. Therefore, those assuming such positions of authority should be able to assess their
skills and behaviors. The findings of this study may help reveal to those that aspire to become
SSAOs the intricacies of the Baby Boomer and Generation X leadership behaviors that could be
emulated, but also those behaviors that should be avoided.
This study also has implications related to research, specifically as it relates to generational cohorts and leadership of the SSAO. As stated previously, much of the research related to the differences of generational cohorts is subjective and qualitative (Macky et al., 2008). Thus, this quantitative study may add to the breadth of the literature on the topic of multi-generational differences in the workforce. In addition, the topic of leadership of the SSAO has been thoroughly investigated by researchers. However, much of the literature discussed in this study is related to season leaders in the field of student affairs from the Baby Boomer generation and beyond. Through this study, the attempt was to gain a perspective not only from Baby Boomers but also Generation X and Millennials. The data collected related to Generation X SSAOs will help begin a comprehension and understanding of a new generation of SSAOs as they begin to lead student affairs in the future. The perspective of Millennials that was not addressed in this study will be illustrated in the next section related to future research.

Recommendations for Future Research

The goal of this research exploration was to compare leadership behaviors of SSAOs across three generations to determine if significant differences existed. However, due to the unequal sample size of Millennials, they were excluded from the analysis. Future research on the leadership behaviors of SSAOs should attempt to include Millennials in the analysis once there are more individuals in this generation which assume such leadership roles within institutions of higher education. Additionally, as stated previously, this study achieved moderate power with a small effect size. Future researchers should achieve a larger effect size to be able to generalize to all SSAOs. Throughout this study, the professional association of NASPA was readily available to help and interested in the study. Those that determine to replicate the study should utilize listservs available by professional associations to promote the study with goal of achieving a
more representative sample. However, the findings did identify some significant differences in each group of SSAOs. Future research should explore these differences from a qualitative perspective by formulating interview questions that are similar to the quantitative questions asked in the Multi-Factor Leadership Questionnaire. By investigating through a qualitative lens, future researchers may gather a deeper understanding of why such difference may exist between SSAOs from differing generations.

Future research should also gain an understanding of the relationship of factors such as institution type, gender, and/or years of experience may have on leadership behaviors of SSAOs. This study collected demographic information from all participants but was not explored in the data analysis. Future research should investigate these to help comprehend and more in depth understanding of generational differences amongst SSAOs.

Conclusions

The findings from this study identified that there were significant differences related to the leadership behaviors of SSAOs at both public and private institutions in U.S. from a generational perspective. Specifically, Baby Boomer and Generation X SSAOs differed on four of nine leadership behaviors (idealized attributes, idealized behaviors, intellectual stimulation, and management by exception active). Additionally, this study suggested that Baby Boomer SSAOs were more transformational while Generation X SSAOs were more transactional while Millennial SSAOs were excluded from study. The findings supported previous research by Meriac et al. (2010); Rodriguez et al. (2003); Sessa et al. (2007); Zemke et al. (1999); related to generational differences of leadership style and preferences while contrasting with of the findings by Yu and Miller (2005) as it relates to educators in higher education.
The results of this study have implications to the field of student affairs to support the assertion of Herbst and Conradie (2011) and Astin and Astin (2000) the need for more transformational leaders in senior administrative roles. The findings of this study should be shared with professional associations, student affairs practitioners, and university presidents in an effort to better develop Generation X SSAOs with the skills to move towards a more transformational leadership style and away from transactional and avoidance of leadership styles. By utilizing this study various internal and external campus constituents may gain an understanding how SSAOs lead currently based on their generational category. Further research on the topic should seek to illustrate if such differences between generational groups change over time and/or why such difference exist between generational groups.
APPENDIX A

PROTECTING HUMAN SUBJECTS TRAINING
Certificate of Completion

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research certifies that Johnny Robinson successfully completed the NIH Web-based training course "Protecting Human Research Participants".

Date of completion: 09/18/2012
Certification Number: 1001960
APPENDIX B

INVITE E-MAIL
Dear Student Affairs Administrator,

I am a Doctor of Education candidate in the Higher Education Administration program at the University of North Texas and invite you to participate in a dissertation research study entitled *The Generational Shift: An exploration of leadership behaviors of Senior Student Affairs Officers through a generational lens.*

The purpose of this study is to identify and compare the differences in leadership behaviors between the Baby Boomer, Generation X, and Millennial generational groups of Senior Student Affairs Officers at four-year public and private higher education institutions. The anticipated duration to complete the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire and demographic questions is 15-20 minutes. Each individual who completes a survey will automatically be entered in a drawing for one of ten $25 gift cards.

