

EASTERN UNIVERSITY

**A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF THE INFLUENCE OF ACTION
LEARNING, COACHING, AND INTRAPERSONAL REFLECTION
AS SIMULATED LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES
WITHIN A LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAM ON INDIVIDUAL RESILIENCE**

by

Kaitlin Rose Wolfert

**A dissertation submitted to the
College of Business and Leadership
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
St. Davids, Pennsylvania
May 2021**

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Table of Contents

Abstract.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Chapter	Page
1. Introduction.....	1
Background.....	2
The Collegiate Leadership Competition.....	6
Purpose of the Study.....	8
Population.....	8
Definition of Terms.....	9
Study Rationale.....	11
The Research Question.....	13
Conceptual Framework.....	15
Overview of the Research Design.....	17
2. Literature Review.....	21
Resilience.....	21
Components of Resilience.....	23
Development of Resilience.....	26
Resilience Training.....	28
Traditional-aged American College Students.....	30
Resilience and Leadership.....	34
Leadership Development.....	37
Longitudinal Development.....	38

Intrapersonal Development.....	40
Leadership Competencies.....	41
Leadership Development Programs for Traditional-aged College Students	
.....	43
Influence of Leadership Development Programs.....	44
Leadership Development Simulations.....	45
Challenge and Support.....	47
Action Learning.....	49
Coaching.....	50
Intrapersonal Reflection.....	53
Experiential Learning.....	54
Summary of Chapter.....	55
3. Method.....	57
Transcendental Phenomenology.....	57
Participant Selection.....	58
Data Collection and Instrumentation.....	61
Surveys.....	61
Interviews.....	65
Data Coding and Analysis.....	65
Surveys.....	66
Interviews.....	66
Role of the Researcher.....	67
Verification.....	68
Ethical Considerations.....	69
Summary.....	70

4. Findings.....	72
Participant Summaries.....	74
Quantitative Data Analysis.....	90
Qualitative Data Analysis.....	94
Theme One: Comfort Zone.....	96
Safe Environment.....	98
Learning Opportunities.....	99
Voluntary Discomfort.....	101
Theme Two: Accountability and Vulnerability.....	103
Self-advocacy and Individual Influence.....	105
Growth Through Feedback.....	107
Theme Three: Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Growth.....	110
Emotional Intelligence.....	111
Collective Resilience.....	114
Group Dynamics.....	116
Theme Four: Internal and External Resilience.....	120
Problem-solving Framework.....	122
Analytical Thinking.....	123
Creativity and Flexibility.....	125
Overview of Findings.....	127
5. Conclusion and Recommendations.....	130
Interpretive Analysis of Qualitative and Quantitative Findings.....	136
Interpretation of Findings, Research Question and Sub-questions.....	136
Interpretation of Findings and Research Question.....	137
Interpretations of Findings and Research Sub-questions.....	139

Interpretation of Findings and Conceptual Framework.....	140
Limitations.....	143
Recommendations for Future Research.....	145
Recommendations for Practice.....	147
Action Learning and Simulations.....	148
Small-group Format.....	149
Team Dynamic.....	151
Conclusion.....	152
References.....	160

List of Tables

1. Descriptive Statistics of Sense of Mastery, Sense of Relatedness, Emotional Reactivity Factors.....	92
2. Descriptive Statistics of the Resiliency Scale for Young Adults Subscales....	93
3. Summary of Themes and Participant Responses.....	131
4. Theme Abbreviation Explanation.....	131

List of Figures

1. Conceptual Framework	15
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Appendixes

A. Interview Questions.....	155
B. Resiliency Scale for Young Adults	156

ABSTRACT

The Influence of Action Learning, Coaching, and Intrapersonal Reflection as Leadership Development Activities within a Leadership Development Program on Individual Resilience

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PhD, 2021

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Due to the complex challenges organizations face, researchers recommend that leaders possess and demonstrate resilience. Many higher education institutions provide students with the opportunity to engage in leadership development programs and resilience development programs. This transcendental phenomenological study explored the influence of three simulated leadership development activities within a leadership development program on individual resilience. The study consisted of fifteen individuals, representing regions throughout the United States, who participated in the 2019 program year of The Collegiate Leadership Competition. The researcher constructed a conceptual framework that examines three leadership development activities (action learning, coaching, and intrapersonal reflection) within the environment of challenging, yet supportive simulations and their influence on the development of individual resilience.

Participants shared how their involvement with the CLC has shaped their ability to navigate life's challenges by developing or strengthening their resilience. They developed the ability to think analytically, solve problems in a structured way, and demonstrate creativity and flexibility. Recommendations from the study include the use of action learning and simulations to provide individuals with an opportunity to practice leadership competencies in a safe environment, the use of a small-group format to allow each person to have a meaningful experience and engage in constructive feedback, and emphasizing a team dynamic to encourage learning from others and development of interpersonal skills. The study contributed to the literature and field of leadership development by exploring the ways specific simulated leadership development activities, identified as action learning, coaching, and intrapersonal reflection influence individual resilience development.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As a distance runner, I appreciated the metaphor used during our first residency by someone in an earlier cohort, “It’s not a sprint; it’s a marathon.” The road has not been easy, and sometimes involved surprise extra miles that I did not plan on running, but the obstacles and extra miles make the finish line so much more rewarding. I am so grateful to so many people for helping me reach this point in my doctoral journey, whether you were showing me the path forward, in the race right along with me, or cheering for me on the sidelines. I did it, but I could not have done it without your love, support, and encouragement.

To those who showed me the path: Thank you to Scott and Bela from The Collegiate Leadership Competition for providing a platform for my research and developing a program that not only develops leaders but develops resilience. Your generosity, support, and willingness to help with whatever I needed was critical to my completion of this dissertation. Bela, I am eternally grateful for and inspired by the care and kindness you demonstrated as you communicated with me through the pandemic.

Thank you to my committee members, Dr. Greenhalgh and Dr. Skinner for reviewing my research, helping me dive deeper, and becoming a better researcher and scholar. Dr. Greenhalgh, thank you for being the kind, warm presence this first-semester doctoral student with imposter syndrome desperately needed. Dr. Skinner, thank you for graciously and enthusiastically taking Connie’s place as committee member when she stepped up to be my chair.

Thank you a million times over to my Committee Chair, Dr. Connie Ostwald. Connie, you believed in me in the many moments I doubted myself. You saved me from giving up and have been an endless source of positive energy, love, encouragement, compassion, and joy every step of the way. You helped me see a purpose in continuing and completing this journey. You were incredibly responsive, approachable, and I simply could not have asked for a better role model and leader in completing this process. I look forward to working with you in the future.

To my fellow runners: Thank you to Stephanie Leister for our many dissertation work sessions at Wegmans, libraries, and Whole Foods. It was so encouraging, motivating, and helpful to have a long-time friend go through this process with me. I loved that we kept each other company, vented, snacked, and provided each other with at times, much needed levity and mostly, focused energy. You kept me on track and your check-in text messages were so thoughtful and encouraging.

Thank you to my SWAG (Smart Women Achieving Greatness)!! You made residencies so much fun and I loved every minute we got to spend together! Our monthly calls were always so timely when I needed some uplifting and loving reminders of why we chose this arduous journey in the first place. We have been together through some hard times and also shared in each other's joy. Now all we need is a SWAG reunion....in San Diego (as I look at the feet of snow outside)!

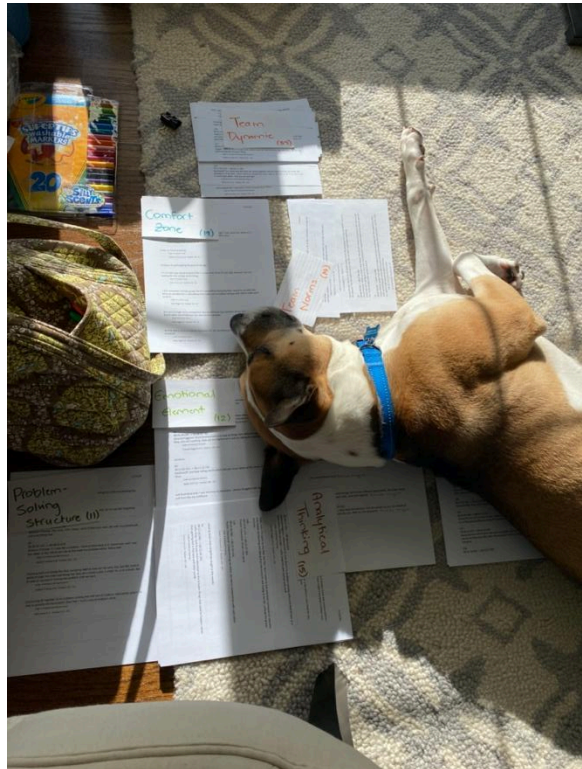
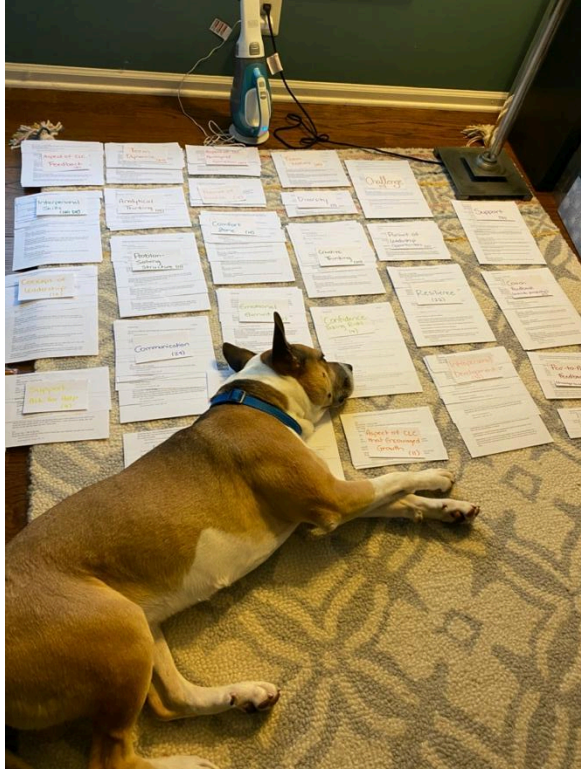
To the cheerleaders who never stopped cheering: Thank you to my colleagues and friends who never stopped asking me how my research was progressing. Your interest served as a wonderful source of accountability. I especially appreciated those of you who inquired knowing that you might not understand the response I was likely to

give. Thank you for never giving me grief for missing out on activities and for empathizing when I encountered those extra miles and obstacles. I cannot wait to see all of you more!

Thank you to my brother and parents. I love you all so much. You are my rocks. You shared in my joy as I completed each semester and checkpoint and reminded me of my strength and resilience when I was tempted to let the obstacles get the best of me. Ben, thank you for coming in at a clutch moment of needing finishing-touch formatting assistance and for always asking about my progress. Mommy and Daddy (yes, I said it), I am the luckiest daughter in the world to have such loving and supportive parents who inspire me to be the best version of myself.

Last but certainly not least, I want to thank my husband. Thank you, Scott for being my biggest cheerleader. Thank you for allowing me the time to be the best student I could be. You provided words of encouragement and read countless drafts which helped me rewrite and reframe my ideas in a more constructive way. You dried my tears, empathized with my frustration, and reminded me that there is not anything I cannot do. Thank you for not letting me give up. I cannot wait until the day when we can take a trip to celebrate this accomplishment.

Oh, and thank you to Atlas for keeping me company during an endless amount of hours doing schoolwork and writing this dissertation. Please enjoy a small sampling of pictures demonstrating Atlas' support and contributions to my dissertation.



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Organizations apply a significant amount of resources towards individual leadership development, often with uncertain outcomes and ambiguity regarding how to develop effective leaders (Avolio et al., 2009; Lunsford & Brown, 2017; Pitichat et al., 2018). Developing leaders provides organizations with a sustainable competitive advantage (Lacerenza et al., 2017). Kaiser and Curphy (2013) reported that in the past twenty years, spending on leadership development has doubled. As of 2012, businesses in the United States spent 14 billion dollars annually on leadership development (Loew & O'Leonard, 2012), and Ho (2016) identified leadership development as the primary training focus for organizations today. However, the perception of leadership competence has dropped by 30% (Kaiser & Curphy, 2013), and only 13% of organizations believe they have trained their leaders sufficiently (Schwartz et al., 2014).

Considerable ambiguity surrounds identifying developmental outcomes for leadership and ways to develop effective leaders. One reason for the ambiguity surrounding leadership development is the abstract, complex skills associated with the idea of leadership (Riggio, 2008). For this study, leadership refers to an individual and the range of behaviors required to perform as a leader. Leadership development denotes growth in knowledge, behaviors, or competencies relevant to performing as a leader, whether informally or formally (Day, 2000; Day & Dragoni, 2015; Hezlett, 2016). Research regarding leadership development has resulted in an extensive list of competencies and temperaments associated with effective leadership (O'Connell, 2014). Leadership development also occurs within the context of adult development (Day et al.,

2009; O’Connell, 2014), which adds to the challenge of identifying leadership development versus general development. Consequently, researchers consider leadership development to be dynamic and longitudinal and connected to career and personal growth (Day et al., 2014; O’Connell, 2014). Lastly, the idea of leadership and leadership development is evolving to reflect the complexity of challenges facing organizations and the structure of how work is organized, making it harder to pinpoint what skills leaders should possess to be effective (Holmberg et al., 2016; O’Connell, 2014; Petrie, 2014).

Because of the complex challenges facing organizations, researchers are advocating for the development of broad competencies that allow leaders to adapt quickly and influence the organization to embrace change (Holmberg et al., 2016; Leonard, 2017; Lunsford & Brown, 2017). Focusing on broad competencies allows leaders to maintain influence, even as the context of leadership and organizational configurations change. Resilience represents one of the broad competencies that scholars suggest contributes to effective leadership (Christman & McClellan, 2012; Holmberg et al., 2016; Howard & Irving, 2013; Ledesma, 2014; Pitichat et al., 2018). This study examined individual resilience as a potential leadership development outcome.

Background

The definition of a resilient leader does not appear in the literature, but rather researchers describe the qualities of leaders who demonstrate resilience. For example, Patterson et al. (2009) identify a leader who demonstrates resilience as someone who exhibits the ability to recover, learn from, and mature developmentally. When confronted by ongoing or crisis-related adversity, other researchers identify leaders as resilient if they can view change and risks as opportunities for growth (Shek & Leung, 2016). Often

leaders who demonstrate resilience are better able to manage their emotions, make informed decisions, and act on their decisions. When mistakes, setbacks, or failures transpire, leaders demonstrate resilience by appreciating the knowledge gained from experience. Consequently, leaders exhibit resilience by approaching similar challenges in the future with greater confidence (Shek & Leung, 2016; Sommer et al., 2016). While resilience has been referred to as “a key step within the formation process of a leader” (Howard & Irving, 2013, p. 681), there is a gap in empirical research regarding how leadership development affects resilience.

Studies regarding resilience and leadership tend to focus on how leaders demonstrate resilience through positive adaptation (e.g., Lane et al., 2013; Ledesma, 2014; Pitichat et al., 2018; Reed & Blaine, 2015; Wang et al., 2017). In this study, resilience is defined as a process through which individuals experience adversity and utilize personal resources to adapt positively (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2013; Huang & Lin, 2013; Jackson et al., 2007; Li & Yang, 2016; Masten, 2001; Richardson, 2002; Turner et al., 2017). Grit and resilience are sometimes used interchangeably, but grit refers to persevering towards long-term goals and sustained effort despite adversity and setbacks (Stoffel & Cain, 2018). Adversity represents a source of stress that threatens a person’s ability to adapt and experience positive development (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2013; Forster & Ducheck, 2017; Ungar, 2011). Positive adaptation refers to an individual’s awareness and use of internal competencies and external resources, or *protective factors*, in overcoming adversity (Forster & Ducheck, 2017; Li & Yang, 2016; Rutter, 1985).

Many organizations recognize the importance of resilience and provide resilience training. In a meta-analytic review of resilience training effectiveness, Vanhove et al.

(2015) observed that organizational resilience training tends to assess its influence on well-being (e.g., positive affect), physiological (e.g., blood pressure), psychosocial (e.g., self-efficacy), and performance outcomes (e.g., successful task completion) (e.g., Carr et al., 2013; Jennings et al., 2013; Pipe et al., 2012). The utilization of individual resilience measures to determine the influence of training is not as prevalent in the literature.

Because the act of demonstrating resilience is internal and unique to each person, researchers recommend using self-report measures (Lester et al., 2018). Researchers also consider resilience to be a phenomenon that cannot be observed or measured directly and which individuals portray differently (Lester et al., 2018; Rutter, 2012). Qualitative research methods are recommended when studying social phenomena (Yin, 2011). Despite its consideration as a phenomenon, there is a gap in qualitative research regarding resilience.

Numerous resilience studies focus on individuals who encounter recurring traumatic experiences in their professions, such as nurses, doctors, and military personnel. The repeated exposure to traumatic experiences can harm their mental health (Adler et al., 2015; Cornum et al., 2011). Researchers suggest that these groups are more likely to be influenced by training efforts, as they have more opportunities to put their newly acquired skills to use, and therefore are more likely to retain what they learn from training (Forbes & Fikretoglu, 2018; Lester et al., 2018; Vanhove et al., 2015).

Another population that is exposed to adversity and, therefore, resilience training efforts are traditional-aged college students (18-21 years of age). These individuals attend college at a time when they are developing their identities (Arnett, 2000; Erikson, 1968). Identity exploration invokes feelings of vulnerability, especially when exposed to

adversity (First et al., 2018; Huang & Lin, 2013; Riolli et al., 2012; Stallman, 2010). As a result, they are susceptible to engaging in harmful behaviors, such as excessive drinking and unsafe sexual practices (Lewandowski et al., 2014; Magrys & Olmstead, 2015), struggling academically (American College Health Association, 2015), and mental health concerns (Eisenberg et al., 2013; First et al., 2018; Galatzer-Levy & Bonanno, 2013; Ratanasiripong et al., 2012). This susceptibility and likely context of adversity makes this age and stage a key context for resilience training. Therefore, traditional-aged college students are the designated population for this study.

Along with providing resilience training for college students, higher education institutions often provide leadership development opportunities (Allen & Shehane, 2016; Avolio et al., 2009; Dugan et al., 2009; Lunsford & Brown, 2017; Rosch & Caza, 2012). Because traditional-aged college students are typically constructing their identity, they are more likely to incorporate being a leader into their identity after engaging in leadership development opportunities (Avolio, 2016; Avolio & Vogelgesang, 2011; Murphy & Johnson, 2016). They are also more likely to demonstrate continued engagement in development opportunities throughout their careers (Avolio, 2016; Avolio & Vogelgesang, 2011; Murphy & Johnson, 2016). Students who develop leadership skills in a practice environment are more likely to engage those skills within the workplace (Murphy & Johnson, 2011; Rosch & Villanueva, 2016). Leadership development programs in higher education tend to utilize simulations as a way of providing a space for individuals to practice and develop confidence in demonstrating leadership competencies (Baron & Parent, 2015; Murphy & Johnson, 2011).

Simulations are also utilized in organizational resilience training (Arnetz et al., 2009; Thompson & Dobbins, 2018; Vakili et al., 2014). By participating in realistic simulations, individuals are more likely to demonstrate resilience (Bonanno et al., 2011; Thompson & Dobbins, 2018) and perform their job functions at a higher level when applying the learned competencies to their professional environment (Vakili et al., 2014; Weaver et al., 2010). Simulations provide individuals with opportunities to practice the material they are learning in a safe environment, engage in reflection, and make meaning of their experiences (Lacerenza et al., 2017).

In addition to simulations, higher education leadership development programs (Allen & Shehane, 2016; Freedman & Leonard, 2013; Marquardt, 2011) and organizational resilience training (Thompson & Dobbins, 2018; Vakili et al., 2014) share three other common activities: “action learning,” coaching, and intrapersonal reflection. These activities create challenging yet supportive environments that encourage individual growth (Bjorkman & Makela, 2013; Howard & Irving, 2013; Khoreva & Vaiman, 2015; Ledesma, 2014; McCauley et al., 2010; Rutter, 1987; Zimmerman, 2013; Zimmerman et al., 2013). By utilizing these activities, even short-term leadership development and resilience training programs, as short as one week, have demonstrated the same long-lasting positive effects on participants as long-term programs that span multiple semesters (Peterson et al., 2008; Rosch & Caza, 2012).

The Collegiate Leadership Competition

This study utilized a short-term leadership development program for tradition-aged college students (18-21 years of age) called The Collegiate Leadership Competition (CLC) that spans four months. This particular organization was selected

because of the simulated adversities it presents to students in the hopes that they will adapt positively. Through simulated problem-solving challenges, the CLC implements realistic aspects of an organizational environment that can be viewed as adversity: time constraints, requirements to meet specified performance goals, team cooperation, and involvement, and exercising leadership roles (Baron & Parent, 2015). Through its leadership development program, the CLC provides a practice environment in which action learning, coaching, and intrapersonal reflection assist participants in learning more about themselves and developing leadership abilities. The program culminates with a competition, which serves as an additional form of simulated adversity because, in an actual organizational environment, organizations compete with one another.

The CLC utilizes Ericsson et al.'s (1993) notion of *deliberate practice* to develop a level of expertise. Deliberate practice refers to refining specific skills to become an expert in a particular area (Ericsson et al., 1993). Through deliberate practice, individuals are able to develop complex mental representations. For example, expert chess players are able to play simultaneous games of chess successfully while blindfolded. Mental representations allow individuals to recreate experiences, condense large amounts of information, and make accurate predictions (Ericsson & Pool, 2016). As a result, individuals who engage in deliberate practice and develop expertise are better able to navigate ambiguous challenges (Ericsson et al., 2007).

Ericsson and Pool (2016) suggest that deliberate practice requires a space to practice skills, receive coaching and feedback, and step outside of one's comfort zone (Ericsson & Pool, 2016). The originators of the CLC wanted to create a practice arena to develop leadership, similar to that of a kitchen for a chef, a field for an athlete, or a stage

for an actor (Allen et al., 2018). The program is designed as a series of coached simulations with the intention of developing leaders who can navigate ambiguous challenges effectively (Allen et al., 2014). The coached simulations are designed to test participants' abilities by placing them in situations they likely have never experienced before (Allen et al., 2018). While the CLC intends to develop leaders, the format and components of the program may influence participants in other ways.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the phenomenon of resilience in college students and recent college graduates who engaged in a leadership development simulation, referred to as the Collegiate Leadership Competition. The study focused on how specific leadership development activities identified as action learning, coaching, and intrapersonal reflection influenced resilience within individual participants.

Population

The population for this study was traditional-aged college students who participated in the 2019 program year of the Collegiate Leadership Competition. Traditional-aged college students are exposed to the negative influences of adversity (e.g., Center for Collegiate Mental Health, 2015; Eisenberg et al., 2013; First et al., 2018; Galatzer-Levy & Bonanno, 2013) and frequently provided with opportunities to participate in leadership development (Allen & Shehane, 2016; Avolio et al., 2009; Dugan et al., 2009; Lunsford & Brown, 2017; Rosch & Caza, 2012). The Collegiate Leadership Competition was selected for its unique competition format, which provides an added level of adversity for participants to overcome.

Definition of Terms

Several key concepts provided a framework for this research study. This section will define key concepts and describe the context used in this study. The definitions are later used to strengthen the phenomenological study by clarifying the findings.

Resilience

The definition of resilience has evolved from a series of traits (Holling, 1973) to a process (Grafton et al., 2010; Luthar et al., 2000) and an evolving outcome (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2016). For the purposes of this study, resilience will represent a process through which individuals experience adversity and utilize personal resources to adapt positively (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2013; Huang & Lin, 2013; Jackson et al., 2007; Li & Yang, 2016; Masten, 2001; Richardson, 2002; Turner et al., 2017). This definition is inclusive of two components that have remained connected to resilience through its various conceptualizations: adversity and positive adaptation.

Leadership Development

Leadership development is intrapersonal growth in knowledge, skills, abilities, or competencies relevant to performing as a leader, whether informally or formally (Day, 2000; Day & Dragoni, 2015; Hezlett, 2016). It emphasizes intrapersonal competence and developing an understanding of how self-awareness relates to an individual's leadership abilities (Day, 2000). This study considers a contemporary perspective of leadership development as longitudinal and connected to adult development (Day, 2012; Day et al., 2009; Kegan & Lahey, 2010).

Action Learning

Action learning refers to a pedagogical tool in which realistic situations are created to encourage learning by doing in a safe environment (Megheirkouni, 2016). Participants in action learning activities are often encouraged to take risks and trust others in accomplishing a task. Action learning is typically supplemented with reflection exercises and feedback mechanisms to strengthen the influence on participants (Day, 2000; Leonard, 2017).

Coaching

Coaching refers to a relationship in which an individual or group of individuals is well versed in a field and uses their knowledge to develop people with less experience in the designated field (Jones et al., 2016). Even if the relationship involves multiple people, an approach is a crucial component to coaching (Jones et al., 2016). A coach considers an appropriate level of challenge and support for each coaching recipient when considering individual resilience development (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2016).

Intrapersonal Reflection

Intrapersonal reflection refers to the process of learning about one's inner emotions, thoughts, motivations, beliefs, and goals in response to an experience or interaction (Macke, 2008). As it pertains to resilience, intrapersonal reflection refers to an individual's assessment of an adverse experience, selected response to the situation, and perspective of the situational outcomes (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2016).

Study Rationale

Researchers suggest that leaders who demonstrate resilience are a necessary component if organizations aim to overcome adversity (Lester et al., 2018; Reed & Blaine, 2015; Shek & Leung, 2016). By demonstrating resilience, leaders strengthen organizations to embrace change as a strategy to overcome adversity (Dartey-Baah, 2015; Ledesma, 2014; Nishikawa, 2006; Shek & Leung, 2016). Leaders who exhibit resilience encourage their organizations to view change as an integral component of remaining competitive (Comfort et al., 2010; Lane et al., 2013; Meyer & Kirby, 2010). Followers view leaders who exhibit positivity in the face of challenges as a source of social support; positive-minded leaders can assist employees in overcoming obstacles (Peterson et al., 2008). Employees who witness their leaders demonstrating resilience feel inspired to exhibit resilience when facing obstacles (Shek & Leung, 2016; Youssef & Luthans, 2007).

However, individuals in leadership positions face a variety of adversities in the twenty-first century. They work in complex environments with increasingly specialized services, federal requirements, and state obligations. High levels of energy and expertise are needed to face economic recessions and associated political pressures. Additionally, leaders and the decisions they make are under the inspection of global media coverage and demands for transparency. These adversities leave leaders vulnerable to damaged reputations, job loss, and adverse effects on their physical and emotional health (Reed & Blaine, 2015). However, if individuals in leadership positions have developed resilience before joining the workforce, they may be less likely to succumb to these adverse effects.

Higher education may provide an opportunity for individuals to develop resilience through leadership development programs because the outcomes of leadership development and resilience training programs are very similar. Participating in leadership development programs assists students with self-discovery and personal development (Eich, 2008) by cultivating their strengths and providing opportunities for growth (Allen & Shehane, 2016; Lunsford & Brown, 2017; Murphy & Johnson, 2011), while resilience training tends to emphasize identification and strengthening of protective factors (Marthers, 2017; Turner et al., 2017; Zimmerman, 2013).

To encourage development in leadership (Baron & Parent, 2015; Eich, 2008; McCauley et al., 2010) and resilience training programs (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2016; Grafton et al., 2010) in higher education, researchers suggest creating an environment that both challenges and supports individuals. The balance of challenge and support creates a space for students to exhibit courage and vulnerability and reflect on personal growth (Eich, 2008; McCauley et al., 2010). A supportive yet challenging environment provides an opportunity for individuals to reflect on their cognitive and emotional responses to adversity, as well as acquire and build the protective factors they will need to overcome adversity (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2012; Riggio, 2008).

Three activities commonly used to establish a challenging and supportive leadership development program are action learning (Day, 2000; Marquardt, 2011; Megheirkouni, 2016), coaching (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2016; Hezlett, 2016; Yip & Wilson, 2010), and intrapersonal reflection (Day et al., 2009). Action learning provides a realistic environment in which participants can practice leadership competencies (Leonard, 2017). Coaches can tailor the level of challenge and support for each participant based on

individual strengths and growth opportunities; they can also offer participants observational feedback that may broaden participants' self-awareness (Lacerenza et al., 2017; Lunsford & Brown, 2017). Intrapersonal reflection serves as a way of determining meaning and growth gained from a development experience (Macke, 2008).

The CLC has been studied regarding the influence of the program on other leadership-related outcomes, such as motivation to lead and leader self-efficacy (Porter, 2018). Researchers have also examined the program's use of deliberate practice in leadership development (Allen et al., 2018). This study seeks to examine the CLC's use of action learning, coaching, and intrapersonal reflection as leadership development activities and the influence of these activities on an emerging leadership competency: resilience. The study seeks to fill a gap in the literature by examining the influence of the three activities on individual resilience within the context of a leadership development program.

The Research Question

The research study addressed the following question: How does the experience of the Collegiate Leadership Competition leadership development program influence individual resilience, specifically through simulated leadership development activities that emphasize action learning, coaching, and intrapersonal reflection? The set of sub-questions were:

- (i) Which elements of the program were most meaningful in encouraging individual resilience development?

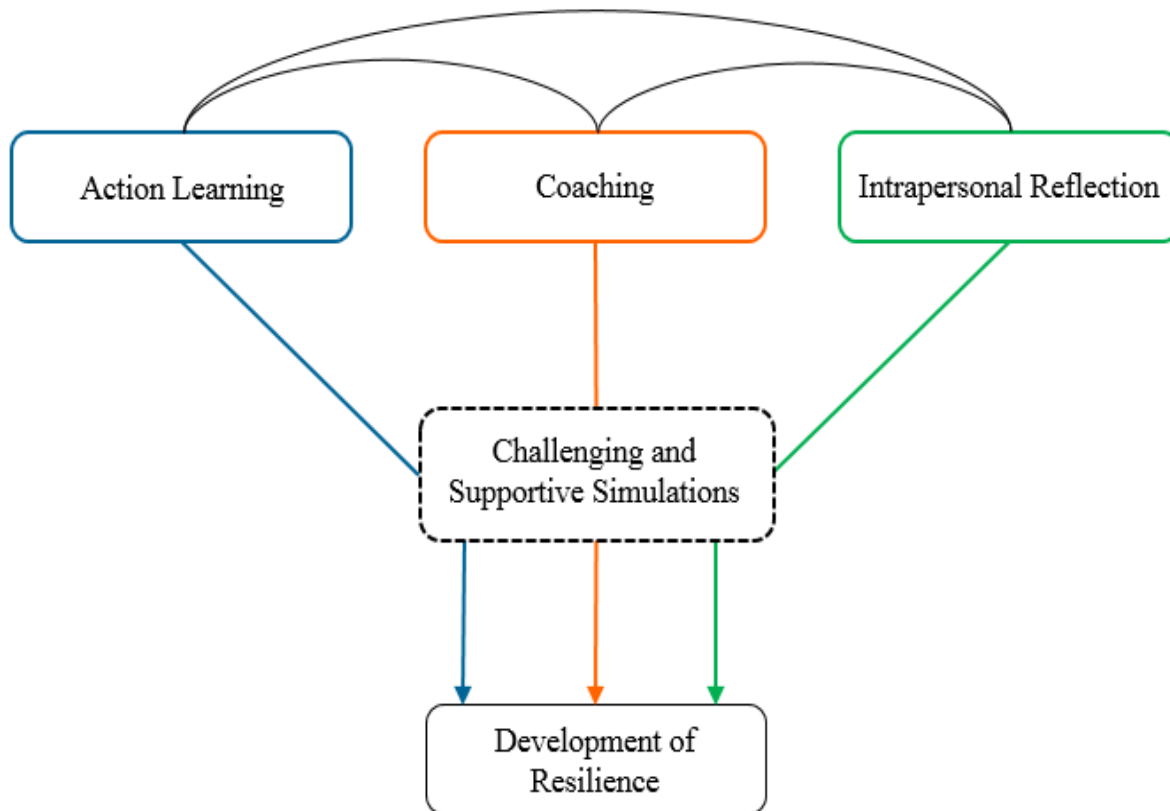
- (ii) Which elements of the program were most meaningful in encouraging individual leadership development?
- (iii) How did participating in the program influence how individuals perceive adversity?
- (iv) What did individuals learn about themselves after the program concluded?

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework illustrates the relationships between critical factors (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Its purpose is not to establish a theory but to provide understanding within a field of study that allows a researcher to investigate a specific research problem (Imenda, 2014; Jabareen, 2009). For this study, a conceptual framework helps illustrate the process of growth through activities shared between leadership development and resilience training programs. The organizational context for this study is the 2019 program year of the CLC, but findings from this study will be applicable in a greater organizational context. The sub-sections following Figure 1 describe the critical components of the model.

Figure 1

The Conceptual Framework



The study examined action learning, coaching, and intrapersonal reflection as they are utilized in both leadership development (Bjorkman & Makela, 2013; Khoreva & Vaiman, 2015; Ledesma, 2014; McCauley et al., 2010) and resilience training programs (Zimmerman, 2013; Zimmerman et al., 2013). These activities are used to increase self-awareness and encourage growth (Day et al., 2009; First et al., 2018; Fletcher & Sarkar, 2016; Lord & Hall, 2005; Zimmerman et al., 2013). In leadership development programs, participants use these activities to test and strengthen leadership competencies (Eich, 2008; Lunsford & Brown, 2017; Ziskin, 2015); in resilience training programs,

individuals strengthen their protective factors through the same activities (First et al., 2018; Fletcher & Sarkar, 2016; Zimmerman et al., 2013).

The three activities connect in their influence on individual development. For example, coaches guide participants through action learning activities and make adjustments based on the strengths and opportunities for growth of each individual (Eich, 2008; Lunsford & Brown, 2017). Action learning activities also provide opportunities for individuals to reflect on their development (Ardichvili et al., 2016; Eich, 2008; Leonard, 2017). In leadership development and resilience training programs, coaches often guide individuals through reflection exercises (Grant & Cavanaugh, 2007; Lunsford & Brown, 2017; McCauley et al., 2010). By engaging in intrapersonal reflection, individuals can derive meaning from action learning and coaching experiences (Allen & Shehane, 2016; Avolio & Luthans, 2006; Dominick et al., 2010).

Action learning, coaching, and intrapersonal reflection can influence the development of resilience by using simulations within a challenging and supportive context. Simulations are often used in both leadership development and resilience training programs (Arnetz et al., 2009; Baron & Parent, 2015; Murphy & Johnson, 2011; Thompson & Dobbins, 2018; Vakili et al., 2014). Through simulations, individuals can learn how they respond to adverse situations and reconstruct their mental representations (Arnetz et al., 2009; Vakili et al., 2014). Participants can also use simulations to practice competencies, take risks, and examine mistakes in a safe environment (Baron & Parent, 2015; Strickland & Welch, 2018; Thomas & Mraz, 2017).

An important aspect of simulations is that they challenge and support individuals to engage in development. Furthermore, individuals need to perceive a balanced amount

of challenge and support. If a simulation is too challenging, individuals will likely feel defeated and disengage. If a simulation is not challenging enough, individuals may not feel encouraged to engage in development (McCauley et al., 2010).

However, individuals interpret and respond to challenge and support in different ways (Frankovelgia & Riddle, 2010; McCauley et al., 2010). As a result, participants' responses to different action learning activities, coaching techniques, and intrapersonal reflection will vary. Coaches determine the appropriate level of challenge and support based on the needs of each participant to further encourage development (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2016; Frankovelgia & Riddle, 2010; Mahoney et al., 2017; Zimmerman, 2013; Zimmerman et al., 2013).

Overview of the Research Design

A qualitative research design by way of a transcendental phenomenological study was used to explore a leadership development program, and three specific leadership development activities within the program, and their influence on individual resilience. A phenomenological study is recommended when a researcher is interested in developing an understanding of lived experiences regarding a phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). The phenomenon in this study is resilience. This study explored the experience of a leadership development program, three main components of the program, and their influence on the phenomenon of resilience.

Throughout the program, the CLC integrates action learning, coaching, and intrapersonal reflection to encourage participant leadership development. During the training sessions and culminating competition, students participate in action learning

activities designed to simulate stressful situations in which the team has to collaborate and execute a solution within a specified timeframe. Participants are evaluated not only on their ability to solve the problem but also on the effort they make to maximize each team member's contribution to the overall goal. Action learning provides opportunities for individuals to practice leadership competencies, receive feedback regarding their efforts, and reflect on areas of improvement (Ardichvili et al., 2016; Leonard, 2017). Action learning is commonly paired with coaching (Ardichvili et al., 2016; Leonard, 2017), as is the case in the CLC.

During the CLC program, coaches who are trained in the CLC curriculum, guide students through practice sessions that focus on specific leadership skills. The curriculum consists of leadership acronyms, or terms (ie. T.E.A.M.S.; S.O.L.V.E.; L.E.A.D.E.R.S.H.I.P.) that are reinforced by the activities. During the training sessions and competition, coaches provide team members with individualized feedback after each activity to further their development. Coaches also encourage team members to provide each other with constructive feedback. Coaches play an influential role in development (Hezlett, 2016; Yip & Wilson, 2010) by determining an appropriate level of challenge and support for each participant (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2016; Frankovelgia & Riddle, 2010; Mahoney et al., 2017; Zimmerman, 2013; Zimmerman et al., 2013). Coaches also model trusting relationships with each participant and encourage the exchange of feedback between participants to further development (Frankovelgia & Riddle, 2010; King & Santana, 2010).

In addition to feedback from coaches and peers, intrapersonal reflection is an activity used by the CLC to encourage development. After engaging in each CLC

activity, whether during a practice session or the competition, participants are asked reflective questions to help them consider their roles and overall group process throughout the activity. After the competition takes place, each team is encouraged to hold a reflection meeting to determine how the CLC program influenced them as leaders and as individuals. Intrapersonal reflection allows participants to determine how an experience contributes to their development and leadership identity (Allen & Shehane, 2016; Avolio & Luthans, 2006; Dominick et al., 2010).

The primary data collection method was interviews with individuals who participated in the most recent occurrence of the program: Spring 2019. Interviews serve as a standard research technique for phenomenology, especially within transcendental phenomenology, where context is bracketed (Vagle, 2018). The interviews were conducted remotely through video-conferencing based on the availability of each participant. The interviews were recorded, and the researcher took her own notes. The interviews were analyzed using bracketing, intentionality, and whole-part-whole analysis (A. Giorgi, B. Giorgi, & Morley, 2017; Giorgi, 2009; Vagle, 2018).

As an additional data point, the fifteen interviewed individuals were asked to complete a survey. The results of the survey were matched to each participant. The survey asked respondents to submit their name, year in college, and fifty items of the *Resiliency Scale for Young Adults* (Prince-Embury et al., 2017). Results from the survey contributed to triangulation, which added to the validity of the study's findings (Creswell, 2013; Vagle, 2018).

The next chapter provides a comprehensive literature review regarding resilience and leadership development. The literature review addresses the idea that resilience can

be developed through common resilience training methods used in organizational settings and in higher education, with emphasis on the use of simulations. The researcher provides a demographic and psychographic profile and developmental stage of traditional-aged college students, as well as the rationale of why this population is a valuable recipient of resilience training. Leadership development is examined as a longitudinal process connected to overall development. Greater detail is provided regarding leadership development programs in higher education and their use of simulations. The literature review also describes the shared components of both resilience training and leadership development programs: a supportive yet challenging environment facilitated by action learning, coaching, and intrapersonal reflection.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review is designed to inform and communicate the importance of this study. The literature review will describe how the study addresses a gap in the literature in determining the influence of specific leadership development activities on individual resilience. It describes the conceptualization of resilience as a process and its ability to be developed. The review includes influential resilience training techniques, emphasizing the use of simulations. Since the selected population for this study is traditional-aged college students, resilience, as it pertains to traditional-aged college students, is reviewed, and examples of resilience training in higher education are examined. The literature review also describes how leaders demonstrate resilience.

The review designates the contemporary perspective of leadership development as longitudinal and connected to overall development. Leadership development programs for traditional-aged college students are described regarding their influence and their use of simulations. The final portion of the literature review addresses an environment that is both challenging and supportive in resilience training and leadership development programs and the activities typically used to construct this environment: action learning, coaching, and interpersonal reflection.

Resilience

The idea of resilience arose from qualitative studies in search of unique characteristics that allowed children to thrive despite facing adversity (e.g., Anthony, 1974; Garmezy, 1971; Richardson, 2002; Rutter, 1979; Werner & Smith, 1982). The term resilience originates from ecological research and refers to an ecosystem's ability to

recover from natural disasters or other influences (Holling, 1973). Despite searching for unique characteristics, research findings revealed that children utilized *ordinary* characteristics as well as the support of external resources in their communities when demonstrating resilience (Garmezy, 1971; Masten, 1994; Rutter, 1979; Werner & Smith, 1982, 1992). For example, children who exhibited resilience possessed the ability to form and maintain positive relationships, think critically, demonstrate self-efficacy, and a sense of humor (Anthony, 1974; Garmezy, 1971; Masten, 1994; Rutter, 1987; Werner & Smith, 1992).

Upon determining that children who demonstrated resilience did not possess unique characteristics, researchers began to investigate how individuals obtain characteristics associated with overcoming adversity (Flach, 1988; 1997; Luthans, 2002; Richardson, Neiger, Jensen, & Kumpfer, 1990; Rutter, 1987). The concept of resilience transitioned from a set of traits to that of a dynamic process. Researchers studied how people interact with stressful circumstances and how that process resulted in identifying and strengthening protective qualities (Grafton et al., 2010; Richardson, 2002). It was during this phase of research that researchers suggested that resilience can be developed (Gillespie et al., 2007; Hamilton et al., 2006; Richardson et al., 1990; Rutter, 1999). The idea that resilience is a process that can be developed applies to the goal of this study: to determine if leadership development activities influence individual resilience.

For the purposes of this study, resilience will represent a process through which individuals experience adversity and utilize personal resources to adapt positively (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2013; Huang & Lin, 2013; Jackson et al., 2007; Li & Yang, 2016; Masten, 2001; Richardson, 2002; Turner et al., 2017). McLarnon and Rothstein (2013)

identified several types of resilience processes: affective (related to recognizing and managing emotions), behavioral (recognizing and controlling behaviors), and cognitive self-regulation (recognizing and managing thinking patterns). Through these processes, individuals are able to demonstrate resilience and experience positive consequences (Forster & Ducheck, 2017; Masten, 2014; McLarnon & Rothstein, 2013; Rutter, 2012).

Components of Resilience

The process of resilience cannot occur without encountering adversity (Luthar, 2006; Rutter, 2006); research reveals a correlation between adversity and resilience (Seery et al., 2010). Responses to adversity differ in relation to the context in which adversity occurs and the severity of the situation, ranging from everyday stress, such as work conflicts, to occasional stress associated with life events, such as experiencing the death of a loved one (Daydov et al., 2013). Cooper et al. (2013) distinguished between chronic adversity, repeating over time, and sporadic adversity, occurring as isolated events. Demonstrating a low level of resilience is associated with feeling strained by everyday adversity. Only severe forms of adversity influence individuals with higher levels of resilience (Daydov et al., 2010; Fletcher & Sarkar, 2013). Researchers also suggest that adversity can be what strengthens resilience (Dienstbier, 1989; Grafton et al., 2010; Seery, 2011).

Dienstbier's (1989) theory of hardiness posited that moderate exposure to stress, with an opportunity to recover in between stressful experiences, can assist individuals in becoming stronger. This theory was used to suggest that experiencing stressful situations allows people to undergo psychological and physiological growth; this growth assists people in viewing other stressful situations as manageable and allows them to develop a

sense of mastery. Furthermore, people who experienced some adversity reported stronger mental health and well-being than people with a history of frequent adversity or those who never experienced adversity (Seery, 2011).

While researchers speculate that every person possesses an innate ability to demonstrate resilience, encountering adversity allows people the opportunity to process the obstacle and experience personal growth. Through this process, their resilience is strengthened (Grafton et al., 2010; Masten, 2001; 2014; Seery, 2011). *The Challenge Model* captures this process by suggesting that a risk factor, considered only moderately challenging by those who encounter it, can strengthen a person's resilience. Encountering a moderate risk allows people the opportunity to practice their skills and utilize their resources. However, the risk must also be significant enough that people experience the process of overcoming a challenge (Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005; Garnezy et al., 1984; Ledesma, 2014).

Another component of resilience is the ability to adapt positively. Defining positive adaptation is critical in determining if a person is demonstrating resilience (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2013). However, what constitutes positive adaptation is difficult to determine because individuals will adapt in different ways and at different rates (Lester et al., 2018). Wright et al. (2009) identified several forms of positive adaption. Individuals may continue positive or effective functioning during an adverse situation; they may recover after a substantial trauma, stabilize after experiencing accelerated or delayed development, or transform developmentally (Wright et al., 2009). The barometer of positive adaption changes as an individual matures (Schoon, 2012). The ambiguity of

positive adaptation complicates the study of resilience and the ability to compare research results (Truffino, 2010).

Despite the challenge in developing a clear definition of positive adaptation, researchers have identified a series of *protective factors* that individuals use when encountering challenges. Protective factors are the personal competencies and external resources used to overcome adversity (Dyer & McGuinness, 1996; Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005; Johnson & Wiechelt, 2004). Protective factors can prevent experiencing negative emotions and assist in selecting appropriate coping strategies (Li & Yang, 2016). To utilize their protective factors in demonstrating resilience, individuals need to recognize that they have the capability, whether internal or external, to overcome adversity (Rutter, 1987; 1993).

Researchers have identified a variety of internal characteristics used as protective factors. Individuals who consider themselves optimistic, empathetic, determined, and efficacious are more likely to demonstrate resilience (APA, 2010, Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005; Gartland et al., 2011; Grant & Kinman, 2012; Ledesma, 2014; Masten, 2014). Furthermore, people who possess strong problem-solving abilities, cognitive maturity, goal-orientation, and reflective skills are also able to exhibit resilience (APA, 2010; Gartland et al., 2011; Grant & Kinman, 2012; Ledesma, 2014; Winwood et al., 2013). Some researchers propose that ethnic identity can serve as a protective factor when encountering adversity (Caldwell et al., 2004).

In addition to personal characteristics, individuals utilize external resources upon encountering adversity. When considering a person's ability to demonstrate resilience, using external resources to adapt positively through adversity reflects the influence of the

social environment on development (Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005). People with strong social support networks and those who regularly engage in interpersonal interactions are more likely to demonstrate resilience (APA, 2010; Gartland et al., 2011; Grant & Kinman, 2012; Hartley, 2011; Lakey, 2013; Ledesma, 2014; Malekoff, 2014; Winwood et al., 2013). Resourceful relationships can include parental support, adult mentoring or coaching, and community organizations that encourage positive development (Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005; Zimmerman et al., 2013).

While individuals may possess protective factors that allow them to overcome adversity, the context of a situation influences how an individual can respond (Ungar, 2011). Depending on a particular environment, situation, other sources of stress, and period of life, people display varying degrees of resilience and handle the situation accordingly (Holmberg et al., 2016; Lester et al., 2018). The influence of context contributes to the idea that resilience is a process that fluctuates throughout an individual's life (Luthar, 2015; Schoon, 2012; Supkoff et al., 2012; Windle, 2011). Viewing resilience as a dynamic process has led researchers to study its ability to be developed or strengthened (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2013; McAllister & McKinnon, 2009; Robertson et al., 2015; Thompson & Dobbins, 2018).

Development of Resilience

Because individuals respond differently to adverse situations and the context surrounding these events, resilience is most often interpreted as an individualized construct (Lipsitt & Demick, 2012; Rutter, 2012). As individuals develop, so too does their ability to demonstrate resilience (Supkoff et al., 2012); the ability to demonstrate resilience shifts as individuals encounter developmental tasks at different stages of life

(Masten, 1994; Schoon, 2012). An individual's developmental background influences their ability to demonstrate resilience as they interact with, interpret, and react to stress and support (Masten, 1994; Supkoff et al., 2012). For example, a person's physical and psychological well-being, education, relationship with adults, and surrounding community influence his or her ability to demonstrate resilience (Masten, 2001; 2014).

Despite these outside influences, some researchers suggest that developing resilience stems from reflection and self-awareness. As people are encouraged to strengthen their unique characteristics, they will feel empowered to demonstrate resilience (Grafton et al., 2010; Lester et al., 2018). Other researchers emphasize the importance of obtaining *protective factors*, which include internal characteristics they may not already possess, and utilization of outside resources that enhance a person's ability to be resilient (Bonanno, 2004; Ledesma, 2014; Masten 2001; 2014; Zimmerman et al., 2013).

Participating in *prosocial involvement* is one way to develop both individual characteristics and external resources (Zimmerman et al., 2013). *Prosocial involvement* refers to organized activities that encourage healthy development. Protective factors can be developed through participating in the activities, and connection to resources can be bolstered by the organization responsible for the program. The activities typically occur in safe and structured environments and provide participants with the chance to develop skills, talents and achieve success. Participants also have the opportunity to develop positive relationships with peers and adult role models. Participating in prosocial involvement is a form of resilience training (Zimmerman et al., 2013).