The data collected from your responses will help formulate an understanding of the leadership behaviors of a multigenerational group of SSAOs. The findings of this study have an impact of campus culture, governance, and the leadership development of a new generation of SSAOs. When you are ready to begin, you may access the online survey and online informed consent notice below. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or my dissertation committee chair.

**Follow this link to the Survey:**

[Take the Survey](https://uta.qualtrics.com/WQRQualtricsSurveyEngine/?Q_SS=3D8uxT6PqBTiK9v_5bsus5WNnBuA4bH&_=1)

Follow the link to opt out of future emails:
[Click here to unsubscribe](https://www.qualtrics.com/unsubscribe/

Thank you,

Johnny Robinson, Doctoral Candidate  
University of North Texas  
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Dr. V. Barbara Bush, Committee Chair  
University of North Texas  
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APPENDIX C

INFORMED CONSENT
February 17, 2015

Dr. V. Barbara Bush
Student Investigator: Johnny Robinson
Department of Counseling and Higher Education
University of North Texas
RE: Human Subjects Application No. 15-060

Dear Dr. Bush:

In accordance with 45 CFR Part 46 Section 46.101, your study titled “The Generational Shift: An Exploration of Leadership Behaviors of Senior Student Affairs Officers through a Generational Lens” has been determined to qualify for an exemption from further review by the UNT Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Enclosed are the consent documents with stamped IRB approval. Please copy and use this form only for your study subjects.

No changes may be made to your study’s procedures or forms without prior written approval from the UNT IRB. Please contact Jordan Harmon, Research Compliance Analyst, ext. 4643, if you wish to make any such changes. Any changes to your procedures or forms after 3 years will require completion of a new IRB application.

We wish you success with your study.

Sincerely,

Chad Trulson, Ph.D.
Professor
Chair, Institutional Review Board

CT:jh
University of North Texas Institutional Review Board

Informed Consent Notice

Before agreeing to participate in this research study, it is important that you read and understand the following explanation of the purpose, benefits, and risks of the study and how it will be conducted.

**Title of Study:** The Generational Shift: An Exploration of Leadership Behaviors of Senior Student Affairs Officers through a Generational Lens.

**Student Investigator:** Johnny Robinson University of North Texas (UNT) Department of Counseling & Higher Education  
**Supervising Investigator:** Dr. V. Barbara Bush

**Purpose of the Study:** You are being asked to participate in a research study which involves identifying and comparing leadership behaviors of Senior Student Affairs Officers at four-year institutions from a generational perspective.

**Study Procedures:** You will be asked to complete the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) which will take about 15-20 minutes of your time.

**Foreseeable Risks:** There are no foreseeable risks involved in this study.

**Benefits to the Subjects or Others:** We expect the project to benefit you by assisting the field of higher education and student affairs comprehend the generational differences amongst Senior Student Affairs Officers that could impact campus culture and governance.

**Compensation for Participants:** Upon completion of the study, you will be entered automatically in a drawing for one of ten, $25 gift cards.

**Procedures for Maintaining Confidentiality of Research Records:** The confidentiality of your individual information will be maintained in any publications or presentations regarding this study. Confidentiality will be maintained to the degree possible given the technology and practices used by the online survey company. Your participation in this online survey involves risks to confidentiality similar to a person’s everyday use of the internet.

**Questions about the Study:** If you have questions about the study, you may contact Johnny Robinson at jarobinson@uta.edu or Dr. V. Barbara Bush at barbara.bush@unt.edu

**Review for the Protection of Participants:** This research study has been reviewed and approved by the UNT Institutional Review Board (IRB). The UNT IRB can be contacted at (940) 565-4643 with any questions regarding the rights of research subjects.

Office of Research Integrity & Compliance  
University of North Texas  
Last Updated: August 9, 2007

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[Signature]

DATE: 2/17/15

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Research Participants' Rights:

Your participation in the survey confirms that you have read all of the above and that you agree to all of the following:

- **Johnny Robinson** has explained the study to you and you have had an opportunity to contact him/her with any questions about the study. You have been informed of the possible benefits and the potential risks of the study.
- You understand that you do not have to take part in this study, and your refusal to participate or your decision to withdraw will involve no penalty or loss of rights or benefits. The study personnel may choose to stop your participation at any time.
- You understand why the study is being conducted and how it will be performed.
- You understand your rights as a research participant and you voluntarily consent to participate in this study.
- You understand you may print a copy of this form for your records.
REFERENCES


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