Resilience Training

Resilience training was created initially as a preventive measure against stress, anxiety, and depression (Cooper et al., 2013; Rutter, 2000) and has broadened to assist individuals in building strengths to maintain higher levels of performance in challenging circumstances (Robertson et al., 2015; Thompson & Dobbins, 2018). Efforts to develop resilience through targeted programming are supported by empirical evidence (Forbes & Fikretoglu, 2018; Robertson et al., 2015; Shek & Leung, 2016; Vanhove et al., 2016). However, few researchers have used resilience instruments to determine the effectiveness of training (Robertson et al., 2015). Instead, outcomes are typically based on well-being, physiological, psychosocial, and performance measures (e.g., Carr et al., 2013; Jennings et al., 2013; Pipe et al., 2012). As a result, the training's influence on participants' resilience remains unknown.

Frequently, training focuses on the development and influence of an individual's protective factors (Forbes & Fikretoglu, 2018; Vanhove et al., 2016). Some of the resilience studies only measured the influence of training on these factors instead of determining if there was a change in individual resilience (Forbes & Fikretoglu, 2018). Of 244 resilience studies reviewed by Forbes and Fikretoglu (2018), 61 focused on protective factors, 86% of the 61 were found to have significantly positive effects regarding workplace-related outcomes. In Vanhove et al.'s (2016) analysis of resilience training programs, they found that resilience interventions produced similar effects regardless of whether they were conducted with military or non-military samples, which suggests generalizability across adult populations who experience varying levels of stress. Developing some protective factors can also positively influence the development

of other protective factors, providing additional strength when demonstrating resilience (O'Dougherty Wright et al., 2013).

Researchers have studied resilience training extensively to determine the programmatic characteristics that lead to effective results (Forbes & Fikretoglu, 2018; Lester et al., 2018; Robertson et al., 2015; Vanhove et al., 2016). Individually-focused resilience training can lead to more significant effects than group or computer-based training (Lester et al., 2018). Programs targeted at all members of an organization have less of an impact than those targeting specific individuals (Forbes & Fikretoglu, 2018; Vanhove et al., 2016). When people have an opportunity to integrate what they have learned and practice it, they can retain the skills from training (Lester et al., 2018; Vanhove et al., 2016; Walton, 2014). Furthermore, researchers posited that training is more influential when it simulates stress instead of taking place in a classroom, removed from a stressful environment (Forbes & Fikretoglu, 2018).

Resilience training is frequently offered to people in professions that are exposed to adversity regularly, such as those in law enforcement (Arnetz et al., 2009), the military (Cornum et al., 2011), and medical professions (Grafton et al., 2010). These populations are at risk of experiencing mental health concerns such as depressive and anxiety disorders (Castro et al., 2012). Through resilience training, organizations hope to alleviate or protect against the effects of experiencing trauma (Thompson & Dobbins, 2018). These populations are influenced by training based on their ability to apply what they learn in adverse environments and therefore, are more likely to exhibit growth (Belsky, 2016; Belsky & Pluess, 2013; Fletcher & Sarkar, 2016; Forbes & Fikretoglu, 2018; Vanhove et al., 2015).

A common training technique used with people who frequently encounter adversity is simulations. Simulations provide opportunities for individuals to experience realistic, stressful situations within a safe environment to learn how they respond physiologically and pinpoint cognitive misrepresentations that may trigger negative emotions (Arnetz et al., 2009; Vakili et al., 2014). Upon determining how individuals respond to adverse situations, simulations aid individuals in strengthening resilience through their affective, cognitive, and behavioral responses (Vakili et al., 2014). Training that uses more general events is more influential than those that use specific situations or stimuli because individuals can more easily channel their optimal physiological state within the actual environment (Vakili et al., 2014). By having participants undergo simulations, they are less likely to experience post-traumatic stress disorder or other forms of psychopathology (Bonanno et al., 2011).

Traditional-aged American College Students

Another group of people vulnerable to the negative influences of adversity is college students (First et al., 2018; Huang & Lin, 2013; Stallman, 2010; Turner et al., 2017). While an increasing number of people over the age of 21 are participating in higher education, the population for this study will be traditional-aged American college students. The *Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation* provides a profile of recent traditional-aged American college students. Fifty-five percent of college students are under the age of 21. Eighty-two percent of students either live on campus or live in other housing without a parent or guardian. Sixty-two percent of college students are attending four-year institutions. Fifty-six percent identify as White, and 42% identify as Non-White. Fifty-six percent of students identify as female, and 44% identify as male.

Thirty-six percent of students work part-time, and 26% of students work full-time.

Thirty-three percent of students come from families that earn less than \$20,000 or less per year (“Today’s College Students,” 2015).

The developmental stages that traditional-age college students progress through while in college leave them vulnerable to the negative influences of adversity. Several theorists posited that individuals within this age range are exploring and developing aspects of their identities (Arnett, 2000; Chickering & Reisser, 1993; Erikson, 1959;1994; Josselson, 1996; Marcia, 1966). Erikson’s (1959;1994) psychosocial development theory contains eight stages at which an individual encounters a problem or crisis. During their higher education experience, 18-21 year-olds are challenged to define their identity or experience *identity confusion*. Identity exploration for traditional-aged college students can result in risk-taking and instability as they engage in higher education (Arnett, 2000).

Arnett (2000) coined the developmental period for individuals between the ages of 18 and 25 in modern, industrialized societies as *Emerging Adulthood*. This period is characterized by identity exploration, uncertainty, a goal of self-sufficiency, optimism, and transition. Emerging Adulthood concludes when an individual is able to accept and attain autonomy and independence. Resilience is identified as a key factor in the transition to adulthood (Hinton & Meyer, 2014). While individuals experience negative and positive events, it is not the nature of these events that predict the ability to adapt and achieve success; it is an individual’s mental health that determines future functioning.

Individuals who experience trauma or severe stress during childhood and adolescence can experience development dysfunctions and mental deficiencies during Emerging Adulthood, resulting in anxiety and depression (Van Vugt et al., 2014). The

transitional nature of Emerging Adulthood itself leads to a high probability of both positive and negative developmental outcomes. However, support and protective factors can lessen the negative influence of stress and trauma on individuals transitioning to adulthood (Bachmann et al., 2014). Researchers suggest that adolescents are more likely to positively transition to adulthood if they are able to capitalize on the developmental tasks associated with Emerging Adulthood that promote protective factors such as social and cognitive abilities that encourage resilience (Masten et al., 2004).

Resilience in Traditional-Aged American College Students

A national survey conducted by the Center for Collegiate Mental Health (2015) revealed that roughly 43% of college students report that stress is their most significant concern in life (First et al., 2018). Twenge (2006) suggested that this stress can result from differences in expectations versus reality. The current generation of students has been told that they are “special” and that they “can be anything they want to be.” This has resulted in a rise in self-esteem, self-evaluations, and narcissism in young adults from the early 1990s to the late 2000s (Gentile et al., 2010; Twenge & Foster, 2010). However, reality presents unexpected challenges, resulting in feelings of anxiety and stress (Twenge, 2011).

When encountering stress, individuals sometimes engage in unsafe behaviors. Researchers suggest that there is a link between stress and an increase in drinking (Magrys & Olmstead, 2015), unhealthy relationship behaviors (Lewandowski et al., 2014), and academic struggles (American College Health Association, 2015). Students who reported experiencing high levels of stress also disclosed that they experience mental

health concerns of anxiety and depression (Eisenberg et al., 2013; First et al., 2018; Galatzer-Levy & Bonanno, 2013; Ratanasiripong et al., 2012).

The stress college students experience stems from a variety of sources. The transition from high school to college presents challenges for students (First et al., 2018; Turner et al., 2017). The transition is associated with financial stress, changes in responsibility, and managing interpersonal relationships (Catterall et al., 2014; DeRosier et al., 2013; First et al., 2018; Houghton et al., 2012; Huang & Lin, 2013). Additionally, college students are challenged by the amount and expectations of academic coursework, interactions with faculty, extra-curricular activities, time management, and distance from their support systems (Huang & Lin, 2013). Due to the increase in stress experienced by college students and their negative response to the challenges they face, higher education institutions are developing programs to assist students in improving their mental health.

Resilience training in higher education

While college students may be influenced negatively by adversity, they are also more likely to be influenced positively by resilience training (Forbes & Fikretoglu, 2018). In a retention and completion study, Rice University found that students at four-year institutions were more likely to receive better grades and graduate if they possess a growth mindset, a sense of belonging, and an intrinsic motivation to achieve. These characteristics are linked with resilience (APA, 2010; Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005; Gartland et al., 2011; Grant & Kinman, 2012; Ledesma, 2014; Masten, 2014; Winwood et al., 2013). As a result, higher education institutions are providing opportunities for students to develop resilience (Marthers, 2017).

The programs assist students in developing personal characteristics and external resources that are utilized when demonstrating resilience (First et al., 2018; Grant & Kinman, 2012; Leppin et al., 2014; Stallman, 2011; Watson & Field, 2011). By developing their resilience, some researchers suggest that students will be able to achieve an individualized measure of success and persist through graduation (DeRosier et al., 2013; Huang & Lin, 2013; Turner et al., 2017). Beyond their time in higher education, resilience has also been linked with preparation to join the workforce and the ability to find employment (Hinchliffe & Holly, 2011; Turner et al., 2017).

The University of Pennsylvania (“Resilience in College Students,” 2019), Cornell University, Morrisville State University, Tulane University, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and University of Utah are just some of the institutions that provide resilience interventions for students. Resilience training in higher education typically involves identifying self-defeating behaviors, developing a growth mindset, and raising awareness of individual strengths to utilize in challenging situations. Training formats include informative videos, workshops, first-year seminars, and coaching (Marthers, 2017). Despite traditional-aged college students’ vulnerability to adversity, none of the programs mention the use of simulations. This study investigates the influence of simulated organizational stressors within the context of a leadership development program on individual resilience.

Resilience and Leadership

As traditional-aged college students engage in resilience development opportunities, they participate in the process of metacognition that involves assessing their protective factors and determining if they can overcome the challenge (Flavell,

1979; Mayer & Gaschke, 1988). This process of metacognition contributes to the development of self-awareness (Ackerman & Maslon-Ostrowski, 2002). Self-awareness is gained from an understanding of strengths and weaknesses, comforts and discomforts, and conditions under which an individual can thrive and those that are challenging (McCauley et al., 2010). Researchers suggest that as individuals encounter adversity and develop self-awareness, they engage in self-differentiation, which allows them to function without relying on the opinions of others. A positive relationship was found between self-differentiation and a leader's ability to demonstrate resilience (Howard & Irving, 2013).

In an exploratory interview study with seventy-seven leaders from industrial organizations, Forster and Ducheck (2017) identified four categories of abilities that influence a leader's ability to demonstrate resilience. The first category includes personal competencies, such as the ability to learn from experiences and think positively. The second category involves cognitive competencies, which include the ability to reflect and act rationally. The third category refers to professional skills, and the fourth encompasses interpersonal behaviors, such as the ability to communicate openly, develop a trusting environment, and collaborate (Forster & Ducheck, 2017).

Beyond an individual's abilities, researchers suggest that there are several situational factors that influence one's ability to demonstrate resilience (Cooper et al., 2013; Forster & Ducheck, 2017; Gu & Day, 2007). Situational factors refer to aspects of a work environment. Leaders can demonstrate resilience in a positive work environment that communicates support, values trust, and provides genuine feedback (Forster &

Duchek, 2017). Additionally, collegial relationships with colleagues and coworkers are influential in demonstrating resilience (Gu & Day, 2007; Sarkar & Fletcher, 2014).

Along with social relationships with colleagues and coworkers, support from family and friends is a significant influence on a leader's ability to demonstrate resilience (Bossman et al., 2016; Forster & Duchek, 2017; Ledesma, 2014). Leaders often feel isolated in their roles and, as a result, are at risk of diminishing resilience (Sarkar & Fletcher, 2014). Support systems that include trusting relationships protect leaders from experiencing the adverse effects of stressful situations (Ledesma, 2014). Family and friends help leaders directly or indirectly and allow leaders to feel loved, valued, and part of a community (Forster & Duchek, 2017).

With the aforementioned personal competencies, situational factors, and support systems, leaders are more likely to demonstrate resilience (Forster & Duheck, 2017). Leaders who demonstrate resilience have a positive influence on their employees (Avey et al., 2011; Forster & Duchek, 2017; Teo et al., 2017). The interpersonal behaviors identified by Forster and Duchek (2017) emphasize how leaders' relationship-oriented competencies can facilitate effective communication and relationship building in challenging organizational situations. By witnessing their leaders exhibiting resilience, researchers have indicated that employees will feel empowered to demonstrate resilience (Shek & Leung, 2016; Teo et al., 2017). Other researchers have identified the positive influence of leader resilience on employee work performance, such as organizational citizenship behavior, job effort, and motivation (Avey et al., 2011) and employee attitudes, such as job satisfaction (Avey et al., 2011b), positive attitude (Avey et al., 2011a) and positive psychological capital (Walumbwa et al., 2010). The literature review

examines the process of leadership development to gain a better understanding of how individuals can exhibit resilience in leadership positions.

Leadership Development

Twenty-first-century leadership development is viewed as dynamic and longitudinal, embedded in adult development (Day, 2012; Day et al., 2009; Kegan & Lahey, 2010). Contemporary challenges facing leaders are too complex and ambiguous to be addressed adequately by short-term leadership development programs. As a result, these programs tend not to use leadership theory in their programmatic efforts and focus more on general development (Day et al., 2014). Additionally, no leadership development theory exists that guarantees growth (Day et al., 2014; O'Connell, 2014). Developing individuals and developing effective leaders is more complicated than deciding on a theory that will motivate development. Human development involves the interaction of complex processes and therefore, can be challenging to standardize under a single theory. Therefore, leadership development is considered a component within the broader context of human development (Day et al., 2014).

As individuals engage in leadership development throughout their lives, they are more likely to incorporate being a leader as part of their overall identity (Avolio & Hannah, 2008; Lord & Hall, 2005). They can transform necessary forms of leadership knowledge and abilities into higher-order, holistic competencies (Day et al., 2009; Day & Sin, 2011). By utilizing a holistic development paradigm, leadership development prepares leaders to navigate organizational conditions of increasing complexity, competition, global connection, and unpredictability (O'Connell, 2014). Furthermore, as individuals develop at different rates and in different ways, it may be hard to pinpoint

specific aspects of leadership development programs that are most influential (Day et al., 2014). Broadening leadership development to include human development may provide a greater understanding of how and why development can take place.

Integrating leadership development into human development resonates with the differentiation between leader development and leadership development. As individuals follow their path of development, so too do leaders. Leader development refers to the individual development of knowledge and skills pertaining to the role of a leader (Day, 2000; Day & Dragoni, 2015; Hezlett, 2016); leadership development refers to collective development (Allen & Shehane, 2016). The focus of leader development is on self-awareness, self-regulation, and self-motivation (Day, 2000). Because resilience is also typically identified as an individual outcome, the focus of leadership development in this literature review will be on individual leader development.

Longitudinal Development

By considering leadership development within a broader framework of human development, it is essential to consider how individuals engage with leadership development throughout their lives. As individuals mature, they are likely to engage with leadership development initiatives in different ways (Day et al., 2009). Day et al. (2009) refer to this consideration as a longitudinal developmental theory with a *function-centered perspective*. In this case, the *function* is leadership, and the focus of the theory is understanding how leadership processes are influenced by development over time (Day et al., 2009).

Several leadership development theories encourage a longitudinal perspective. Russell and Kuhnert (1992) created a model of longitudinal leadership development by

combining Kanfer and Ackerman's (1989) model of episodic skill acquisition, Kegan's (1982) constructive development theory of adult development, and the development of transactional and transformational leaders. The model intends to inform what processes guide developmental change related to how leaders understand and act in their environment (Russell & Kuhnert, 1992). McCauley et al. (2006) developed a model that connects constructive development theory with perceptions of leader effectiveness. The longitudinal perspective of this theory focuses on how perceptions of self and the world become more complex over time (McCauley et al., 2006).

Murphy and Johnson (2011) identified *sensitive periods* of development that occur before individuals reach adulthood. During these timeframes, young people can develop skills more easily and faster. Moreover, skills developed during sensitive periods may not appear immediately; they may be easier to observe during adulthood. Development during a sensitive period influences future engagement in future developmental experiences, leader effectiveness, and increases resilience if poor performance occurs during a developmental experience (Murphy & Johnson, 2011).

Over the course of a lifespan, individuals engage in the process of *intellectual functioning*, which refers to selecting goals, acquiring and utilizing resources to pursue goals, and using resources to maintain a certain level of functioning after having achieved a goal (Baltes et al., 1999). Day et al. (2009) propose that it is through this process that individuals engage in leadership development. While adults strengthen how they function intellectually over time, research suggests that adolescents and young adults possess the ability to engage in intellectual functioning (Lerner et al., 2001). Exposure to novel and challenging experiences in adulthood can enhance intellectual functioning; if young

adults are exposed to the intellectual functioning process before joining the workforce, their leadership development may be enhanced later in their careers (Day et al., 2009).

Intrapersonal Development

Leadership development programs assist individuals in developing self-awareness and understanding. Individuals are able to learn about themselves and how they relate to others (Day, 2000). In a one-week leader development program, O'Connell (2014) found that emphasizing intrapersonal development provided a flexible framework that was influential for leaders with varying levels of experience. Participants are more likely to utilize what they learn if the developmental experience is applicable to their individual context (McCauley et al., 2010). Researchers suggest that leadership development programs should address adult development by considering cognitive and moral development and organizational and societal contexts (Ardichvili et al., 2016).

Dominick et al. (2010) suggested that effective leadership development should include mechanisms for assisting individuals in identifying their beliefs, behaviors, and effects that influence their ability to engage in and apply development efforts. Day et al. (2014) designated three groupings of individual characteristics that motivate individuals to engage in leadership development activities: *work orientation* (job and organizational commitment), *mastery orientation* (motivation to self-develop, gain greater self-efficacy, and overall conscientiousness), and *career-growth orientation*. Other developmental factors influence a person's inclination to engage in leadership development: genetics, relationships, education, work experiences, organizational influence, incentives, and training (Conger, 2004).

The degree to which individuals are prepared to engage in intrapersonal development influences what they can gain from leadership development experiences (Day et al., 2009). Engaging in leadership development is a process that integrates numerous developmental experiences, the motivation to develop, and the ability to learn from the experience (McCauley et al., 2010; Reichard & Walker, 2016). The ability to learn stems from self-awareness. Developmental experiences can enhance a person's ability to learn, and a person's inclination to seek out learning opportunities may gain a more considerable benefit from varying developmental experiences (McCauley et al., 2010).

Leadership Competencies

Henri Fayol's 14 principles of management, which became popular in the 1950s (Fayol & Storrs, 1949), inspired many competencies expected of leaders today. Despite his top-down, authoritative approach, Fayol's ideas of management, along with Frederick Taylor's Scientific Theory, Max Weber's Bureaucratic Theory, and Douglas McGregor's X&Y Theory are still influential regarding leadership competencies. However, these theories are representative of the historically managerial perspective of leadership with a "leader-centric" emphasis (Fowler, 2018). Since then, leadership competencies have shifted to represent modern leadership theories.

David McClelland (1973) constructed the contemporary idea of competencies. He defined competencies as sustaining characteristics that include knowledge, skills, self-concepts, behaviors, and motivations (McClelland, 1973). McClelland (1973) encouraged the use of personal competencies to predict job success rather than intelligence and aptitude tests. McClelland (1973) encouraged workplace development

that emphasized competencies. Instead of focusing on intelligence training, individuals were assessed based on their behavior, any change reflected after engaging in development opportunities, and consideration of the situations in which the person is evaluated (McClelland, 1973).

However, as the concept of leadership has evolved from a traditional management perspective to one that is complex and collective, it has become much more challenging to pinpoint specific competencies that are likely to lead to success (Leonard, 2017). Over the last decade, leadership development research has focused on identifying leadership competencies that are applicable across time, levels of organizations, and ambiguous challenges (Horey et al., 2004; Seemiller, 2016). Researchers are recommending that leaders develop broad competencies, such as resilience (Christman & McClellan, 2012; Howard & Irving, 2013), that allow them to adapt quickly and encourage organizations to embrace change (Holmberg et al., 2016; Leonard, 2017; Lunsford & Brown, 2017). As organizations encourage collective leadership, promoting resilience as a broad competency allows them to develop a wider range of employees, and as a result, navigate complex challenges more effectively (Faustenhauer & Gossler, 2011; Kuntz et al., 2016; Luthans & Youssef, 2004; Megele, 2014). However, there is a gap in the literature regarding the influence of leadership development on individual resilience.

Leadership Development Programs for Traditional-Aged College Students

There has been a recent emphasis on developing leadership competencies in college students (Allen & Shehane, 2016; Avolio et al., 2009; Lunsford & Brown, 2017; Rosch & Caza, 2012). Young people between the ages of 17 and 25 years old tend to be the focus of leadership development programs because they are at a fundamental stage

marked by the opportunity to engage with their community, plan their career trajectories (Bowers et al., 2016), and experience what Murphy and Johnson (2011) refer to as a *sensitive period* of development. Researchers suggest that if young people participate in development during this time, the effects can be observed during adulthood (Lunsford & Brown, 2017; Murphy & Johnson, 2011). Additionally, college coincides with a time of identity development in young people (Bowers et al., 2016).

There are several benefits of engaging students in leadership development programs. By initiating the leadership development process during an influential period of their identity development, college students may be more likely to identify as a leader and engage in development opportunities throughout their careers (Avolio, 2016; Avolio & Vogelgesang, 2011; Murphy & Johnson, 2016). As young people engage in opportunities to practice leadership skills, they develop the confidence to apply their skills in the workforce (Murphy & Johnson, 2011; Rosch & Villaneuva, 2016). Additionally, providing college students with opportunities to practice leadership allows them to develop resilience if they experience failure within leadership programs (Murphy & Johnson, 2016).

The National Association of Colleges and Employers (2013) posited that the top five skills sought by prospective employers are associated with leadership. By providing opportunities for college students to engage in leadership development, they are facilitating students in developing the competencies they need to be successful in the workplace. Employers are looking for individuals who will lead without formal leadership positions and eventually grow into formal leadership roles, enriching the organization's talent. Furthermore, hiring employees with leadership competencies

encourages productive teamwork, high-quality decision-making, and innovative thinking (Seemiller, 2016).

Influence of Leadership Development Programs

Despite the emphasis on college student leadership development and the prospect of encouraging engagement in workforce leadership, there are several issues regarding the influence of leadership development programs. While young adults are the future leaders of communities and organizations, there are widespread concerns regarding the availability and efficacy of leadership among young people and adults in the United States (Ashford & DeRue, 2012; Rosenthal, 2012). Though leadership development programs in higher education tend to use engaging and experiential learning methods, there is a lack of clarity regarding if these methods are backed by leadership theory or evidence-based research (Lunsford & Brown, 2017). Specifically, research is needed regarding one-time leadership development programs because they predominate co-curricular leadership education (Owen, 2012; Rosch & Stephens, 2017). This study seeks to address this gap in the literature by using the CLC as a one-time leadership development program.

Furthermore, the emphasis on leadership development literature is on the adult perspective. Less is known about the perspectives young people have in navigating the leadership growth process. In a meta-analysis of leadership development programs focused on younger than 22 year-olds versus older than 45 year-olds, interventions made a stronger impact on younger participants (Avolio & Vogelgesang, 2011). Investigating how young people view this process can provide adults with insight into ways of

facilitating college students' leadership development more effectively (Avolio & Vogelgesang, 2011; Bowers et al., 2016).

Leadership Development Simulations

Leadership development programs for college students serve as a practice environment to engage in leadership competencies (Lacerenza et al., 2017). Development literature encourages the use of practice as a way of allowing learners to form constructions of the world through experiences and reflections of experiences (Piaget, 1952). The Center for Creative Leadership suggests that when individuals have an opportunity to practice leadership competencies, they can reflect on the experience, solve problems in a structured environment, and participate in the learning process, which quickens the rate at which they learn from the experience (Van Velsor et al., 2010). Researchers suggest that practice-based methods are also critical in influencing program outcomes because they allow participants to engage with the material fully in a realistic environment (Weaver et al., 2010).

Because employers are seeking candidates who possess leadership competencies, leadership development programs are increasingly using simulations to create realistic environments in which students can practice these competencies (Baron & Parent, 2015; Strickland & Welch, 2018; Thomas & Mraz, 2017). For example, nurses are expected to perform autonomously in a chaotic environment while managing several patients but seem to be lacking these skills upon graduation (McPherson & MacDonald, 2017). A capstone simulation experience was created to improve their ability to think critically, make decisions, delegate, and build self-confidence (Thomas & Mraz, 2017). Providing the opportunity for experiential education through simulations allowed recent graduates

to draw on the capstone to develop further and cultivate their leadership skills in the future (Strickland & Welsh, 2018).

At the graduate level, Daloz Parks (2005) observed a course taught by Ron Heifetz centered around leadership simulations. Heifetz took an unconventional instructional approach by allowing the social dynamic of the class to serve as a leadership case study. From the students' perspective, Heifetz was not providing leadership; as a result, the class was encouraged to adapt to the challenge. Between the perceived ambiguity of the instructor's teaching style and the conflict generated by natural social interactions, Heifetz used his classroom to create a simulation of the ambiguous, complex challenges his students would face upon returning to or joining the workforce. The course was also designed to help students recognize the power of complex social systems and develop the ability to identify, examine, and intentionally intercede to summon change (Daloz Parks, 2005).

After observing the course in its entirety, Daloz Parks (2005) interviewed leaders who took the course 3-10 years prior. While the interviewees gained different skills from their experiences based on their individual beliefs about leadership, the influence of the course was evident based on their own reflection and feedback Daloz Parks (2005) learned from people associated with each leader. Embedded in their reflections were terms that Heifetz used to educate his students about the unfolding dynamics throughout the course (Daloz-Parks, 2005). Furthermore, experiencing discomfort and even failure within the safety of Heifetz's course instilled confidence in interviewed leaders (Daloz Parks, 2005).

A critical component of the simulation process is having the participants reflect and debrief their experience (Baron & Parent, 2015; Adamson, 2015; Daloz Parks, 2005). Feedback can be provided, and any concerns can be addressed soon after participating in the simulation (Strickland & Welch, 2018). Through reflection and debriefing, participants can connect their behaviors to their developmental process (Baron & Parent, 2015). Participants can also learn from each other as they share their experiences (Strickland & Welch, 2018).

Challenge and Support

Resilience training and leadership development programs share in their use of simulations (Arnetz et al., 2009; Baron & Parent, 2015; Murphy & Johnson, 2011; Thompson & Dobbins, 2018; Vakili et al., 2014). Simulations and other developmental experiences have a more significant impact if they are mindful of two elements also commonly found in resilience training and leadership development programs: challenge and support (McCauley et al., 2010). Facilitating an environment that is both challenging and supportive encourages individuals to take risks, try new behaviors or approaches, give and receive feedback, and learn from experiences (Day et al., 2009; McCauley et al., 2010). Finding a balance of challenge and support provides an opportunity for individuals to reflect on their responses, internal and external resources, thoughts, and emotions (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2012; Riggio, 2008). Assisting individuals in determining how they respond to challenges or adversity is a critical component of developing resilience (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2016).

Challenges typically involve unusual situations, demanding goals, conflict, and adversity (McCauley et al., 2010). They are used to create a sense of instability. This

instability stems from people's skills have and the skills needed to accomplish a goal, which encourages people to step out of their comfort zones (Frankovelgia & Riddle, 2010; McCauley et al., 2010). The instability also encourages people to question their frameworks and approaches and consider adapting to achieve success. By experiencing challenges, individuals can develop what McCauley et al. (2010) refer to as an *inoculation effect*, which allows them to navigate similar situations more confidently in the future with their acquired coping mechanisms. Exposure to challenges can also strengthen a person's ability to adapt positively to unexpected adversity (Day, 2000).

Though creating a challenging environment is essential in facilitating development, support prevents individuals from feeling overwhelmed and defeated. Support allows individuals to feel comfortable in the struggle of development. Individuals can view themselves as worthy and capable as they reflect on mistakes to learn from them (McCauley et al., 2010). Support serves as a reinforcement for behaviors. Facilitators and coaches can help individuals focus on specific areas for development. They can help individuals identify barriers and help them determine ways of overcoming the barriers. Coaches communicate support through both constructive and positive feedback, the celebration of victories, and acknowledgment of setbacks. However, it is important to know that individuals need and want support presented differently; facilitators and coaches must determine how each individual should be supported (Frankovelgia & Riddle, 2010; McCauley et al., 2010). In resilience training and leadership development programs, practitioners use three development activities to establish a challenging and supportive environment: action learning, coaching, and intrapersonal reflection.

Action Learning

Action learning is a problem-solving practice in which individuals work in teams to overcome practical challenges in a safe environment and then reflect on their process (Day, 2000; Marquardt, 2011; Megheirkouni, 2016). An essential component of the action learning experience is a reflection to connect the group process to individual development (Day, 2000; Leonard, 2017). Within the framework of resilience training, action learning provides individuals with an opportunity to develop protective factors (First et al., 2018; Fletcher & Sarkar, 2016; Zimmerman et al., 2013). Marquardt, Leonard, Freedman, & Hill (2009) suggested that there is a positive relationship between engaging in action learning and adaptability.

First et al. (2018) described an example of a resilience intervention that emphasizes action learning. A group of participants receives a problem and works together to develop a solution unique to the strengths of each group member. The group must conceptualize the challenge and seek solutions that utilize both individual and group-level actions (First et al., 2018). As individuals contribute to the group's effort, they strengthen their own ability to solve problems in the future (Malekoff, 2014) and an encouraging group dynamic serves as social support, which is a buffer against the harmful effects of adversity (APA, 2010; Gartland et al., 2011; Grant & Kinman, 2012; Hartley, 2011; Lakey, 2013; Ledesma, 2014; Malekoff, 2014; Winwood et al., 2013).

Researchers estimate that as many as 77% of leadership development programs utilize action learning (Freedman & Leonard, 2013). Action learning, along with coaching and opportunities for feedback, provides realistic contexts in which individuals can practice leadership competencies as well as reflect on areas in which they may want

to pursue additional development (Ardichvili et al., 2016; Leonard, 2017). In the workplace, action learning is used as time and cost-efficient way to increase the abilities of leaders in an environment that mirrors the context of the organization. Action learning allows organizations to encourage continuous development and encourage adaptability as they encounter complex challenges (Carson, 2015; Marquardt, 2011).

Within higher education, Eich (2008) wrote about the impact of action learning on student experiences in leadership development programs. Students reported gaining self-efficacy, a voice, and an understanding that they are capable of overcoming doubts and challenges. They developed a broader perspective of what leadership is and how it is performed. Students reported that they learned about the dynamics of organizations and groups as well as how to develop a team. Students also gained time management and problem-solving skills through action learning (Eich, 2008).

Coaching

Coaching has been identified as an influential approach to development (Hezlett, 2016; Yip & Wilson, 2010). Researchers suggest that coaches should determine the appropriate level of challenge and support for each participant (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2016; Frankovelgia & Riddle, 2010; Mahoney et al., 2017; Zimmerman, 2013; Zimmerman et al., 2013). This determination reflects Sanford's (1967) theory on balancing challenge and support in the pursuit of student development. The theory has been applied to a variety of audiences, including employees and organizational leaders, to encourage development through coaching (Bird & Gornall, 2015; Blakey & Day, 2012; Fletcher & Sarkar, 2016; Hardy et al., 2010).

In finding the appropriate balance of challenge and support, researchers suggest that coaches should be aware of how participants respond to specific development activities, both in their psychological reactions and performance outcomes. If participants perceive the level of challenge as too advanced, they may feel discouraged from engaging and perform poorly, at which point coaches can provide positive reinforcement and modify the activity (Mahoney et al., 2017). When participants have achieved positive outcomes and exhibited growth, coaches can increase the level of challenge (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2016).

Coaches can challenge perspectives, support risk-taking, and encourage accountability towards progress. In order to do this work, a coach must have a trusting relationship with each participant. Within a trusting relationship, participants understand that coaches are providing a structured, safe environment in which development is encouraged (Frankovelia & Riddle, 2010). As coaches model these behaviors, participants in resilience training and leadership development programs begin to interact in similar ways with each other. As participants become more open and vulnerable with one another, a trusting learning environment emerges (King & Santana, 2010).

Resilience interventions that utilize an individualized coaching element tend to be more influential than those that influence group or computer-driven formats (Lester et al., 2018). Among the literature that examines the influence of coaching in resilience training, two studies described different influential coaching approaches. Sherlock-Storey et al. (2013) used a skills-based coaching approach. This method provides a highly-structured and directive style, with a particular skill or developmental focus and a shorter period of coaching. Grant et al. (2009) utilized a developmental approach, which

is more complex and evolving in style, and focused on creating an environment conducive for reflective learning.

In leadership development programs, coaches help participants hone in on specific competencies that need development (Ziskin, 2015). Coaches assist participants in reflecting on their identity as a leader and can support the development of self-efficacy and resilience (Grant & Cavanaugh, 2007; Lunsford & Brown, 2017; McCauley et al., 2010). Coaches encourage participants to align their thoughts, beliefs, and actions to achieve their goals (Solansky, 2010). In his study of influential student leadership development programs, Eich (2008) described the important role coaches play in modeling leadership competencies and facilitating positive growth.

An essential component of coaching is the ability to provide participants with meaningful feedback because it provides participants with insight into their abilities (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2016; Lacerenza et al., 2017). For the feedback to be meaningful, participants must be open-minded and willing to challenge. Participants may not act on feedback if their defense-mechanisms perceive the feedback as threatening or if they are fearful of change (Day, 2000). Within a supportive environment, feedback is viewed as pertinent and useful; participants feel that their strengths are respected and are willing to engage in development. Coaches can facilitate this environment by relating to each participant authentically, using self-disclosure, considering participants' needs, and withholding judgment (King & Santana, 2010).

Intrapersonal Reflection

Intrapersonal reflection provides an opportunity to engage in metacognition regarding beliefs, goals, and actions and develop a deeper understanding of oneself

through meaning-making (Merriam et al., 2007). Paired with feedback, it can serve as the motivation a participant needs to engage in the development process. Reflection can enhance growth from experiences (Day et al., 2009); it can be used to reveal the gaps between participants' current competencies and those they wish to develop or gain (McCauley et al., 2010). Reflection is more influential when it is structured, facilitated, and paired with feedback (Anseel et al., 2009; Hezlett, 2016). Participants' openness to growth and emotional stability also influences the degree to which reflection is impactful in modifying behaviors (Hezlett, 2016).

An individual's ability to evaluate and interpret the adversity they face, along with the personal and external resources they possess to handle the adversity, are critical components to any resilience training (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2012). An individual's characteristics and the facilitative environment established by the resilience training are important elements in encouraging individuals to develop this intrapersonal introspection. Furthermore, individuals should develop an awareness of the negative thoughts that make them susceptible to the adverse effects of stress and the choice they have in how they act in response to those negative thoughts (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2016).

Intrapersonal reflection assists participants in developing a sense of self-awareness (Day & Lance, 2004; McCauley et al., 2010). These exercises allow participants to derive meaning from their experiences and determine how their experiences contribute to their leadership development and identity (Allen & Shehane, 2016; Avolio & Luthans, 2006; Dominick et al., 2010). Participants can also learn more about their values, goals, needs, inspirations, blind spots, and how their strengths and limitations match the challenges they face (Allen & Shehane, 2016; Day & Lance, 2004;

McCauley et al., 2010). They can also learn about their influence on others, speculate how others perceive them, and evaluate the environmental factors that influenced their self-concept and others' perspectives (Day & Lance, 2004). Participants who engage in reflective leadership development experiences can also experience higher levels of self-efficacy (Holmberg et al., 2016).

Eich (2008) determined that through reflection, students who participated in leadership development programs were able to learn more about themselves, develop visions and goals for the future, and become more consistent in their decisions and actions. Students were able to identify their leadership style, strengths, and opportunities for growth. They were also able to develop self-confidence, specific skills, and experienced accelerated growth from reflecting on their simulation experience (Eich, 2008).

Experiential Learning

The outcomes of participating in action learning, coaching, and intrapersonal reflection, within a challenging yet supportive environment can be elucidated by experiential learning theory. Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory describes learning as a cyclical process involving four components: experiencing, reflecting, thinking, and acting. Feedback is used throughout the cycle to enhance learning (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). A constructivist approach to experiential learning emphasizes reflecting on experiences and challenging individuals' assumptions, while substantiating personally constructed knowledge (Fenwick, 2003; Kolb & Kolb, 2005). This approach provides flexibility for individuals to engage in the process of experiential learning with different learning styles (Kolb & Kolb, 2005).

Using a constructivist approach, Merriam et al. (2007) described how experiential learning could facilitate development in higher education. Educators, serving as coaches or mentors, can create an open and trusting environment. They guide students through problem-solving activities. Through these activities, students expose their assumptions and can engage in reflection. The educators can challenge these assumptions and encourage individuals to demonstrate competencies despite lacking confidence in their abilities (Merriam et al., 2007). A constructivist approach to experiential learning may provide an explanation of how leadership development activities of action learning, coaching, and intrapersonal reflection influence individual resilience.

Summary of Chapter

The literature review elaborated on the conceptualization of resilience as a process and its components: adversity and positive adaptation. The review describes ways in which leadership and resilience can be developed in traditional-aged college students. An emphasis is placed on the prominence of using simulations to develop resilience and leadership. Within a simulation, the literature review describes the importance of having a challenging yet supportive environment to encourage growth. The literature reveals that three specific activities are used to facilitate an environment that is both challenging and supportive: action learning, coaching, and intrapersonal reflection. The next chapter describes how case study methodology will be used to examine action learning, coaching, and intrapersonal reflection and their influence on individual resilience.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

This transcendental phenomenological study examined resilience in the context of the Collegiate Leadership Competition (CLC). The CLC provides a context for college students to engage in leadership development activities to prepare for a team-based competition. During the competition, each team member is required to lead his or her team through an action learning activity. The preparatory activities include elements of action learning, coaching, and intrapersonal reflection, which have been demonstrated to influence resilience. This chapter provides comprehensive information on the method employed for this research study. Included is a description of the research method; participant selection; data collection, coding, and analysis; my role as a researcher; validity/verification, and ethical considerations.

Transcendental Phenomenology

Phenomenology is utilized when researchers are interested in how individuals interact with and make meaning of a phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). While there are many types of phenomenology, transcendental or descriptive phenomenology is the form utilized for this study. Originated by Edmund Husserl, transcendental phenomenology seeks to understand how people experience abstract ideas in what Husserl refers to as *lifeworld*, which allows individuals to make meaning of the world through consciousness (Husserl, 1970). The focus of this type of phenomenology is on the relationship between a subject and an object (Vagle, 2018). The study sought to examine how past participants of the leadership program are living out the knowledge, skills, and abilities gained from

the CLC and whether the program and its main components influence individual resilience. The subjects were the past participants and the object was the application of knowledge, skills, and abilities gained from the CLC. The relationship between the past participants and the application of knowledge, skills, and abilities was represented by the potential influence on resilience (Vagle, 2018).

Through interviews, the researcher gained an understanding of the *intentionality* of resilience as it is revealed through individual responses. Intentionality represents the “relational connectedness between humans and the world (Vagle, 2018, p. 12). As the research gathered responses from each participant, she crafted both *textural* and *structural descriptions*. The textural description consists of what each person experienced, and the structural description refers to the conditions and context surrounding the experience. These elements make up the *essence* of each person’s experience (Creswell, 2013).

Participant Selection

A purposive sampling method was used for this study because the researcher was interested in a specific population within a specific leadership development program. Individuals who can be classified as traditional-aged college students at the time they participated in the program were the selected population for this study because of their exposure to adversity (e.g., Center for Collegiate Mental Health, 2015; Eisenberg et al., 2013; First et al., 2018; Galatzer-Levy & Bonanno, 2013). Leadership development programs are frequently found within higher education institutions (Allen & Shehane, 2016; Avolio et al., 2009; Dugan et al., 2009; Lunsford & Brown, 2017; Rosch & Caza, 2012). Higher education institutions are trying to enhance college student leadership

development and resilience in order to better prepare students entering the workforce (Bowers et al., 2016; Hinchliffe & Holly, 2011; Lunsford & Brown, 2017; Murphy & Johnson, 2011; Rosch & Villaneuva, 2016; Turner et al., 2017). However, there is a lack of research determining specific outcomes of participants who experience these programs (Avolio & Hannah, 2008; Avolio et al., 2009; Leppin et al., 2014; Meinert, 2014).

The CLC was the leadership development program selected for this study. Founded in 2015, the CLC was created to provide college students with a practice field to implement acquired leadership skills and knowledge. The program does not indicate resilience as a learning outcome, but this study investigated how activities within the CLC as a leadership development program influence individual resilience. The program consists of a practice season (from January to April of each year) in which teams from higher education institutions throughout the United States of America meet regularly to learn terms associated with leadership and participate in activities that reinforce the terms through experiential learning. Each team consists of no more than six participants because the program wants each student to receive individualized attention towards their potential for growth. In April, each team participates in competition within one of six regions. During the competition, each member of a team is asked to lead an activity. The teams are judged on their ability to complete each activity's objective and the process they use as a team in completing the objective.

The CLC was selected because it emphasizes the three leadership development activities designated for this study: action learning, coaching, and intrapersonal reflection. The CLC utilizes a simulation format to provide participants with opportunities to practice leadership competencies. Simulations are used by both

leadership development and resilience training programs to encourage growth (Arnetz et al., 2009; Baron & Parent, 2015; Murphy & Johnson, 2011; Thompson & Dobbins, 2018; Vakili et al., 2014). The simulation is used to emulate realistic organizational obstacles such as time constraints, the need to meet certain performance measures, team cooperation, and competition (Baron & Parent, 2015).

The program also encourages individualized challenge and support for each participant, elements commonly found in leadership development and resilience training programs (Bowers et al., 2016; Fletcher & Sarkar, 2016; Ledesma, 2014; Lunsford & Brown, 2017; Mahoney et al., 2017; McCauley et al., 2010; Rutter, 1987; Zimmerman, 2013; Zimmerman et al., 2013). Participants are presented with new challenges each week of training as they are assigned action learning activities that must be solved as a team. After the activity concludes, teams are asked to process the role that each member played in their effort to solve the problem. Coaches guide each training session to provide additional feedback for each team member. Then, during the competition, participants experience new activities within a competitive format, which serves as an additional form of adversity. The program concludes when each team congregates to reflect on their growth as individual participants and as a team.

When conducting phenomenological research, Creswell (2013) recommends interviewing 10-15 individuals. Fifteen individuals from different higher education institutions who participated in the 2019 program were selected for this study –interviewing individuals after they participated in the program allowed the researcher to explore how the phenomenon of resilience was actualized in an individual’s lifeworld. Studying fifteen individuals from different higher education institutions allowed for a

variety of perspectives but also maintained the feasibility of completing the data collection process, and selecting participants who participated in the most recent occurrence of the program allowed individuals to recall their experiences more easily than those who participated several years ago. This type of sampling strategy is identified as *criterion sampling* (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Data Collection and Instrumentation

Quantitative data was collected using surveys consisting of an instrument that assesses resilience. Individuals who participated in the 2019 program year were individually interviewed. The interviews provided rich, qualitative data that described the ways in which specific aspects of the CLC and the program overall were influential regarding their resilience. The data collected from the surveys, interviews with the past participants, and the researcher's notes provided different data points from different forms of evidence, which allowed the researcher to use triangulation as a verification strategy. Collecting multiple data points also created a more holistic understanding of influences on resilience through different sources of information (Vagle, 2018).

Surveys

Because resilience can be hard to observe and tends to be an internal process, researchers have identified self-report surveys as a mechanism for measuring resilience in individuals (Lester et al., 2018). The survey was distributed to each person who participated in the study. The survey contained the following items: name, age, year in college (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior), higher education institution, and items from the *Resiliency Scale for Young Adults* (Prince-Embury et al., 2017). Individuals

were provided a link to an online survey through Qualtrics after they signed a consent form.

Resiliency Scale for Young Adults (RSYA) (Prince-Embury et al., 2017)

The RSYA was developed to determine personal resilience in college students ranging in age from 18 to 25 (Prince-Embury, 2006, 2007). The scale is based on Prince-Embury's (2006, 2007) *Three Factor Model of Personal Resiliency*. The model was created based on a broad literature review and Masten's (2001, 2014) proposition that resilience stems from fundamental developmental functions. Prince-Embury's (2006, 2007) *Three Factor Model* was originally operationalized through the *Resilience Scale for Children and Adolescents (RSCA)* and supported through comparing factor structures for normative samples of children and adolescents (Prince-Embury & Courville, 2008a). It has also been supported through analysis of measurement invariance regarding gender and age (Prince-Embury & Courville, 2008b). The RSCA and resulting RSYA were both created with the intention of contributing to research regarding longitudinal development of resilience (Prince-Embury et al., 2017).

The three factors in Prince-Embury's (2006, 2007, 2013, 2014) model are *Sense of Mastery*, *Sense of Relatedness*, and *Emotional Reactivity*. Sense of Mastery refers to competency and self-efficacy. This developmental function is guided by natural curiosity and possession of problem-solving skills. It includes a positive view of the future in relation to oneself and adaptability regarding the adjustment of oneself and one's behavior when appropriate. Sense of Relatedness includes the ability to trust, perception of possessing a support system, and ease with and tolerance of others. Emotional Reactivity refers to the rate and intensity of an individual's negative emotional response

to adversity. Convergent and divergent validity have been determined for all three factors (Prince-Embury, 2006, 2007, 2013, 2014).

Each factor encompasses several subscales. Sense of Mastery includes Optimism, Self-Efficacy, and Adaptability. Sense of Relatedness is composed of Trust, Comfort With Others, Support and Tolerance. Emotional Reactivity includes Sensitivity, Recovery, and Impairment. The RSYA measures the three factors separately and in relation to one another. By using three factors to measure personal resilience, the RSYA represents a differentiated assessment of resilience as opposed to scales that produce only a single score (Prince-Embury et al., 2017).

When developing the RSYA from the RSCA, supplementary items regarding adaptability were added that were more appropriate for young adults, such as viewing hardships as opportunities for growth (Prince-Embury et al., 2017). Researchers piloted two versions of the RSYA with college students and compared the results with the original RSCA. The researchers determined that the factor structures of both versions were consistent with the original RSCA and the alpha coefficients for the scales and subscales were suitable (Saklofske et al., 2013).

The second phase of developing the RSYA involved adult-centric wording but remained consistent with the constructs of the RSCA with additional adaptability items. After conducting an exploratory factor analysis of the items and subscales, all but nine of the new items were removed as well as twenty-three of the original RSCA items, resulting in a 50-item scale known as the RSYA. Each of the ten subscales has five items on a five-point Likert scale (0 = *never* to 4 = *almost always*). The items of each subscales

are mixed to reduce the potential influence of the response set (Prince-Embury et al., 2017).

The three-factor scale and eight of the subscales meet the criteria for the assumption of normality (Prince-Embury et al., 2017). The Support subscale was moderately negatively skewed (-.66), and the Recovery subscale was moderately positively skewed (.87), but Prince-Embury et al., 2017 suggest that these results are still acceptable regarding normalcy. Coefficient alpha values were calculated for the three factors; the results ranged from .89 to .92. The coefficient alpha values for the subscales ranged from .75 to .87, with the exception of the Tolerance subscale, which received a .65. Researchers have yet to determine if this is because of the sample, age group, or a weakness in the instrument. Reliability analyses confirm that the three factors and ten subscales achieve a high level of internal consistency (Prince-Embury et al., 2017).

Convergent and discriminant validity was established using the *Psychological Flourishing Scale*, *Satisfaction with Life Scale*, *Trait Emotional Intelligence*, and *Depression Anxiety Stress Scales*. Sense of Mastery, in particular the Optimism subscale, is strongly related to student's self-reported flourishing and sense of well-being. Sense of Mastery and Sense of Relatedness and their subscales are strongly related with emotional intelligence. The Emotional Reactivity factor and subscales are strongly correlated with depression, anxiety, and stress (Prince-Embury et al., 2017).

Wilson et al. (2019) conducted a cross-cultural validation study using RSYA with Canadian and Italian students. The researchers also sought to examine test-retest reliability of the instrument (Wilson et al., 2019). Test-retest reliability was tested over a 3-month period of time. Wilson et al. (2019) reported that the Canadian sample

demonstrated good test-retest reliability, though the correlation between Time 1 and Time 2 for Sense of Mastery was slightly lower with Sense of Mastery $r = .67$, Sense of Relatedness $r = .79$, and Emotional Reactivity $r = .76$.

Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were utilized to gather individual perspectives from each past participant. The interviews contained open-ended questions to encourage participants to provide as much information from their experience as possible. Interviews provide personal perspectives on experiences. The researcher also kept in mind that the interview questions may have influenced the participants, interpretations of the responses may be biased, and the participants may have provided answers they believed the researcher wanted to hear (Yin, 2014). The researcher systematically assessed and iterated the questions to acquire data that was more accurate. The semi-structured interviews contained established questions but also allowed the researcher to ask clarifying questions if necessary. Interviews were conducted virtually based on the availability of each participant. Interviews were recorded to create accurate transcriptions. The researcher also took her own notes during the interviews. Vagle (2018) recommends that the researcher not take detailed notes but to write down words and phrases that seem important and then revisit these notes during the data analysis process.

Data Coding and Analysis

Data coding and analysis occurred throughout the data collection phase. Data was coded and analyzed on an individual participant level. In conducting a high-quality

analysis, the researcher considered all data points as evidence, addressed reasonable rival interpretations, and clearly identified the most significant aspects of the case (Yin, 2014). Data was represented through narratives, tables, and figures (Creswell, 2013). The researcher also considered self-report bias as a potential influence in participants' responses to both of the surveys, as well as the interview questions.

Surveys

The surveys were used to show a quantitative measure of resilience. SPSS software was utilized to conduct quantitative data analysis. The data was tested for normality. The descriptive statistics include the mean, standard deviations, skewness, and kurtosis of the data.

Interviews

Interviews were transcribed by a transcription service. Direct transcription allowed the researcher to include detailed descriptions to support the findings. To organize the interview information, the researcher created a database. This improved the reliability of the research because it allowed the researcher to track and organize different data points (Baxter & Jack, 2008). The researcher read each interview transcription several times and highlighted significant phrases or statements that described how each individual experienced the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). From these statements, the researcher developed what Giorgi (2009) refers to as *meaning units*. The meaning units were used to write the textural and structural descriptions. These descriptions contributed to the *essence* of the phenomenon, a core component of Husserl's (1970) transcendental phenomenology (Creswell, 2013; Vagle, 2018).

Giorgi's (2009) approach to transcendental phenomenology served as the underlying structure guiding the analytical process. Vagle (2018) encourages this as a method for verification because it provides a guide of how the researcher developed intentionality, intended meanings, and relationships among meaning units. Giorgi (2009) echoes Husserl's (1970) emphasis on determining the essence of a phenomenon but allows for a bit more flexibility in establishing *invariant meanings* which contribute to the structure of a phenomenon. Invariant meanings are statements that do not change despite varying contexts (Vagle, 2018).

Under Giorgi's (2009) process of analysis, all data points must be analyzed. While ambiguities can be noted, Giorgi (2009) discourages the researcher from trying to interpret these ambiguities. During the analysis process, the researcher read the content of each interview as a whole to get a sense of the complete description. Then, the researcher established the meaning units by taking a participant's lifeworld responses and formulating phenomenological expressions. During this portion of the analysis, Giorgi (2009) emphasizes the need for the researcher to engage in phenomenological reduction, or bracketing, to prevent their own experiences from influencing the researcher's reaction to the participant's responses. From the meaning units, the larger textural and structural descriptions are developed. This process establishes structure and invariant meanings (Giorgi, 2009).

Role of the Researcher

A unique characteristic of Husserl's (1970) transcendental phenomenology is phenomenological reduction or *epoché*. This process requires that the researcher suspend judgment and preconceptions to allow a phenomenon to be studied within the

consciousness of each individual participant (Vagle, 2018). As someone who has been involved in youth leadership for the past fifteen years, I am aware that I may have a vested interest in seeing a leadership development program have an impact on its participants. I have been a participant, as well as a facilitator for a youth leadership conference. I have also participated in the CLC as a coach, but I did not utilize any teams or participants in the study with whom I have had any previous interactions. I also refrained from participating as a coach in the last several years of the program to clearly distinguish my role as a researcher in this process. I engaged in bracketing to critically examine my interview questions and findings to allow each participant to share their experiences without the possibility of me inserting my own bias or assumptions about the leadership development process.

Verification

Through the research design, data collection, data analysis, and final editing stages of the dissertation process, the researcher established construct, internal, and external validity, as well as reliability. During the research design phase, the researcher utilized resilience theory and leadership development theory to establish external validity. Resilience is the process by which an individual experiences adversity and uses abilities and resources to overcome that adversity (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2013; Huang & Lin, 2013; Jackson et al., 2007; Li & Yang, 2016; Masten, 2001; Richardson, 2002; Turner et al., 2017). Leadership development is intrapersonal growth in knowledge, skills, and competencies relevant to functioning as a leader (Day, 2000; Day & Dragoni, 2015; Hezlett, 2016).

The data collection and analysis phases also contributed to the study's validity and reliability. The researcher utilized several strategies to establish validity. The survey responses, interview transcriptions, and researcher notes established triangulation (Creswell, 2013). The researcher engaged in peer review to explore other meanings of responses as well as member checking to ensure that each participant's responses were accurately represented (Creswell, 2013). Furthermore, descriptions gained from participant responses were rich with details to determine transferability to other settings based on shared characteristics (Erlandson et al., 1993). The researcher ensured construct validity by using multiple forms of evidence (surveys and interviews from each participant) and creating a chain of evidence for each participant. During the data analysis phase, the researcher addressed internal validity by demonstrating the path of intentionality established through Giorgi's (2009) data analysis techniques.

Ethical Considerations

There were several steps taken to ensure that qualitative research was conducted in an ethical way. First, before any data collection, the researcher collected participants' informed consent and emphasized the voluntary aspect of the study (Creswell, 2013). Completion of the Institutional Review Board application through Eastern University ensured that the researcher gained informed consent from all participants. When considering the potential for harm (Creswell, 2013), I communicated the purpose of the study through the consent form to avoid deception and prevented participants from experiencing maltreatment; participants were permitted to leave the study at any time.

When gathering data from human subjects, whether qualitative or quantitative, it is important to keep the data private and confidential (Creswell, 2013). Participants were

assured that contributing to the study would not put them in an objectionable position and their names were changed in the findings report. Creswell (2013) also encourages researchers to have people outside of the study consider the data findings. While analyzing the data, I reported my findings to several colleagues who could help identify different explanations and offer suggestions for data analysis. I also asked the participants to engage in member checking which ensured that the findings were reflective of what they said during the interview. A final report of the information was provided to all participants and organizers of the Collegiate Leadership Competition. The report can assist individuals in determining what may have influenced their resilience and assist the organizers of the Collegiate Leadership Competition in developing an understanding of the influence their program has on college students.

Summary

The phenomenological study sought to understand the influence of a leadership development program on individual resilience, specifically by experiencing simulated leadership development activities that emphasize action learning, coaching, and intrapersonal reflection. The researcher utilized interviews and one-on-one interviews for data collection. Consent forms were used to ensure participants understood the scope and purpose of the researcher as well as their rights before, during, and after participating. The interviews were transcribed electronically with permission from the subjects. Quantitative data was analyzed to determine the descriptive statistics of the participants. Qualitative data were analyzed by finding themes regarding the interpersonal and intrapersonal skills obtained and the ways in which individuals exhibited growth through

application of these skills. In the following Chapter, the researcher provides the findings of the study.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

In this phenomenological study, the researcher's intent was to provide an opportunity for individuals who had participated in the most recent competition year of the Collegiate Leadership Competition to share their experiences with the program, specifically as it pertained to particular leadership development activities within a simulated environment: action learning, coaching, and intrapersonal reflection. The purpose was to understand each individual's unique experiences within the program and how their experiences have influenced their lives after participating as it relates to their ability to demonstrate resilience. From gaining an understanding of their experiences within the program and its influence on their lives after participating, the researcher sought to identify common themes. The Resiliency Scale for Young Adults (Prince-Embury et al., 2017) provided an additional data point and framework to analyze resilience. The following chapter consists of four sections: an overview of the research process, an introduction to each participant, an analysis of the quantitative data, and the qualitative findings.

The researcher interviewed fifteen participants in September 2020. Before participating in the interviews, which were conducted remotely through an online meeting platform, each person signed a consent form and completed an online survey consisting of their name, higher education institution that they attended while participating in the Collegiate Leadership Competition, their year of college at the time of participation (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior) and 50 items from the *Resiliency Scale for Young Adults* (Prince-Embury et al., 2017). During each interview, the

researcher kept a log of notes and followed up with any participants, via e-mail, with whom she needed additional information.

The semi-structured interviews consisted of seven standard questions with the opportunity for the researcher to ask for clarification. Participants were asked what they recalled of their experience in the CLC (preparation, competition, post-competition activities). They were asked how each of the three designated leadership activities (action learning, coaching, and intrapersonal reflection) influenced their individual growth. The researcher inquired about the skills, abilities, and knowledge participants gained from their experiences in the program and opportunities to apply the skills, abilities, and knowledge. Participants were asked to reflect on how recent events have influenced their acquired skills, ability, and knowledge. The researcher also inquired about the influence of the program on their current daily routine and the participants' ability to demonstrate resilience (see Appendix A).

After completing fifteen interviews, the transcriptions were printed and reviewed by the researcher. Responses to each question were summarized and entered into an Excel spreadsheet. After reading through all of the transcripts and summaries, the researcher coded significant statements and made a note of the codes represented by each question. Then, the researcher utilized MaxQDA to electronically log the codes from each response and condense some of the more repetitive codes. Each code and its corresponding excerpts were printed and condensed into themes. The researcher wrote each code with its corresponding themes onto large index cards to begin to study the relationships. The large index cards of themes were studied in conjunction with their corresponding interview excerpts to construct both textural and structural descriptions. From these

descriptions, the essence of developing resilience was constructed (Giorgi, 2009). To contribute to the validity of the findings, the researcher had peers review unmarked transcriptions to determine their own codes and themes. Participants were also asked to engage in member checking to ensure that they were represented accurately by the researcher.

Participant Summaries

All individuals who took part in the study participated in the 2019 Collegiate Leadership Competition program year. Thirteen different institutions were represented from across the United States of America with two instances of two participants representing the same team. All participants were undergraduate students, which the researcher believed would imply that they were traditionally-aged. However, one participant was of a non-traditional age (50 years old); the rest of the participants were traditionally-aged. Three individuals were in their freshman year at the time of participation, four were sophomores, four were in their junior year, and four were in their senior year. The study had no specific requirements for having a certain number of participants in each year of college because the sample was not stratified. Each participant was given a pseudonym and other identifiable information, such as specific names of higher education institutions, was omitted in order to uphold confidentiality. The participant summaries were created based on information from the surveys and interviews.

Olive

Olive participated in the CLC as a junior. Of her experience in the program, she recalled weekly meetings consisting of activities that followed a curriculum that included

leadership terms. During the weekly meetings, Olive recalled that the team was encouraged to think of multiple solutions for each activity. She viewed the competition as an opportunity to apply what was learned during their weekly meetings. After participating, Olive reported that she took a risk by starting a student organization that involved people of different backgrounds engaging in dialogue. When reflecting on how the program influenced her development, she reported, “I definitely encourage myself and others to think outside the box” and the “need to bring myself back and look at the big picture rather than narrowing my viewpoint.” Olive has since graduated, obtained a job, and is currently pursuing a Masters in Business Administration.

Within the RSYA, she scored a 41 out of 60 on *Sense of Mastery*. Of the 41 points, her scores were similar among the three subscales: 14 out of 20 on *Optimism*, 14 out of 20 on *Self-efficacy*, and 13 out of 20 on *Adaptability*. She may be slightly more likely to utilize optimism or self-efficacious beliefs to help her demonstrate resilience than through adaptability. Regarding her *Sense of Relatedness* factor, she received an overall score of 59 out of 80. Among this factor’s sub-scales, Olive scored a 14 out of 20 on *Trust*, 15 out of 20 on *Access to Support*, 16 out of 20 on *Comfort with others*, and 14 out of 20 on *Tolerance*. Her level of comfort with others and perceptions of access to support may help her demonstrate resilience more than trust or tolerance. Olive’s *Emotional Reactivity* score was a 21 out of 60. Her highest subscale was an 8 out of 20 on *Sensitivity*, then a 7 out of 20 on *Impairment*, and 6 out of 20 on *Recovery*. While all of these scores are low, Olive’s sensitivity to adversity may influence her ability to be resilient.

Greg

Greg participated in the CLC as a freshman. While his team met twice a week, he was only able to make one meeting each week, and for that he sometimes felt like he was a detriment to his team regarding his personal contribution. He could not remember how his team ranked in the competition because the team had decided to focus on the overall experience as their opportunity for growth. From his experience in the CLC, Greg formed strong connections to both of his coaches and felt driven to pursue other leadership opportunities throughout his college career. He felt as though the experience initiated his leadership journey; he reported wanting to make a positive impact on his institution:

Having a personal connection with the faculty and staff on campus makes me feel welcome and gives me a sense of purpose. I like to feel intentional when I'm [on campus]. I like to feel like I am impacting people but it's hard to feel like you're impacting someone if someone never impacted you. So having [the coaching experience] allowed me to be that for someone else.

After participating in the CLC, Greg obtained a position as an orientation leader for a freshman leadership program and was featured in several campus promotional videos pertaining to leadership.

On the RSYA, Greg scored a 48 out of 60 on *Sense of Mastery*. Greg's scores on two of the subscales within *Sense of Mastery* were much higher than the third subscale. He scored a 17 out of 20 on *Optimism* and an 18 out of 20 on *Self-efficacy*. He only scored a 13 out of 20 on *Adaptability*. Therefore, Greg might be much more likely to utilize optimism and self-efficacy when encountering adversity than be able to adapt. With an overall score of 45 out of 80 *Sense of Relatedness*, Greg scored a 13 out of 20 on

both *Access to support* and *Comfort with others*. He scored a 12 out of 20 on *Tolerance* and only a 7 out of 20 on *Trust*. While he may trust only a few individuals, he still seems to feel comfort with others, believe he has access to support, and demonstrate tolerance for interpersonal conflict. Greg's *Emotional Reactivity* score was a 32 out of 60. Two of his sub-scale scores (*Recovery* and *Impairment*) within *Emotional Reactivity* may result in his inability to demonstrate resilience more so than the third subscale (*Sensitivity*). He scored a 16 out of 20 on *Recovery*, a 10 out of 20 on *Impairment*, and a 6 out of 20 on *Sensitivity*. *Recovery* refers to the amount of time Greg needs to recover when he encounters diversity (based on his responses, he may be upset for a day or week) and *Impairment* refers to how encountering adversity influences his ability to function. Greg is less likely to demonstrate emotional sensitivity when he interacts with adversity.

Mona

Mona was a sophomore at the time she participated in the CLC. Mona identified that the CLC activities were reflective of her teammates' diverse strengths. She reported feeling very anxious leading up to the competition because she understood the program to present her with novel activities and situations that encouraged her to think innovatively. Her team obtained first place; she attributed that to her team members' varying strengths and their ability to balance each other's good and bad qualities. Mona recalled bonding with her team in the hotel the night before the competition: "We got to know so much about each other. That really helped us push the next day." She stressed the importance of coming together outside of the formal practice sessions as a way to strengthen a team's dynamic. Mona reported that since participating in the CLC, she has been much more

aware of her ability to be an uplifting member of a team and to take on the role of a listener rather than needing her own voice to be heard.

Regarding her RSYA results, Mona scored a 37 out of 60 on *Sense of Mastery*. Among the subscales of *Sense of Mastery*, Mona scored a 10 out of 20 on *Optimism*, 13 out of 20 on *Self-efficacy*, and 14 out of 20 on *Adaptability*. Mona may be more inclined to utilize self-efficacious beliefs or adaptability to overcome adversity than have an optimistic perspective. In *Sense of Relatedness*, her overall score was a 48 out of 80. She scored 12 out of 20 on *Trust*, 14 out of 20 on *Access to support*, 13 out of 20 on *Comfort with others*, and 9 out of 20 on *Tolerance*. Mona's perceptions of her access to support, along with her comfort and trust in others may be more helpful in demonstrating resilience than her tolerance for interpersonal conflict. On *Emotional Reactivity*, Mona scored a 24 out of 60. She scored 8 out of 20 on *Sensitivity*, 6 out of 20 on *Recovery*, and 10 out of 20 on *Impairment*. While Mona may not exhibit emotional sensitivity or take long to recover after encountering adversity, her level of functioning may be impaired.

Winnie

Winnie participated in the CLC as a junior. Her team consisted of leaders of various student organizations, but despite having strong, competitive personalities, Winnie reported that her teammates had prominent respect for the team dynamic and individual strengths. During the competition, she experienced an interpersonal conflict with a teammate she did not feel was listening to her when assigning her a role she did not believe she could complete successfully. Winnie reported that this activity was influential on her development for two reasons: it reminded her of the importance of communicating clearly despite feeling negative emotions (something she said has been a

struggle for her since childhood). Winnie said, “I think what I learned was that I needed to find a way to better communicate without showing my frustration.” Additionally, when serving as a leader, she considers the level of comfort her followers have with their assigned roles. Winnie is now in a graduate program halfway across the country from her home, feeling vulnerable and outside of her comfort zone socially and academically.

On the RSYA, Winnie scored 55 out of 60 on *Sense of Mastery*. Her subscale scores on this factor were a 17 out of 20 on *Optimism*, 20 out of 20 on *Self-efficacy*, and 18 out of 20 on *Adaptability*. Winnie’s high scores on all three subscales imply that she can utilize her optimism, self-efficacy, or her adaptability when encountering adversity. Her score of 56 out of 80 on *Sense of Relatedness*, breaks down to subscale scores of 10 out of 20 on *Trust*, 15 out of 20 on *Access to support*, 11 out of 20 on *Comfort with others*, and 20 out of 20 on *Tolerance*. She is much more likely to call on her support system and confidently navigate interpersonal conflict than trust or find comfort in others. Winnie scored a 6 out of 60 on *Emotional Reactivity*, with a 5 out of 20 on the *Sensitivity* subscale and a 1 out of 20 on *Impairment*. Winnie is not likely to be influenced by emotions when she attempting to demonstrate resilience.

Julie

Julie was a sophomore at the time that she participated in the CLC. Julie stated that she valued the weekly meetings with her team the most out of every aspect of the program. She reported that the meetings provided her with time to develop relationships with her peers, think about solutions to problems, and apply them to situations outside of the program. When asked about the influence of action learning on her growth, she said, “It’s a part I value the most because I had the opportunity to spend a lot of time with my

peers and think about the solutions.” Julie wrote a reflection paper directly after participating in the CLC, which she subsequently shared with the researcher. Julie identified two significant areas of personal growth. She gained the ability to regulate her emotions when faced with stressful situations: “I became more calm in trying to find a solution without losing my mind” and motivation to ask questions to gain clarity in an effort to solve a problem more efficiently.

On the RSYA, Julie received a 40 out of 60 on *Sense of Mastery* with subscale scores of 10 out of 20 on *Optimism*, 14 out of 20 on *Self-efficacy*, and 16 out of 20 on *Adaptability*. Julie may be more likely to demonstrate adaptability or believe in her abilities than utilize a positive mindset. Julie’s score on *Sense of Relatedness* was a 58 out of 80 consisting of a 13 out of 20 on *Trust*, 16 out of 20 on *Access to support*, 14 out of 20 on *Comfort with others*, and 15 out of 20 on *Tolerance*. Because Julie’s scores are relatively even between the subscales, she is not less or more likely to call on one subscale over another regarding her interpersonal skills. Julie scored a 23 out of 60 on *Emotional Reactivity* with a 7 out of 20 on *Sensitivity*, 8 out of 20 on *Recovery*, and 8 out of 20 on *Impairment*. Similarly to her subscale scores in *Sense of Relatedness*, Julie’s scores within *Emotional Reactivity* portray that she is not more or less likely to be negatively impacted by sensitivity than she is by her ability to recover or be impaired by adversity.

Dana

Dana was in her sophomore year at the time of her CLC participation. She was not initially part of the inaugural team to represent her institution, but when someone dropped out, her friend recommended that she join the team. Dana emphasized the

diversity of her teammates and attributed this factor to their success and camaraderie. She shared that her coach was a positive role model for resilience when the team did not achieve a goal. Dana said, “He [gave feedback] in a way that made us feel like we still accomplished something in the end.” Dana recalled a specific activity that brought her outside of her comfort zone but also felt a strong desire to not disappoint her team. This pushed her to put forth her best effort in completing the activity. Since participating, Dana has taken on a leadership position within her sorority, an orientation leader position, and then promoted to become manager of a group of orientation leaders.

Dana scored 57 out of 60 on *Sense of Mastery*. Her subscale scores within *Sense of Mastery* are all strong with a 20 out of 20 on *Optimism*, 18 out of 20 on *Self-efficacy*, and 19 out of 20 on *Adaptability*, which indicates she can utilize any of these characteristics to exhibit resilience. She scored 66 out of 80 on *Sense of Relatedness* with a 15 out of 20 on *Trust*, 15 out of 20 on *Access to support*, 19 out of 20 on *Comfort with others*, and a 17 out of 20 on *Tolerance*. Dana is slightly more likely to utilize the comfort she finds in her relationships to overcome adversity than trust, a support system or tolerance for interpersonal conflict. Dana’s *Emotional Reactivity* score was a 12 out of 60 with 5 out of 20 for *Sensitivity*, 4 out of 20 on *Recovery*, and 3 out of 20 on *Impairment*. Her low scores on all three subscales imply Dana is unlikely to react emotionally when interacting with adversity.

Gretchen

Gretchen participated in the CLC as a senior. Furthermore, Gretchen was considered a non-traditional student, which gave her pause when considering participation on a team of 18 and 19-year-olds. However, Gretchen reported that the

coaches emphasized team-building, trust, and communication. She said, “We had a lot of discussions about what it means to trust your teammates and how do we relate to one another if there should be a disagreement or differing opinions about how to take leadership.” She stated that the debrief after each activity was an important part of the team’s development as well as her individual development. She also recalled that her team emphasized identifying and relying on the strengths of each leader and celebrating small victories throughout the experience. Gretchen has since used aspects of the CLC curriculum in her own youth leadership work.

On the RSYA, Gretchen scored 53 out of 60 on *Sense of Mastery* with subscale scores of 20 out of 20 on *Optimism*, 18 out of 20 on *Self-efficacy*, and 15 out of 20 on *Adaptability*. While all of these scores may lead Gretchen to utilize these characteristics to demonstrate resilience when overcoming resilience, she may be more inclined to utilize her optimistic outlook or her belief in her abilities than her adaptability. Gretchen scored a 75 out of 80 on *Sense of Relatedness*. Her subscale scores within this factor were 17 out of 20 on *Trust*, 20 out of 20 on *Access to support*, 19 out of 20 *Comfort with others*, and 19 out of 20 on *Tolerance*. Gretchen’s scores on all of the subscales and her overall high score on *Sense of Relatedness* speaks to the likelihood that she would use her relationships, support systems, and external resources in overcoming hardship. Gretchen’s score on *Emotional Reactivity* was 12 out of 60, with a 6 out of 20 on *Sensitivity*, 1 out of 20 on *Recovery*, and 5 out of 20 on *Impairment*. Her low scores on the subscales imply that Gretchen is not likely to respond emotionally when she experiences adversity.

Polly

Polly participated in the CLC as a junior. She reported that the entire program was out of her comfort zone: “I’m going to push myself out of my comfort zone. I’m going to attend these practices, but I’m not going to compete.” However, another member was unable to attend competition; Polly stepped in to fill the position. She stated that she felt anxious, but prepared for the experience. Polly spoke about several activities at the competition that contributed to the group’s growth and her growth as an individual. During one activity, there was a chance that Polly’s team would be disqualified, and yet the team maintained a positive outlook and encouraging the team member at fault. She reported that the activity she was selected to lead emphasized her weakest leadership attribute: the ability to maintain a calm demeanor when under a time constraint. However, she persevered with the intention of not letting her team down and was surprised to hear that the judges did not view her as anxious during the activity. After participating in the CLC, she became president of her a cappella group and also manages a group of student employees.

On the RSYA, Polly scored 56 out of 60 on *Sense of Mastery*. Her subscales scores within this factor were 20 out of 20 on *Optimism*, 19 out of 20 on *Self-efficacy*, and 17 out of 20 on *Adaptability*. Polly can likely utilize an optimistic perspective, confidence in her own abilities, or her capacity to adapt when encountering adversity. Polly’s 76 out of 80 on *Sense of Relatedness* stems from a 19 out of 20 on *Trust*, 18 out of 20 on *Access to support*, 20 out of 20 on *Comfort with others*, and a 19 out of 20 on *Tolerance*. Polly’s high scores across the subscales allow her to recognize her support system, external resources, and relationships in demonstrating resilience. A 16 out of 60

on *Emotional Reactivity* stems from Polly receiving a 6 out of 20 on *Sensitivity*, 4 out of 20 on *Recovery*, and 6 out of 20 on *Impairment*. Polly's low scores on the subscales and overall factor lead the researcher to believe she is not likely influenced by her emotions when she experiences hardship.

Tess

Tess took part in the CLC as a student returning to higher education to take a few courses to complete her Certificate in Public Accounting. She had spent a few years in the workforce and opted to participate in the CLC as part of a leadership certificate. Tess said, "[I] kind of already knew what [I was] going to be doing [in the workforce]. So [the CLC was] a different way to challenge [myself]." She recalled the camaraderie experienced by the team at the competition and how the program encouraged individuals to confront uncomfortable situations, whether through interpersonal conflict or challenging activities, in a safe environment.

Regarding her RSYA results, Tess scored a 51 out of 60 on *Sense of Mastery*, consisting of an 18 out of 20 on *Optimism*, 17 out of 20 on *Self-efficacy*, and 16 out of 20 on *Adaptability*. The close scores among the subscales imply that Tess is just as likely to rely on her ability to adapt, than she is to believe in her ability to overcome adversity and demonstrate optimism. Tess's score on *Sense of Relatedness* was a 74 out of 80 with a 17 out of 20 on *Trust*, 19 out of 20 on *Access to support*, 20 out of 20 on *Comfort with others*, and 18 out of 20 on *Tolerance*. Overall, Tess scored higher on *Sense of Relatedness* than *Sense of Mastery*, which means she may be more likely to utilize her relationships, support systems, and external resources to overcome adversity than her internal resources. Tess scored an 18 out of 60 on *Emotional Reactivity* with subscales

scores of 7 out of 20 on *Sensitivity*, 5 out of 20 on *Recovery*, and 6 out of 20 on *Impairment*. While Tess may be slightly more likely to exhibit sensitivity when interacting with adversity, she is not very likely to be influenced by her emotions.

Nancy

Nancy participated in the CLC as a junior. She reported feeling very hesitant about participating due to undiagnosed ADHD and moderate to severe anxiety. However, her favorite instructor recommended she participate, and Nancy trusted her instructor's intentions. Nancy said, "It was a new—interface with leadership training. It was an area taught to us and drilled into us as though it was a sports team." When recalling her experience at the competition, Nancy identified several negative factors that challenged her team but reported that the preparation of the program allowed the team to persevere through the challenges and maintain a positive outlook. After participating in the CLC, Nancy began working at a makeup store. She reported that her supervisors viewed her as having managerial skills due to her ability to navigate conflict with customers and coworkers; she eventually received a promotion.

On the RSYA, Nancy received a 52 out of 60 on *Sense of Mastery* with an 18 out of 20 on *Optimism*, 17 out of 20 on *Self-efficacy*, and 17 out of 20 on *Adaptability*. The even distribution of subscale scores allow Nancy to rely on all three characteristics to demonstrate resilience when she encounters hardship. With a 47 out of 80 on *Sense of Relatedness*, Nancy scored 10 out of 20 on *Trust*, 15 out of 20 *Access to support*, 12 out of 20 on *Comfort with others*, and 10 out of 20 on *Tolerance*. While Nancy acknowledges that she has resources she can utilize when experiencing hardship, she is overall less likely to rely on her relationships and support system than her own faculties to exhibit

resilience. Nancy's score of 40 out of 60 on *Emotional Reactivity* was the highest of all participants. She received a 14 out of 20 on *Sensitivity*, 11 out of 20 on *Recovery*, and 15 out of 20 on *Impairment*. Nancy is more likely to react sensitively and be impaired by her emotions than require a certain amount of time to recover from adversity.

Taylor

Taylor was in her freshman year at the time of her participation in the CLC. She reported that the team was encouraged by their coaches to socialize outside of practice to build camaraderie. Taylor explained her team's dynamic: "As long as we took something from this experience, learn something, and we're able to grow and build friendships with each other...we weren't too concerned about winning." She described one activity at competition in which she had a strong emotional reaction. She described this activity as a pivotal growth moment in which she learned that it is okay to demonstrate vulnerability and lean on others for support. Since participating, Taylor has pursued several leadership positions in student organizations. She reported that she is still in awe of the confidence she gained from the program.

On the RSYA, Taylor scored a 60 out of 60 on *Sense of Mastery* with a 20 out of 20 on all three subscales: *Optimism*, *Self-efficacy*, and *Adaptability*. These scores reflect Taylor's confidence in her ability to overcome adversity and demonstrate resilience. Taylor's score of 71 out of 80 on *Sense of Relatedness* consists of 19 out of 20 on *Trust*, 17 out of 20 on *Access to support*, 20 out of 20 on *Comfort with others*, and 15 out of 20 on *Tolerance*. While her subscale scores are relatively similar, Taylor is likely to find comfort in her relationships and feel comfortable exhibiting vulnerability. She is less likely to be tolerant of interpersonal conflict. Taylor scored a 5 out of 60 on *Emotional*

Reactivity with a 1 out of 20 on *Sensitivity*, 1 out of 20 on *Recovery*, and 3 out of 20 on *Impairment*. The low scores on these subscales imply that Taylor is not likely to react emotionally when she meets adversity.

Iris

Iris participated in the CLC as a senior. She reported that her team consisted of only females with a female coach: “It was like the girl power squad.” They were encouraged to focus team dynamics and prepared for competition by completing activities from previous competitions. Iris stated that each team member had a strong personality and gravitated toward leadership positions on campus. She said,

It was definitely challenging because we were all go-getters and then all of us always wanting to step up. That was definitely a new challenge that I had never experienced before, so that was a great growth aspect of it.

The team socialized outside of the formal practices, and Iris attributes their ability to share honest feedback to the relationships formed through their informal social interactions. Iris is now pursuing her Master’s in Business Administration.

Regarding her RSYA results, Iris scored 51 out of 60 on *Sense of Mastery* with a 19 out of 20 on *Optimism*, 16 out of 20 on *Self-efficacy*, and 16 out of 20 on *Adaptability*. Iris may be slightly more likely to utilize an optimistic outlook when encountering hardship than her beliefs in her abilities or the skill of adaptation. Iris scored a 68 out of 80 on *Sense of Relatedness* with a 15 out of 20 on *Trust*, 19 out of 20 on *Access to support*, 18 out of 20 on *Comfort with others*, and 16 out of 20 on *Tolerance*. Iris may be slightly more likely to utilize her support system and find comfort in others than exhibit trust or tolerate interpersonal conflict. Her score of 17 out of 60 on *Emotional Reactivity*

stems from an 8 out of 20 on *Sensitivity*, 2 out of 20 on *Recovery*, and 7 out of 20 on *Impairment*. While her overall score on the factor is not high, Iris may be more likely to respond sensitively and be impaired by adversity than need time to recover.

Caroline

Caroline participated in the CLC as a freshman. Her team met for formal practice and also socialized outside of practice on a weekly basis. Caroline shared how prior to the CLC, she was hesitate to share her own ideas: “[Action learning] showed us that we all have a voice and that we may have ideas that no one else has so we need to speak up for the betterment of the team.” She reflected on the close bond of the diverse members of her team and reported that the honest feedback shared during practice sessions and the competition was what influenced them to grow as a team and as individuals. After participating in the CLC, Caroline reported utilizing the identification of team member strengths at the beginning of group projects. However, she has found that when she poses the question to her peers, she is the only person who can provide a response.

On the RSYA, Caroline scored a 51 out of 60 on *Sense of Mastery*. Her subscale scores within this factor are 20 out of 20 on *Optimism*, 16 out of 20 on *Self-efficacy*, and 15 out of 20 on *Adaptability*. Caroline is more likely to utilize an optimistic outlook when encountering adversity than self-efficacy or her ability to adapt. Her score of 52 out of 80 on *Sense of Relatedness* stems from an 11 out of 20 on *Trust*, 16 out of 20 on *Access to support*, 15 out of 20 on *Comfort with others*, and 10 out of 20 on *Tolerance*. Between her scores on the *Sense of Mastery* and *Sense of Relatedness* factors, Caroline is more likely to rely on her own competencies than her interpersonal skills when experiencing hardship. Within *Sense of Relatedness*, the subscales she scored highest on imply that

Caroline is aware of her support system and external resources that may help her in overcoming adversity. She scored a 27 out of 60 on *Emotional Reactivity* with subscale scores of 9 out of 20 on all three subscales: *Sensitivity*, *Recovery*, and *Impairment*. While Caroline's scores are not necessarily high, there is still a likelihood that her emotions negatively influence her response to adversity.

Maggie

Maggie was in her sophomore year when she participated in the CLC. Maggie recalled that her coaches encouraged her and her teammates to utilize their practice time to solely focus on the CLC, which included turning off their cell phones. Maggie recalls her coaches saying "You are here, you are present, you are learning, you are contributing." She reported that this encouragement was appreciated because she felt scattered outside of the practice sessions. During an activity at the competition, Maggie recalled that a crutch fell on top of her team's structure. Through that experience, she learned to take a moment to collect herself and continue to make progress. She also learned the importance of asking for help. She reported that she maintains a strong connection with her teammates, despite the variety in their backgrounds, personalities, and ways of thinking.

On the RSYA Maggie scored a 41 out of 60 on *Sense of Mastery* with subscale scores of 14 out of 20 on *Optimism*, 15 out of 20 on *Self-efficacy*, and 12 out of 20 on *Adaptability*. Maggie is less likely to demonstrate adaptability than utilize optimism or belief in her abilities when encountering adversity. Her score of 72 out of 80 on *Sense of Relatedness* implies she is more likely to utilize her interpersonal skills than her own abilities when attempting to demonstrate resilience. She received an 18 out of 20 on

Trust, 19 out of 20 on *Access to support*, 20 out of 20 on *Comfort with others*, and 15 out of 20 on *Tolerance*. Maggie is likely to trust others, rely on her support system, find comfort in her relationships and slightly less likely to feel comfortable engaging in interpersonal conflict. Maggie scored 24 out of 60 on *Emotional Reactivity* with subscale scores of 8 out of 20 on *Sensitivity*, 6 out of 20 on *Recovery*, and 10 out of 20 on *Impairment*. Maggie may be negatively influenced by her emotions when encountering challenges with a slightly higher chance of experiencing impaired abilities.

Rose

Rose participated in the CLC during her senior year. She was a member of a board of directors and their supervisor approached the board with the CLC as a team-building opportunity. Because the board consisted of 7 people, and the competition is limited to 6 participants, Rose volunteered to serve as a student coach. She practiced the activities along with her teammates but shifted her role to student coach for the competition. She reported, “I opted to be the [student] coach because I thought it was a better learning opportunity for myself. I can lead; I know that about myself, but I’m letting others take the reins which is something I struggled with.” Her recollection of the competition involved feeling like “underdogs” because they were the only junior college in their division, and though they received fifth place due to a scoring decision, felt like they deserved third place. Despite the challenges they faced, Rose observed her team maintaining an optimistic attitude and demonstrate gratitude for the growth they experienced as a board.

On the RSYA, Rose scored a 50 out of 60 on *Sense of Mastery*, consisting of a 16 out of 20 on *Optimism*, 19 out of 20 on *Self-efficacy*, and 15 out of 20 on *Adaptability*.

Rose is slightly more likely to utilize her belief in her abilities to overcome adversity. Her score of 64 out of 80 on *Sense of Relatedness* stems from a 17 out of 20 on *Trust*, 19 out of 20 on *Access to support*, 13 out 20 on *Comfort with others*, and 15 out of 20 on *Tolerance*. Rose may rely on trust and her support systems more than comfort in relationships and tolerance of interpersonal conflict when experiencing challenges. Rose scored a 17 out of 60 on *Emotional Reactivity* with 7 out of 20 on *Sensitivity*, 5 out of 20 on *Recovery*, and 5 out of 20 on *Impairment*. Rose is not likely to be influenced by her emotions when encountering adversity.

Quantitative Data Analysis

All fifteen participants completed the survey in its totality. The data analysis was conducted using SPSS software. The descriptive analysis included the means, standard deviations, skewness, and kurtosis of the three main factors as well as the ten subscales. Table 1 portrays the means, standard deviations, variance, skewness, and kurtosis of each factor. Because of the small sample size, it is helpful to make a note of each factor's skew. The negative skew of *Sense of Mastery* and *Sense of Relatedness* reflects the high scores recorded on both factors. From their experiences in the CLC, many of the participants described growth in areas related to these factors. Regarding their *Sense of Mastery*, participants described increases in confidence, acknowledgement of skills they were previously unaware of, and adaptability when they encountered obstacles brought on by the pandemic. Their *Sense of Relatedness* was strengthened by the program's emphasis on teamwork and group process. Participants explained the importance of

asking for help, appreciating different teammates' strengths, and trusting teammates to complete a task in their own way.

The positive skew of *Emotional Reactivity*, a factor that could impede one's ability to demonstrate resilience, reflects the low scores reported by participants. Six participants described how the CLC positively influenced their ability to control their emotions when experiencing stressful situations. After participating in the program, the CLC's step-by-step problem-solving framework provided individuals with a tool to utilize upon encountering challenges. Participants reported feeling fewer negative emotions when interacting with a challenge because they felt confident utilizing the framework they had practiced so frequently within the program. Additionally, three of the participants reported negative feelings towards failure prior to their involvement with the CLC. After completing the program, their view of failure shifted to that of an opportunity for growth.

Table 4.1

Descriptive Statistics of Sense of Mastery, Sense of Relatedness, Emotional Reactivity Factors

Variables	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Sense of Mastery	37	60	49.53	6.85	-.517	-.708
Sense of Relatedness	45	76	62.13	10.77	-.279	-1.386
Emotional Reactivity	5	40	19.6	8.20	.465	.547

Note. $N = 15$

Table 4.2 portrays the means, standard deviations, variance, skewness, and kurtosis of each subscale. Because of the small sample size, it is helpful to make a note of each subscale's skew. While most of the subscales skew direction matches those of their corresponding factor. However, Adaptability, as a part of *Sense of Mastery*, and Support, as a part of *Sense of Relatedness*, had a slightly positive skew. The higher kurtosis scores on Comfort, Support, Recovery, and Sensitivity represent the presence of outliers in the subscale scores.

Table 4.2*Descriptive Statistics of the Resiliency Scale for Young Adults Subscales*

Variables	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Optimism (Mastery)	10	20	16.87	3.46	-1.05	.126
Adaptability (Mastery)	12	20	15.73	2.25	.210	-.376
Self-Efficacy (Mastery)	13	20	16.93	2.22	-.311	-.958
Comfort with Others (Relatedness)	11	20	16.2	3.36	-.122	-1.752
Trust (Relatedness)	7	19	14.3	3.70	-.481	-.803
Tolerance (Relatedness)	9	20	14.93	3.45	-.344	-.822
Access to Support (Relatedness)	13	20	16.67	2.19	.023	-1.357
Recovery (Reactivity)	0	16	5.67	4.13	1.064	1.588
Sensitivity (Reactivity)	1	14	6.93	2.69	.567	4.201
Impairment (Reactivity)	1	15	7	3.53	.451	.640

Note. $N = 15$

The qualitative findings and existing literature provide additional insight into the quantitative data. Of the three factors, *Sense of Mastery* had the highest mean of 49.53 out of 60. This factor is comparatively lasting, which could imply that the CLC had a lasting impact on its participants. The *Sense of Relatedness* factor was only slightly slower with a 62.13 out of 80. The similarly high scores of the two factors aligns with

other studies that utilized the RSYA (Wilson et al., 2017; Wilson et al., 2019) in which participants seemed to score comparably on both factors. *Sense of Mastery* and *Sense of Relatedness* align with the interview responses in which individuals emphasized an increase in self-efficacy and commitment to relationships. The relatively high scores on *Sense of Relatedness* may align with the low scores received on *Emotional Reactivity*. This corresponds with the other studies which utilized the RSYA (Wilson et al., 2017; Wilson et al., 2019). The subscales within *Sense of Relatedness* that received the highest scores were Comfort with Others and Access to Support. The qualitative findings support the higher score of these subscales: participants described their willingness to demonstrate vulnerability and utilize a support system in overcoming challenges. This may moderate their emotional responses to adversity. The lower mean of *Emotional Reactivity* can also be associated with the growth individuals exhibited regarding emotional intelligence. Participants discussed their ability to recognize and control their emotions more effectively when encountering adversity. These findings align with studies that observed a strong correlation between *Sense of Mastery*, *Sense of Relatedness*, and emotional intelligence (Prince-Embury, Saklofske, & Nordstokke, 2017; Saklofske et al., 2013).

Qualitative Data Analysis

The participants were asked to reflect on their experiences in the CLC and how the program has influenced their lives since partaking in it. The interview questions pertained to what they recall of their experience in the program, drawing attention to the elements of action learning, coaching, and individual reflection. Participants were asked what knowledge, skills, and abilities they gained and how they have been able to apply

those attributes since completing the program. The researcher inquired about how the CLC is impacting their current day-to-day lives since a year and a half has lapsed since their participation. Participants were also asked how the CLC influenced their resilience. The following major themes and associated sub-themes outlined in Table 4.3 emerged through coding exercises.

Table 4.3

Summary of Findings

Major Themes	Sub-Themes
Comfort Zone	Safe Environment, Learning Opportunities, Voluntary Discomfort
Accountability and Vulnerability	Self-advocacy and Individual Influence, Growth Through Feedback
Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Growth	Emotional Intelligence, Collective Resilience, Group Dynamics
Internal and External Resilience	Problem-solving Framework, Analytical Thinking, Creativity and Flexibility

Theme One: Comfort Zone

A recurring theme throughout the study was how the CLC in its entirety or an element within the program brought participants out of their comfort zone. Four participants described their hesitancy to even partake in the program at all. Some individuals felt too young and inexperienced; one individual hesitated to join a team of traditional college students due to her non-traditional student age of 50. Even after agreeing to participate on her school's team, Polly stated, "I remember initially going into the competition believing that I would be an alternate because the competition is something that makes me incredibly nervous, and I didn't really want to do it." Nancy reported only agreeing to try out for the team because her favorite instructor had encouraged her to participate. Others willingly engaged in the program because they saw it as an opportunity to step outside of their comfort zone. Tess, who had already experienced a few years in a work environment, saw participating in the CLC as "a different way to challenge [herself]." Rose took on the role of student coach instead of participating on the team because she knew the role would challenge her to take a step back and allow others to lead. Whether or not individuals felt confident about participating in the CLC, there was an additional feeling of apprehension regarding what a leadership competition would entail.

There were two main elements of the program that seemed to facilitate feelings of discomfort: the format of the practice activities and the debrief and feedback exchanged after each activity. Individuals felt that the purpose of training was to become comfortable with a wide range of activities, knowing that the competition would present them with new challenges, unlike any they had experienced before. The activities were

described as ambiguous and constraining. Greg felt that the practice activities were designed intentionally to encourage the team to become comfortable with ambiguity. However, the ambiguity and constraints of each activity also resulted in conflict.

The debrief and resulting feedback also led to discomfort, sometimes by rehashing a conflict that occurred during an activity or by identifying growth opportunities for individual members of the team. Dana said, “I don’t want to go back and think about stuff that we did wrong.” Three participants were uncomfortable with the idea of engaging in peer-to-peer feedback; six individuals were uncomfortable with receiving constructive critiques of their abilities whether from peers or coaches. Julie reported that when she lived in China, she became familiar receiving critiques as part of their educational system, but that the nature of the feedback when participating in the CLC was harder to receive because it was more personal.

During the interviews, all participants mentioned two specific activities during the competition that seemed to challenge themselves or their team, despite mostly representing different teams. One activity involved cooperating with the other teams to achieve a larger goal and another activity involved a point system in which the member with the lowest score would become the team’s score. These activities seemed to facilitate feelings of discomfort in different ways. The cooperating activity presented a new form of activity that teams had not experienced in preparation for competition. The execution of this activity also challenged the participants to remain unified as a team. Five individuals referred to the concern regarding their own abilities and the influence it could have on their team. Taylor and Dana both reported that the public speaking activity

brought them out of their comfort zone because they doubted their public-speaking abilities and did not want their low score to impact the team.

Safe Environment

Despite the challenges they spoke of in their interviews, six individuals identified the safe environment of their practice sessions and the overall program as part of what encouraged them to push themselves beyond their perceived limits. Gretchen said, “When I had a leadership fail at one of my challenges, I was able to redo [it] again at a later time.” Mona shared that despite the nerves she had due to the novelty of a leadership competition, she saw the value in being presented with unknown and unusual challenges because of the safe environment surrounding the challenges which allowed her and her teammates to view the challenges as “fun.”

Three participants described how they experienced challenges outside of the CLC and that the safe environment and team dynamic allowed them to view the CLC as a positive presence and source of stability in their lives. Caroline referred to the time period during her participation as “the hardest time in [her] life” and yet she viewed her experience with the CLC as a source of “consistency” and “support.” Maggie shared the positive feelings she had after leaving practice each week. Feeling overwhelmed by other aspects of her life, she appreciated that her coaches encouraged the team to physically disconnect from their cell phones and mentally disconnect from their other obligations to fully experience the program.

Coaches played a significant role in establishing the safe environment by utilizing a variety of strategies. Greg shared that as a freshman, he felt that by communicating

their support, his coaches provided a sense of community he had not yet experienced at his institution. Some coaches encouraged their teams to engage in social activities outside of practice as a way to build rapport; others emphasized team-building activities and trust exercises during practice sessions. Dana reflected that their coach was selective about the activities in their practice sessions, tailoring some to boost the team's confidence and some to challenge them. The safe environment established by the coaches seemed to communicate that all participants have opportunities for growth, growth is encouraged and exercised through the activities, and that while experiences within the program might be uncomfortable, the discomfort is what leads to growth.

Learning Opportunities

Despite the challenging conditions perceived by each participant, there was an overall appreciation for the opportunity to step outside of his or her comfort zone.

Participants saw learning opportunities through the ambiguity and constraints of the activities. In addition to the ambiguity and constraints of the activities, several individuals described how the CLC familiarized its participants with the feeling of encountering unforeseen circumstances.

Olive, Caroline, Nancy, and Rose reflected that the ambiguity and constraints encouraged them to broaden their minds and think creatively when solving problems. Olive stated,

A lot of activities really taught me how like there wasn't one way to go about doing anything like it was very much think smarter, not harder. After every activity after that I definitely encouraged myself and others to think outside the

box. Competition kind of just enhanced that ability. –don't put that constraint on yourself without like confirming that that is an actual constraint because you're just going to be stressed out even more.

Instead of focusing on the stress and discomfort presented by the range of activities, the participants spoke with gratitude about how the challenges they encountered led to an increase in confidence and belief in their own capabilities. In reference to an activity she led during the competition that seemed to highlight Polly's anxiety around time limitations, she stated,

I think that the experience was super validating for me that even something I think is my greatest weakness was not apparent to the judges, and even though I was very nervous, I was still able to rally through and get the results that we needed in order to do well in the competition. So for me, that was just a huge confidence booster.

Through the challenging activities, four participants discovered that they take on an encouraging role when participating in teams, as well as the importance of having a source of positivity when working through challenging situations.

Since participating in the CLC, numerous individuals remarked on their appreciation for how the program acclimated them to the feeling of encountering unforeseen circumstances. At the competition, Caroline recalled that the teams had to leave the main room between each activity, and upon re-entering the room for the next activity, they never knew what to expect. Nancy described what she referred to as “a series of unfortunate events” that happened to their team throughout the competition, and

yet she credits the CLC for preparing her team to navigate the challenges and seek out the learning opportunities in each of those events. Now, in the midst of a pandemic, fourteen of the participants referenced how COVID-19 is impacting their day-to-day life and how they are adapting to the unforeseen circumstances this year has presented.

Interpersonal conflict provided another source of learning opportunity for the CLC participants. When encountering interpersonal conflict, some individuals referred to the growth they experienced by participating in a team consisting of strong personalities and leadership styles. Several people remarked on the diversity of their team and how, ultimately, the diversity allowed them to have a broader range of strengths and perspectives to utilize in solving each activity efficiently. Four participants attributed the casual social interactions as what allowed their team to have honest, candid conversations. The perceived safe environment and established trust allowed participants to confront each other in a way that would help the team, and respective individuals grow from the interaction. It seemed the participants understood the necessity of working through conflict to strengthen their team dynamic. Upon graduating and rejoining the workforce, Tess described how she might have shied away from conflict before, but now it is “easier to overcome confrontation [even though] it can be uncomfortable.”

Voluntary Discomfort

Because of the growth experienced when individuals pushed themselves beyond their perceived limitations, participants described ways in which they choose to step outside of their comfort zones. Twelve of the participants described how, after participating in the CLC, they pursued leadership opportunities in college and the workplace. For some, like Greg, the CLC was the start of his passion for leadership:

“CLC was the pivotal moment of investing myself in leadership for the rest of my time in college—and being that person that people can go to discuss leadership.” Taylor, through several responses, reflected on her disbelief that her participation in the CLC led her to campus connections and relationships with people she would never have thought herself worthy of having prior to the program. Because of her newfound confidence, she pursued and obtained several leadership positions on campus.

In addition to leadership opportunities, nine participants described ways in which they took risks they might not have had the courage to pursue prior to stepping outside of their comfort zones in the CLC. Olive reported that she took a risk in starting a dialogue-based student organization on her campus that brings people with different perspectives together to learn from each other. When describing the impetus to start the organization, Olive reported, “I think that confidence that kind of built up through the CLC. It was enhanced with, you know, the activities and being able to take that risk.” Taking the risk resulted in an increasingly popular student organization on her college campus. Taylor proposed the idea of a pen pal program to help incoming first-year students feel a personal connection to campus community despite not being able to physically visit campus due to COVID-19. She presented her idea to the office responsible for student engagement who adopted her idea into a campus-wide initiative. Taylor stated, “If I didn’t have the confidence I’ve gained from the CLC, I wouldn’t have pitched that idea to anyone.”

Another participant made the decision to apply to and attend an academically challenging, highly respected Master’s program halfway across the country from her hometown. As a First Generation student who was waitlisted for the program, Winnie

described feelings of imposter syndrome and feeling out of her element in an institution much more diverse than any other place in her life thus far. Recognizing that she is feeling uncomfortable, she responded, “It’s okay, this is just the process of life, and this is where you grow.” Additionally, Winnie began a position as a graduate assistant in the office of financial aid, pushing her further outside of her comfort zone. She stated that in the past, she might have given up easily. Now, she says, “Instead of saying like, I can’t do this. Now it’s I can’t do this yet.

Theme Two: Accountability and Vulnerability

Fourteen of the participants described the strong connection they felt with their teammates. Winnie stated, “We were all willing to kind of like take a bullet for one another.” Participants attributed this strong team dynamic to the way their coaches emphasized trust or encouraged them to engage in social activities outside of the more formal practice sessions. Gretchen described the intentional conversations led by her coach to develop trust and understanding among her teammates. Four participants reflected on the value they saw in the casual social interactions in building team camaraderie, even in the time they spent together in the hotel the night before competition. Mona attributes that bonding time as what propelled their team to win first place in their division.

Additionally, team members seemed to have a solid understanding of each other’s strengths and weaknesses and were able to adapt accordingly depending on the nature of the activity and who was leading the group. Polly reflected that her team verbalized their support for her during the training sessions,

Coming up with those strategies together of ways that they could help me like if they noticed that I had missed something, they could ask a question that would trigger my mind to go, “Oh shoot, yes I need to allocate someone to take the time or something.” So, um, what really helped my nerves and anxiety the most was knowing that I had their support.

Polly reported that her team’s support during their practice sessions ultimately empowered her to overcome a perceived weakness during the activity she led at competition. Caroline continues to apply a strengths-based approach to the teams in which she partakes since she participated in the CLC.

Understanding team members’ strengths and weaknesses, several individuals described how team members were assigned roles to complete an activity. Three participants referred to setting roles as an important part of a problem-solving framework and the value of each role in accomplishing a task. Winnie stressed that leaders should be aware of whether team members are comfortable with their assigned roles in order for them to perform effectively. Greg shared that since his involvement with the CLC, he continues to consider his role in group interactions to understand that everyone in a group has different skills that will influence the role they take on to achieve a goal.

Whether serving as the leader or in another role, five participants described a sense of accountability towards their team. They described instances of owning up to mistakes and pushing through perceived limitations so as not to let down their team. Olive spoke about an activity during the competition in which she misinterpreted the rules, causing her team to be disqualified from that particular activity. She reflected on feeling comfortable owning up to the mistake because of the camaraderie of her team.

Olive said, “—we’re just here to grow together. It’s not about like one individual person; we’re all growing together.” When referring to their trepidation involving the public speaking activity, several participants were motivated to complete the activity because of the commitment they felt to their team. Polly shared, “Each one of us had our different things that we were working on, and the fact that it was a collaborative effort, I didn’t feel like I had to conquer my anxiety alone.” There seemed to be a mutual understanding that each team member would do whatever it took to contribute to the team’s success, which included overcoming personal fears and perceived limitations.

The sense of accountability and belief that individual members were devoted to the team effort resulted in an environment that encouraged vulnerability. Three participants who identified as independent and self-sufficient learned the value of asking for help and clarity. Mona shared that despite her inclination to work independently, she realized that a task could be accomplished much more efficiently if she asked for help. Taylor said, “I mean, maybe it was because there was a team aspect to it, and I didn’t want to let other people down. So, if I didn’t understand, I really did want to clarify, like, not just for myself, but for [my team] too.” Taylor reported that she had integrated the act of asking for help and clarity into her academics to ensure that she is obtaining each assignment’s goal.

Self-advocacy and Individual Influence

Connected to the idea of demonstrating vulnerability, three participants learned how to speak up for themselves and communicate with their leader if they felt the role that they were assigned was not well-suited with their capabilities. Maggie reflected on one activity at the competition in which a crutch fell on a structure she was building. She

recognized that she would not be able to rebuild the structure independently with the time they had remaining; she asked for additional support instead of feeling obligated to complete her assigned task individually. Taylor said, “Asking for help, asking questions, and letting others know what I need them to do or what the team needs to do in order to be successful” were some of her biggest takeaways from participating in the CLC. Polly emphasized “being able to communicate about what support you need both in giving support and receiving support.” Participants seemed comfortable trusting their teammates to be aware of and adaptive to each team member’s strengths and weaknesses.

However, instances of conflict also contributed to raised awareness of individual influence on their team dynamic. Winnie recalled the frustration she felt when a leader assigned her a role that did not coincide with her strengths. She recognized that she was likely not communicating her perspective effectively due to the emotions she was feeling at the time. This was an issue she attributes to events that occurred in her childhood. From this interaction, she learned the importance of putting her emotions aside to communicate more effectively and advocate for herself. She also shared that the interaction has inspired her to adopt a leadership style that empowers individuals to try out different roles but make adjustments if the individual is resistant to the assignment.

Mona, Julie, and Nancy, recognized that their opinions and attitude regarding their team performance could be detrimental to the team dynamic. Mona described how, initially, she showed negative emotions on her face, which influenced her teammates. To help her demonstrate a positive attitude, she shifted her focus to enjoying the program’s experience instead of winning. Participants that developed self-awareness regarding their influence on the team dynamic reported that maintaining positive energy, even when the

team was not performing to their standards, was essential in contributing to their team's ability to persevere. Taylor, Caroline, Polly, and Gretchen, became aware of the influence their naturally positive outlooks had on keeping their team united and motivated.

Taylor described her experience with the public speaking activity at the competition that strengthened her self-advocacy ability and demonstrated vulnerability with her team. Despite not associating with displays of emotion, Taylor experienced a breakdown in her effort to complete the task. She identified this vulnerable moment as pivotal to her growth and has shared this moment with pride when previously, she would have felt embarrassed. Taylor said,

I think I needed to break down at that moment to realize, like, it's totally fine.

You're not getting it, but maybe you just need to get support from your team. Try something new, like maybe not having the girl tap me five seconds before because it wasn't working for me. Maybe I needed someone like waving in front of my face. I needed to keep on pushing and just get support like I asked for different ways other people have done it or don't be afraid to admit that maybe it's not working right now, but like keep trying and you will get there eventually.

Taylor described her appreciation for her teammates and the way they rallied around her to help her complete the activity, communicating their care for her as a higher priority than winning.

Growth Through Feedback

Feeling empowered to advocate for themselves also allowed five participants to feel comfortable sharing feedback with their teammates. During their debrief after the

first activity, Caroline reported that she shared feedback with a teammate about how she undermined Caroline's role as a leader. Caroline believed that sharing this feedback so early in the day helped her team remain united and remember that sharing constructive feedback would help them improve as the day progressed. Olive shared her initial hesitancy in providing feedback but that the close-knit dynamic of her team encouraged her to voice her opinion. Iris reflected on her all-female team as a potential deterrent from providing each other with feedback:

I feel like in an environment with six women you can easily take that like passive aggressive approach in beating around the bush if you have something to say. But you don't necessarily want to hurt someone's feelings, but we kept it raw and real and that was awesome. If someone was frustrated, they just spoke it and let it out. So it was intimidating, but also good for us because we were able to grow exceptionally from the debrief.

Similarly, Caroline remarked on the importance of each person voicing their opinion to grow as a team.

Knowing that they would only have limited time-periods to share their perspective and advice during the competition, all of the participants shared how their coaches encouraged the team to engage in the exchange of feedback. Regarding the encouragement to share feedback among team members Winnie shared,

How could we have done it differently to not have those problems...and make it more about a team thing because then it really facilitated a conversation for people to own up to the things that they had done wrong.

However, if necessary, coaches were also a source of accountability during practice sessions if the group was not performing to their normal caliber.

Providing an outside perspective, coaches offered another source of feedback for the participants. Olive reflected that her coach offered a “perspective that you yourself can never see. Coaching definitely adds in another perspective and allows me to [see that] I need to maybe bring myself back and look at the big picture.” Five participants reported that the intention of feedback was to encourage growth. Polly said that her coach “knew how to give criticism in a way that was constructive and uplifting rather than making you feel overwhelmed or down about yourself.” Iris shared, “I think that [my coach’s] feedback and then my group members’ feedback helped shape who I am as a leader with all of the things I needed to improve on.” Dana and Polly shared that listening and accepting feedback was a skill they gained from the CLC. Iris valued that her coach worked in the field of human resources and formed connections between the activities to relatable situations in the workplace.

Winnie reported that her coach would have guests attend their practice sessions, observe their team during activities, and provide them with feedback. This taught her that individuals might emphasize or focus on different aspects of performance as well as bring their own biases into an evaluation. With several coaches providing feedback, Nancy shared a similar experience. She equated it to having different bosses, some hands-on and others more hands-off. Mona remarked that she did not always agree with the feedback she received but appreciated the opportunity to engage in discussion and “exchange ideas.”

Seven participants described how they encourage their followers to engage in the feedback process as leaders in organizations. Gretchen utilizes it with the people she oversees in her work involving youth development. Polly became president of her all-female a cappella group. By providing office hours, she encouraged communication channels to open and provided opportunities for her group members to share their feedback with her. Similarly, Polly oversees a group of student workers. In this role, she launched a retreat program at the start of every semester, where participants learn how to give and receive feedback. Olive described her inclination to seek out feedback from her supervisor based on the value she gained from her participation in the CLC. Iris transferred the straightforward nature of her team's feedback into being more direct in social and professional settings.

Theme Three: Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Growth

There are several aspects of the CLC that encourage intrapersonal and interpersonal growth. The activities and overall competition encouraged participants to push themselves outside of their comfort zones. Teamwork and the coaching component's emphasis also provided the participants with opportunities to experience intrapersonal and interpersonal growth. The encouragement to engage in feedback and reflection also contributed to the prospect of participants' intrapersonal and interpersonal growth. Furthermore, the intimate size of a CLC team allows each person to serve as a leader and other essential roles in the team's efforts and overall development.

Six participants reported how the CLC was influential in managing their emotions, especially when experiencing stress and demonstrating empathy. These elements connect to the overarching concept of emotional intelligence. It should be noted

that a few participants had slightly higher scores on the *Emotional Reactivity* portion of the *RSYA*, which can inhibit a person's ability to demonstrate resilience. Seven participants scored over 20 points out of 60 and two of those seven individuals scored over 30 points. This might reflect that some individuals might not have experienced long-term growth despite the influence of participating in the CLC. Contrarily, individuals might have scored even higher on this factor before their participation. In addition to managing their own emotions and understanding others' emotions, 11 participants described how they discovered new capabilities, self-confidence, or experienced a shift in mindset.

Beyond learning about themselves, all of the participants seemed to learn even more about how to interact and work with groups of people. Participants described how they are more willing to engage in interdependence with an overarching idea of trust. They spoke of the value of team-building, especially in the current remote environment. They shared how teamwork throughout the CLC influenced their conceptualization of what it means to be a leader and engage in leadership. Three participants also highlighted utilizing different methods of communication and the value of ensuring inclusivity among team members.

Emotional Intelligence

The challenges presented by the CLC sometimes caused tension, stress, and negative emotions among participants. Five participants articulated how their emotional responses were impediments to their ability to think clearly or help their team make progress towards a goal. Iris, Maggie, and Caroline shared the anxiety and panic that can sometimes inhibit their ability to solve a problem. Iris described how after participating,

she is now more aware of her emotions; if a quick decision needs to be made, she considers how her emotions might influence her decision. Maggie and Caroline reported that knowing there are people they can rely on, either on an official team or other support systems, instills a calm influence when tackling challenges. Julie and Winnie shared how the CLC brought on some very negative emotions. They both seemed to learn the importance of identifying their emotions and managing them to remain focused and communicate clearly.

The emphasis on team collaboration and the diverse, strong personalities of team members facilitated empathy in some of the research participants. Five participants described how they have since applied their empathic skills. Tess reported that she is now more understanding of how people interpret situations from different perspectives and how this understanding has boosted her confidence in confronting conflicts. Gretchen said, “I learned that I am more open to hearing what those I’m coaching are feeling. I can be a stronger coach by speaking directly to their specific needs instead of just assuming what they need.” In her role as an orientation leader, Dana uses her ability to empathize with first-year students who are struggling in their first semester. She shared that demonstrating empathy allowed her to reach a struggling student and connect her with resources. Polly, Maggie, and Mona utilize their ability to demonstrate empathy during the quarantine as they interact with or even live with individuals experiencing a range of emotions under the stress of a pandemic.

Nine participants described values, characteristics, abilities that they did not know they possessed before their experience with the CLC. Nancy reported that the CLC assisted her in clarifying her values. She has made the conscious decision to spend less

time on her cell phone, seeing it as something that distracts her from focusing on her goals and values. Nancy's rationale for this is because she believes the CLC taught her the value of time and how to make more effective use. Julie shared a recent experience in which she took on the role of mediator. By being a mediator, Julie was able to regulate her own emotions to help the group make progress under a critical leader's supervision. Rose learned that she identifies as a strategic thinker and several participants discovered their natural inclination to engage in out-of-the-box, creative thinking.

Many participants mentioned that the CLC strengthened their self-confidence. The individuals who were tentative about the value they could contribute at the start of the program experienced an increase in confidence. Taylor shared the intimidation she felt as a first-year student as she compared herself to her teammates who held leadership positions. Polly learned, "that I'm capable of more than I think I am, and that I often get in my head about what other people are thinking." During the activity that Polly led, which she believed emphasized her "biggest leadership weakness," the judges saw no indication of struggle or stress in her leadership. Polly recognized that she projects her insecurities into the perceptions others have of her. Tess reflected that the encouragement to engage in challenges within a safe environment allowed her to develop confidence.

Seven of the participants described how an aspect of the CLC caused a shift in their mindset. Polly spoke about how the preconceived notions she had regarding her abilities were very limiting before engaging in the program:

For me, the biggest thing that I would ruminate on and think about and try to grow in was confidence because even from the beginning, I told myself that I'm going to try this, but I'm not going to compete, because I can't do that rather than

considering maybe I can. I think by going through this process and doing the training and continuously hearing others say, “You did this really [well]” changed my mindset. Rather than thinking, “How did I screw it up?” [I shifted] to thinking about what I did well and how I can bring what I did well into future activities.

Three participants who formerly identified as being very vocal learned the importance of taking on the role of listener and allowing others the opportunity to contribute. Mona said, “Sometimes I think the loudest person is the right person, but that’s not always true. Maybe someone has the right answer, but they’re not able to speak up because I’m not giving them the space to speak.” Winnie talked about how she has applied her improved listening skills to her participation in discussions regarding social justice issues.

Collective Resilience

In addition to individual growth in emotional intelligence, five participants described their overall confidence in their team to overcome challenges. Rose said, “knowing that you have a strong team makes it easier to move forward because you know that this isn’t going to break us apart.” Nancy shared, “we’re in a group and even if I mess up or somebody else messes up, then we’ll just save it. No big deal. Just go on. Small wins matter.”

Four participants described instances during the competition in which their team exhibited resilience. After two challenging activities, Caroline explained how her team utilized their debrief to take a step back and let go of the previous negative experiences. They shifted their focus to improvement for future activities. She said,

Recognizing that one event like doesn't define the whole entire process, but if we let our mindset kind of stay in that one event, then it will. So yeah, having to be resilient with and kind of moving on and knowing that we can do better next time.

Caroline attributed the team's level of trust and comfort with each other as positive influences on their ability to demonstrate resilience. Their camaraderie allowed each person to feel comfortable confronting the team when their performance did not reflect the typical team dynamic. Despite facing numerous unexpected challenges, Nancy reflected how her team maintained a positive attitude throughout the competition. She attributed the CLC curriculum and training process as the factors that allowed her team to demonstrate resilience. As a student coach, Rose admired her team's ability to focus on how they were able to identify individual strengths demonstrated throughout the competition instead of their overall ranking.

Their team's collective resilience inspired some participants and demonstrated resilience when encountering challenges since completing the CLC. Maggie reported that before participating in the CLC, she struggled with the idea of starting over because she viewed it as a form of giving up. However, by witnessing her team start over with different strategies to complete activities, she now views starting over as a form of resilience. Maggie feels challenged by her current job, but instead of walking away, she implements different strategies to achieve success because she knows the value the position will add to her resume. Inspired by her team's experience in the CLC, Rose said, "I think having strong people around you that you can believe in, learn from, and grow with is the biggest thing about being resilient."

Three participants stressed the importance of coming together to overcome a challenge or achieve a goal. Gretchen shared that she is working on a virtual state fair project and believes, “that if we are not working together, sharing responsibilities, or leaning on each other’s strengths, that our work is just not going to get done.” Maggie communicated a need for unity in persevering through the pandemic:

It’s kind of like the CLC. You come together as a team to figure out the challenge and right now the entire world needs to come together to figure out a challenge to figure out how to beat this and I want to be part of the solution, not part of the problem.

Nancy also compared the nation’s response to COVID-19 and how poorly the nation as a team would score if the pandemic was a CLC activity. She emphasized that during the CLC, the main goal was to work together as a team to overcome challenges. In the “real world,” as citizens of the nation, it is individuals’ responsibility to work together to overcome challenges that impact society.

Group Dynamics

Four participants shared that they could demonstrate trust in team members after participating in the CLC. Identifying as an introvert and individualist, Nancy reported that she initially felt hesitant about working on a team but now sees the value of teamwork. The CLC taught her to differentiate between constructive feedback and her own opinions regarding the team’s performance. Others reflected on how the necessity of relying on their team members to perform individual roles to complete an activity has

encouraged them to delegate tasks and share responsibilities on other teams. Taylor shared that when she is a leadership position, she,

[tells the team] what I need them to do in order for the team to be successful and not [be] afraid to ask them for help or even if I wasn't sure of how to approach the problem, wondering how they think we could approach the problem. So I didn't always have to have all off the answers and I didn't have to do everything myself. That's what the team is there for. That's how we're all going to work together to solve it or fix it.

Similarly, Iris shared that before she participated in the CLC, she struggled with delegating tasks. However, in the CLC, Iris recalled that a leader's primary role is to delegate and trust the team to execute their responsibilities. This encouraged her to demonstrate the same trust in subsequent teams.

In addition to instilling trust in their team members, participants spoke about how their leadership conceptualization evolved. Maggie learned about leadership's transformational capabilities and integrated this style into a leadership position within her sorority. When describing an occurrence of a sister not fulfilling her obligations, she took the time to understand what may be impeding her from upholding her responsibilities, instead of jumping to conclusions and bestowing a consequence. Maggie was able to connect with the individual and support her. Mona shared that she implemented her acquired listening skills into the leadership positions she pursued after participating in the CLC. Julie learned that leadership is not innate but can be learned and developed.

Four participants spoke of a more flexible approach to leadership. Greg determined that the CLC taught him to demonstrate adaptive leadership, making adjustments to the different groups he leads. Previously believing leaders should be front and center, Winnie and Rose evolved to demonstrate a form of servant leadership in which they now take on whatever role is necessary to support their team. Rose said, “It’s not always about being the best or winning or being the loudest or being the one with the answers. It’s about being the one who can open up the floor for other people. It’s [about] lifting other people up.”

The participants also shared how they emphasize team-building in the groups that they lead. As leader of her a cappella group, Polly organizes social gatherings for her members so that they can spend time building rapport and work together more effectively during rehearsals. She also believes the social gatherings establish a safe environment that allows the group to feel comfortable providing constructive feedback. Polly also utilizes team-building to help her family co-exist during the quarantine. As president of her executive board, Taylor integrates team-building exercises into each of their meetings. Taylor reported that team-building is even more critical due to the remote environment in which they are currently operating. In her role as a graduate assistant for the career development office, Iris reflected that she perceived a strain on the department’s team dynamic due to a complete transition to a virtual work environment. She plans to utilize team-building as a way to communicate more effectively and heal her coworkers’ relationships.

Communication is another element of group dynamics that participants acknowledged in their responses. Five of the participants shared how their

communication styles have progressed since their involvement in the program. Rose became more comfortable with silence. Nancy shared how she utilized her communication skills in her position as a retail employee at a make-up store, mediating conflicts between customers and employees and among coworkers. Greg now identifies as “a voice of reason” when he takes part in conversations in which people have opposing views. While he may have his own opinion, he is more focused on helping “both sides see both sides.” By mediating these conversations, Greg believes those involved will be able to achieve a mutual understanding.

Amid the current pandemic, six participants expressed gratitude for how the CLC encouraged them to think creatively about communication. Maggie and Dana recalled activities that forbid talking, and therefore, the team had to utilize non-verbal forms of communication. Faced with the limitations of a virtual work environment, participants described adjusting their communication styles. Tess shared that she communicates more frequently, using different modalities to convey a message: e-mails and phone calls. Taylor added that using multiple forms of communication is beneficial in developing relationships. Instead of only utilizing one modality, such as texting, she has found it useful to schedule video meetings to communicate more fully. Gretchen echoed that she tries to be clear in her communications with a more hands-on leadership approach. Mona shared that patience is “needed and required” in communicating with teams remotely.

Four participants mentioned how the remote work environment and the emphasis on teamwork in the CLC have highlighted the importance of inclusivity when working with a group. Gretchen reflected on her observation and admiration of how members of her CLC team were conscientious of everyone’s involvement when serving as a leader.

She has integrated this attentiveness into her leadership style. Dana communicated that she now sees the value in making sure everyone on a team feels part of the problem-solving process and contributes to the solution. Greg shared, “I gained a lot of respect for communication...when you’re in a problem-solving setting, you not only have to talk *to* people. It’s more than that. You’re talking *with* people.” Taylor integrates this when leading her executive board; she noticed that one member who resides in another country at a six-hour time difference did not connect with the other board members. She made a conscious effort to set aside time for virtual meetings designated for informal social interactions. She noticed the board member becoming more engaged and bonded with the rest of the team.

Theme Four: Internal and External Resilience

While some of the participants identified as resilient before participating in the CLC, fourteen individuals described how the program revealed, contributed to, or strengthened their resilience. As a social worker, Rose reflected on how the CLC contributed to her ability to work in a very emotionally demanding profession. She said, “You have to be comfortable with the uncomfortable.” Similarly, Maggie believes in the importance of trying multiple leadership strategies with the knowledge that a solution might never be found. The growth seems to stem from trying different strategies and not giving up on the effort. Maggie also saw the CLC curriculum and leadership concepts as providing a rationale for the challenges they experienced. She has applied this to her sorority leadership position; when she encounters challenges, she strives to find the underlying reasoning instead of rushing to solve the problem. Likewise, instead of

viewing failure as a detriment to her character, Dana now views failure as a learning opportunity.

Interwoven in the responses provided by the participants, arose two main types of demonstrating resilience. One of the types of resilience the participants exemplified was internal resilience. Internal resilience encompasses how individuals conceptualize situations and their ability to overcome challenges. 14 of the participants described how the pandemic presented a multitude of challenges. However, there are several facets of the CLC that allowed them to maintain a positive outlook. Maggie shared that obtaining a job during the pandemic has been strenuous. Through a CLC mindset, she views job acquisition as an obstacle to overcome instead of a stressful activity. This allows her to maintain endurance throughout the application process. Olive mentioned her use of one specific leadership acronym from the CLC curriculum in demonstrating internal resilience: T.E.A.M.S. (Trust Matters, Emotions Matter, Accountability Matters, Members Matter, Small Wins Matter). Olive specifically embraced the “Small Wins Matter” component of the term. She described how she recently attended a small birthday party gathering and how that social interaction was enough to sustain her need for social interaction since most of her time is spent in isolation during the quarantine.

The other type of resilience demonstrated by the participants was external. Some form of action determines this type of resilience. For example, Julie felt more confident in her decision-making process, whether the decision was significant or minor, such as remaining in the United States during the pandemic, pursuing further education, or her determination to receive all As in her courses. Dana pursued and obtained a position that allowed her to oversee a group of orientation leaders, assuming that supervising

orientation leaders would be challenging as they perform their duties remotely. Two other participants described how they made the decision to engage in physical activity or modify their physical activity routine to improve their sense of well-being during the pandemic. Two participants adopted the practice of asking for help.

Participants utilized three main approaches when exhibiting internal and external resilience. The approaches were identified as implementing a problem-solving framework, thinking analytically, and demonstrating creativity and flexibility. These approaches serve as the tools that the participants utilize in their day-to-day lives since participating in the CLC.

Problem-solving Framework

One of the CLC acronyms guides the process portion of the score the teams receive after each activity. The judges observe if the participants follow the problem-solving steps outlined in the acronym, S.O.L.V.E. (Set Roles, Outline the Problem, List Multiple Strategies, Veer Towards Consensus, and Evaluate Results). Of all of the acronyms in the curriculum, this is the term that seemed to leave the most significant impact. This is likely because teams understood they were scored on their use of the acronym during each activity. Therefore, the acronym was likely emphasized more than others during their practice sessions. Nancy shared that in instances in which she feels unequipped to overcome a challenge, she said that her “muscle memory” of S.O.L.V.E. propels her to take action. Iris also described the subconscious nature through which she uses the process in her personal and professional life.

Three participants reported that they continue to utilize the acronym when they encounter a challenging situation or interact with a group of individuals regularly, like living with family members through the pandemic. Winnie reported that the term helped provide structure to the activities and reminded them to work collaboratively. Instead of jumping to a solution, Winnie now views it from a step-by-step perspective and considers who might help her solve the problem. Similarly, Dana shared how she tries to approach problem-solving with intentionality, even brainstorming “what-if” scenarios to test her problem-solving abilities. Iris credits the problem-solving framework for allowing her to approach challenges with less consternation.

Analytical Thinking

Ten of the participants shifted how they analyze challenges. The phrase “take a step back” was widely used in describing their efforts to see a challenge from different perspectives and opportunities for innovative solutions. Four participants emphasized how taking a step back facilitates their ability to formulate numerous solutions, which allows them to utilize back-up plans if necessary. Maggie shared how she views her assignments and study strategies with an evaluative mindset to ensure that she performs at a level of academic rigor. Maggie has applied analytical thinking to her job-search; by viewing the job market from a broader perspective, she can see that not many positions are available. Therefore, it is acceptable to take a break from the process.

Viewing challenges from a broader perspective has helped other participants become overwhelmed by the details of a challenge. Gretchen said that before participating, she would “get bogged down in the weeds,” but that slowing down and broadening her perspective allows her to see problems with greater clarity. Formerly,

Nancy shared that she would act quickly when encountering a challenge out of fear or anxiety, but now she knows that taking time to think before reaching a solution does not hinder the process. She said,

It actually cuts time down because you have a game plan. So that is a huge skill that I think needs to be talked about more with CLC. It's awesome. Just being able to take that time and just sit and breathe and think about it before you actually go into a situation.

Similarly, Iris described how she utilizes analytical thinking when encountering conflict to separate from the emotions she may be feeling.

In addition to integrating intentionality into their problem-solving process, three of the participants described how they can now think objectively and evaluate potential solutions. Greg considers how a solution will influence the people and the level of compromise involved. Iris stated,

The CLC competition has definitely helped me to take a step back before I do anything and just go through that process mentally and take it from a strategic approach rather than just like a mental “go, go, go” approach. I would say that just being more aware of situations and process and strategy that will be most effective [rather] than not taking the time to be fully aware.

Rose developed a strong interest in approaching problems strategically, initiating a weekly strategic game night with her husband and friends to strengthen her skillset.

Creativity and Flexibility

Four participants highlighted the value of creativity in problem-solving. Winnie said, “Just because this first [solution] didn’t work doesn’t mean that there aren’t 100 other ways to try to solve this problem to get to the end goal and having resiliency through that.” The phrase “think outside of the box” was frequently used by participants. Olive shared that thinking outside the box was not a skill she utilized until the CLC and how engaging in the activities reinforced the skill. She now feels encouraged to think outside the box and encourages others to do the same. Connected to thinking outside of the box, Olive described the necessity of clarifying constraints. She said, “don’t put a constraint on yourself without confirming that [it] is an actual constraint, because you’re just going to be stressed out even more.”

Each CLC activity outlined a list of “cannots” that, if violated, would result in the team receiving a point value of 0 in the “results” portion of their score. Three participants, already aware of their ability to engage in creative problem-solving, could strengthen this skill based on the outline of each activity’s parameters. Nancy said, “I’m a creative problem-solver. I’m that annoying person who like looks at the “cannots” and [considers] how can I flip this?” Maggie felt the CLC encouraged participants to utilize it throughout the program. Through feedback she received during the program, Rose recognized her ability to think outside of the box. She shared, “[I] really like the opportunity to find those loopholes, find that creative problem-solving, while still working within the very strict parameters... but outside of that, the way you [accomplish] it is yours.”

Due to the pandemic, six of the participants described how they put their creativity and flexibility into practice. In her role as a supervisor of a group of orientation leaders, Dana shared how she played a role in planning and facilitating a training for the orientation leaders that was half remote and half in-person. Throughout the planning and execution, Dana stressed the importance of leadership, communication, and team-building for training the orientation leaders and the performance of their role in helping first-year students feel as if they are having “as normal [of] an experience as possible.” Gretchen shifted to an online model to continue delivering youth development programs and integrated more team-building components to strengthen connections through the remote environment. Rose facilitates youth leadership programs. Because of COVID-19, she could not provide the full-length paper surveys she uses to evaluate the programs. She used flexibility and creativity to construct a brief, electronic survey that parents could help their children complete. Struggling to develop ideas for remote events within her organization, Taylor created a Facebook page for student clubs and organizations’ executive boards. The platform allows student leaders to brainstorm programming ideas, collaborate, and provide each other with feedback regarding what they learned through their own programmatic experiences.

In addition to practical applications, the participants described how the CLC influenced conceptualizations of challenges they encountered following the program. Nancy shared how her experience in the CLC transformed the way she envisions and demonstrates resilience:

Being resilient normally, people would imagine what would be a grizzled war hero who has no emotion at all. Nothing fazes them and they’re like a chunk of

wood. They don't break under pressure and they're tough, but I think resilience is also the ability to bend and go with the flow. You're not just standing straight up; you're able to sway and be flexible with whatever comes and lessen the impact. –If what we're doing right now isn't working as a team, as a class, or as the world, then [we] can't be afraid to change tracks and be confident that once you change that track, we'll still be able to get where we want to go.

Olive echoed a similar impression by equating the constraints the CLC implemented regarding time or resources to the constraints people encounter in everyday life:

“Everything's continuously changing and you're going to be met with constraints. You just kind of have to take it as you go.” The constraints presented by the CLC paired with its structure approach to problem-solving seemed to develop individual's confidence in demonstrating resilience through creativity and flexibility.

Overview of Findings

Through this phenomenological study, four central themes emerged: comfort zone, accountability and vulnerability, intrapersonal and interpersonal growth, and internal and external resilience. The participants described how the safe environment encouraged by their coaches and embraced by their peers inspired them to push themselves beyond their perceived limitations. Participants were able to see failure and uncomfortable situations as opportunities for learning and growth. From the experiences outside of their comfort zones in a safe environment, they felt emboldened to seek continued growth opportunities.

Under the influence of the program's team-based format, participants experienced a sense of accountability and were encouraged to demonstrate vulnerability. They developed the ability to advocate for themselves and understand the positive or negative influence on a group dynamic. Through feedback from their coaches and peers, they were able to gain an outside perspective of areas in need of growth and strengths they might not have recognized within themselves. In their efforts to hold themselves accountable and demonstrate vulnerability, they could take part in and observe their team exhibiting collective resilience.

The third theme of intrapersonal and interpersonal growth represents how the participants developed within themselves and their relationships personally and professionally. Emotional intelligence captures the main areas in which participants exhibited intrapersonal growth. They were better able to manage their own emotions, recognize emotions in others, and empathize. Group dynamics represent the central area of interpersonal growth. Participants learned to trust their team members and modify their leadership practice by practicing delegation or exemplifying a servant-leadership philosophy.

The involvement participants had with the CLC and the life experiences following the program provided opportunities for the growth and demonstration of internal and external resilience. Participants described how their mindset shifted to embrace challenges as opportunities for growth. They feel more prepared and confident in taking a step back to consider a problem from different perspectives and brainstorm various solutions. They have also embodied the problem-solving framework emphasized by the

CLC and embraced creativity and flexibility as they continue to encounter life's challenges.

The next chapter provides a deeper analysis of the findings with a comprehensive perspective of both quantitative and qualitative data, the research questions, and theoretical framework. The researcher also provides limitations of the study and recommendations for future research and practice to further college student leadership development and resilience.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the phenomenon of resilience in college students and recent college graduates who engaged in a leadership development simulation: the Collegiate Leadership Competition (CLC). The study focused specifically on how certain leadership development activities identified as action learning, coaching, and intrapersonal reflection influenced individual participants' resilience. The study was conducted through 15 individual surveys and interviews. The study's format allowed the participants to describe their experiences during the CLC and how those experiences influenced their lives since participating. The chapter provides a comprehensive analysis of the quantitative and qualitative findings. The findings outlined in Chapter 4 are used to answer the research questions and interpreted through the researcher's conceptual framework. Limitations of the study are described in addition to recommendations for future research and practice.

Interpretive Analysis of Qualitative and Quantitative Findings

During September 2020, the researcher surveyed and interviewed 15 participants. The surveys were analyzed using SPSS; the interviews were recorded and transcribed. The researcher reviewed the interview transcriptions and highlighted meaningful statements, placing them into an Excel spreadsheet with separate sheets for each interview question. Then, the researcher printed the collection of meaningful statements for each question and utilized these statements to develop codes. The researcher used MaxQDA to integrate the codes into each transcription. The codes and corresponding

excerpts were analyzed to determine relationships, which resulted in themes and sub-themes. Table 4.4 provides a visual representation of how each participant's responses were incorporated into each theme and sub-theme. Table 4.5 explains the abbreviation of the themes and sub-themes from Table 4.4.

Table 4.4

Summary of Themes and Participant Responses

Themes/ Sub-themes	Olive	Greg	Mona	Winnie	Julie	Dana	Gretchen	Polly	Tess	Nancy	Taylor	Iris	Caroline	Maggie	Rose
CZ															
<i>SE</i>															
<i>LO</i>															
<i>VD</i>															
AV															
<i>SAIL</i>															
<i>GTF</i>															
IIG															
<i>EI</i>															
<i>CR</i>															
<i>GD</i>															
IER															
<i>PSF</i>															
<i>AT</i>															
<i>CF</i>															

Table 4.5

Theme Abbreviation Explanation

CZ: Comfort Zone	AV: Accountability and Vulnerability
<i>SE: Safe Environment</i>	<i>SAIL: Self-advocacy and Individual Influence</i>
<i>LO: Learning Opportunity</i>	<i>GTF: Growth Through Feedback</i>
<i>VD: Voluntary Discomfort</i>	
IIG: Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Growth	IE: Internal and External Resilience
<i>EI: Emotional Intelligence</i>	<i>PSF: Problem-solving Framework</i>
<i>CR: Collective Resilience</i>	<i>AT: Analytical Thinking</i>
<i>GD: Group Dynamics</i>	<i>CF: Creativity and Flexibility</i>

The researcher then analyzed the themes and sub-themes in relation to the three factors and ten sub-scales of the *Resiliency Scale for Young Adults* (Prince-Embury et al., 2017) resulting in a comprehensive analysis of both qualitative and quantitative findings. This interpretive section links the themes and sub-themes that may provide a rationale for the factors and subscales with higher averages. Conversely, since this study did not include a pre-test, a subscale's higher average could provide a rationale for the sub-themes that emerged. While the sub-themes may be linked to the higher averages, this study did not seek to prove a direct correlation.

The study utilized transcendental phenomenology to study the potential influence of specific leadership development activities within a leadership development program on individual resilience. The qualitative findings consisted of textural and structural descriptions, revealing the intentionality of resilience (Vagle, 2018). The researcher elected to use a quantitative measurement of resilience through the *Resiliency Scale for Young Adults* (Prince-Embury et al., 2017) as an additional data point to enhance the essence of individual resilience development (Creswell, 2013).

When analyzing the qualitative and quantitative findings, there are considerable connections among the themes, sub-themes, factors, and subscales in relation to development of resilience. The participants expressed how various aspects of their experience with the CLC took them outside of their comfort zones. By engaging in new and challenging experiences, participants described opportunities to learn. At times, they were so inspired by the growth they experienced within their perception of a safe environment that they continued to pursue opportunities to remain outside of their comfort zone after the program concluded. The overarching theme of Comfort Zone

aligns with the RSYA's *Sense of Mastery* factor. Participants scored highest on this factor (11 participants scored 50-60 out of 60) with consistently high scores among the three subscales (*Optimism; Self-efficacy; Adaptability*); 11-12 participants scored at least 15 out of 20 on all three subscales.

The participants demonstrated optimism by viewing the challenges they encountered as opportunities for growth. While they communicated discomfort regarding certain situations or activities that highlighted their perceived weaknesses, they felt encouraged to persevere and embrace the discomfort knowing that there would be an opportunity to reflect and learn during the activity's debrief. Five participants communicated initial disinterest in the debrief and exchange of feedback. However, by the end of the program, twelve of the participants described the value of giving and receiving constructive feedback. Participants described how they have demonstrated adaptability as they navigate the challenges of the pandemic, whether through trying different self-care techniques or modifying the way they lead organizations.

The *Sense of Mastery* factor is also connected to the participants ability to exhibit Internal and External Resilience. Participants spoke about challenges related to the pandemic and divisive political climate. Nonetheless, they shared how the knowledge, skills, and abilities gained from the CLC has allowed them to overcome these challenges by maintaining a positive outlook, believing in their abilities, and demonstrating adaptability. They spoke of how their experiences with the CLC provided them with a structured approach to problem solving and enhanced their ability to demonstrate creativity and flexibility as they navigate life's challenges since participating in the program.

Two of the overarching themes (Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Growth; Accountability and Vulnerability) connect to *Sense of Relatedness* and its subscales. Regarding Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Growth, participants described growth related to emotional intelligence, whether from gaining the ability to identify and manage their own emotions, expressing empathy, or understanding emotions that others experience. Participants developed skills associated with group dynamics, such as a willingness to trust others and engage in teamwork instead of acting independently. Individuals remarked on the diverse make-up of their teams and viewed the diversity as a strength of their dynamic. Participants spoke fondly of their teammates and instances of when their teams demonstrated collective resilience. It was the strong connections they felt to their teammates and the challenges they collectively overcame that inspired participants to demonstrate Accountability and Vulnerability.

Individuals described how they pushed themselves beyond their perceived limitations to support their team. They shared how they were more willing to take ownership of mistakes and engage in honest feedback. Despite sharing negative emotions regarding feedback, participants were able to see opportunities for growth in the feedback they received. They were also empowered to share their own thoughts and ideas despite formerly doubting the value of voicing their own insights. The empowerment to speak up also allowed them to advocate for their own needs and reflect on how their behaviors and actions were influencing the team's dynamic.

In comparison to *Sense of Mastery*, participants did not consistently score as high on *Sense of Relatedness*; only five participants scored 70-80 points and three participants scored 60-69 points. However, many of the participants scored in the 15-20 point range

on a few of the subscales. One of the subscales on which 13 individuals scored 15-20 points was *Access to support*. Participants described a new inclination to ask for help and rely on support systems when encountering challenges. Two of the participants described how despite facing challenges outside of the program, the regularly scheduled practice sessions and social interactions with their teammates provided them with a positive outlet that inspired them to overcome their struggles. In their leadership positions, six individuals shared that they are more willing to delegate and share responsibilities instead of feeling the need to maintain control as a leader.

The other subscale that may reflect a positive influence of the CLC on individual resilience is *Tolerance* (10 participants scored 15-20 points). This subscale pertains to a person's level of comfort with interpersonal conflict. Their enhanced emotional intelligence and ability to navigate group dynamics can contribute to their ability to navigate interpersonal conflict. They also demonstrated a willingness to hold themselves accountable and exhibit vulnerability which may strengthen their tolerance for interpersonal conflict.

The themes of Internal and External Resilience and Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Growth also connect with the third factor on the RSYA: *Emotional Reactivity*. Contrary to the other two factors, a lower score reflects a stronger likelihood of demonstrating resilience. On this factor, two individuals scored 1-10 points and six individuals scored in the 11-20 range. Participants described their ability to identify and control their emotions when encountering adversity, which they attributed to the influence of the CLC on their ability to think analytically. They also reported feeling

more confident facing challenges because they utilize the problem-solving framework that the CLC emphasizes in their curriculum.

Of the subscales within *Emotional Reactivity*, participants consistently scored the lowest on *Recovery*, which refers to the amount of time a person needs to recuperate when interacting with adversity. Six participants scored 0-4 points and seven participants scored 5-9 points. This can be explained by any of the themes and sub-themes that contribute to the participants' ability to demonstrate resilience. The optimistic perspective of seeing challenges as learning opportunities can assist individuals in recovering from an adverse event. While six participants communicated that they had strong negative feelings regarding failure, their experiences with the CLC encouraged them to see the value of learning from failure. Individuals described viewing adversity as an opportunity for learning and growth. Participants gained confidence to step and remain outside of their comfort zones. The ability to manage their emotions can also contribute to their ability to recover quickly. Additionally, when encountering obstacles, such as those presented by the current pandemic, participants exhibited creativity and flexibility in seeking solutions. Instead of allowing the obstacles to deter them from their goal, they recovered quickly and adapted positively.

Interpretive Analysis of Findings, Research Question, and Sub-questions

As stated in Chapter 1, the research question was:

How does the experience of the Collegiate Leadership Competition leadership development program influence individual resilience, specifically through

simulated leadership development activities that emphasize action learning, coaching, and intrapersonal reflection?

The sub-questions were:

1. Which elements of the program are most meaningful in encouraging individual resilience development?
2. Which elements of the program were most meaningful in encouraging individual leadership development?
3. How did participating in the program influence how individuals perceive adversity?
4. What did individuals learn about themselves after the program concluded?

Interpretive Analysis of Findings and Research Question

The CLC was influential on almost all of the participants' resilience; the way this influence was felt varied from participant to participant. For some, the program revealed their resilience; others reported that their resilience was strengthened or reinforced. All participants described how certain aspects of the program challenged them within a safe environment, encouraging them to test their limits, engage in honest feedback, and think analytically and creatively. The coaches constructed this safe environment and it was reinforced by the team's dynamic as they grew together during practice sessions and casual social settings.

Some individuals felt discomfort at the thought of participating. Working on a team of strong-minded individuals, concerns regarding age (some felt too young, one felt too old), serving as a leader while not feeling confident in their abilities, and the act of

competing, were some of the reasons individuals gave to justify their initial apprehension. Others did not encounter discomfort until experiencing aspects of the program. One of those aspects was how the CLC structured the activities within their curriculum.

The problem-solving activities designed by the CLC and the emphasis on teamwork presented challenges that facilitated growth among participants. The variety of activities highlighted different strengths in some individuals while also providing new experiences for others. Each activity was designed with limited resources, time, and parameters for the participants to follow as they attempted to achieve the activity's objective. The activities were designed to simulate situations that could cause stress. While completing activities kept the teams goal-oriented, the participants perceived the program's larger meaning resided in their ability to work collaboratively.

The small team size of 6-7 people allowed each individual to play an essential role in the team's performance, whether as a leader or other supporting role. A group size of 6-7 people also facilitated growth in each member of the team. Coaches and peers shared feedback that was constructive and encouraged development. Participants communicated that they learned about strengths they were unaware of before the CLC; they became comfortable with vulnerability and pursuing other growth opportunities after engaging in the program. Furthermore, many participants integrated opportunities for constructive feedback in the leadership roles they obtained after the program.

In addition to the elements mentioned above, most of the participants highlighted aspects of the competition that challenged them. It served several purposes in influencing individual resilience. Weekly practice sessions simulated the same conditions they would experience at the competition: timed activities with limited resources, a series of

constraints, and unforeseen circumstances. It provided a pinnacle that heightened emotions and challenged participants to serve as a leader and perform as a team while being evaluated by individuals outside of their coaching team. It also allowed teams to demonstrate collective resilience, which then inspired individuals to embody their resilience.

Interpretive Analysis of Findings and Research Sub-questions

The aspect of the program that seemed most meaningful in influencing individual resilience would be the team dynamic. Participants communicated the important role their teammates played in their development. Teammates provided support, constructive feedback, camaraderie, and demonstrations of collective and individual resilience. Each team's experiences, whether challenging or uplifting, were highlighted in individual responses as contributing to their growth. In exchange for the encouragement they received from their teammates, participants seemed to hold themselves accountable regarding self-improvement and effort to help their team succeed.

The team dynamic also seemed to be a meaningful element of the CLC in encouraging leadership development. Individuals described how their understanding of leadership broadened beyond the traditional role of being in the spotlight and the most vocal team member. They adopted the characteristics of transformational and servant leadership. The team dynamic's strength also gave weight to the feedback received from their teammates and coaches, further contributing to individual leadership development. Participants spoke of bolstered self-confidence and discovery of strengths they were not aware they possessed. They also developed an interest in continued growth beyond the program.

Participants also described how the CLC influenced their perception of adversity. They reflected that the activities encouraged them to view defined constraints as an opportunity to think creatively about how to solve a problem. A few of the participants described how their emotions often interfere with their ability to overcome challenges. However, the CLC provided them not only with a problem-solving framework but the ability to “step back” and think about a problem analytically, considering different perspectives and ways of reaching a solution. Individuals related the constraints of quarantining and the pandemic to a CLC challenge that can be overcome with teamwork.

The fourth sub-question inquired what participants learned about themselves after participating in the CLC. Many of the participants developed self-confidence and were inspired to continue pursuing leadership positions. One individual described how she is capable of so much more than she gives herself credit for and that the negative thoughts she believes others think of her are just her insecurities. Several individuals described the way they continue to utilize creativity and analytical thinking when they encounter challenges.

Interpretive Analysis of Findings and Conceptual Framework

In Chapter 1, the researcher constructed a conceptual framework to illustrate development through activities shared by leadership development and resilience training programs. These activities were identified as action learning, coaching, and intrapersonal reflection. The framework clarified how utilizing the three activities within challenging yet supportive simulations can influence individual resilience.

The conceptual framework was constructed with the understanding that the concept of resilience evolved from a series of traits used to overcome adversity (Garmezy, 1971; Masten, 1994; Rutter, 1979; Werner & Smith, 1982, 1992) into a process that can be developed (Gillespie et al., 2007; Grafton et al., 2010; Hamilton et al., 2006; Richardson et al., 1990; Richardson, 2002; Rutter, 1999). Resilience cannot be exhibited unless individuals encounter adversity (Luthar, 2006; Rutter, 2006). Upon encountering adversity, the other key component of demonstrating resilience is adapting positively (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2013). *The Challenge Model* represents the process through which individuals interact with adversity that they deem to be moderately challenging, which encourages them to utilize their skills and resources or, *protective factors* (Forster & Duchek, 2017; Li & Yang, 2016; Rutter, 1985) in overcoming the challenge (Fergus and Zimmerman, 2005; Garmezy et al., 1984; Ledesma, 2014).

Participants described instances in which the leadership development activities challenged them while also providing them with a conducive environment for growth. Action learning presented individuals with novel, ambiguous problems with limited resources several constraints to make the process more challenging. During their weekly meetings, the activities contributed and strengthened the team's dynamic; the activities at competition allowed the teams to demonstrate their collaborative process and collective resilience. Participants emphasized two specific activities during the competition that were especially challenging on an individual or team level. Through these activities, individuals and teams could utilize their *protective factors* to overcome the challenges and adapt positively.

Coaches were able to challenge individuals by providing them with an outside perspective and constructive feedback on areas in need of improvement. Coaches facilitated individual growth by emphasizing a strong team dynamic. They encouraged social interactions outside of the formal practice sessions that allowed the participants to develop a deeper level of care. Coaches also led discussions about trust and acknowledged individual team member's strengths. At times, participants described how their coaches played instrumental roles in identifying strengths they did not know they had. By emphasizing each team member's value and facilitating a culture of trust and support, individuals felt comfortable exchanging constructive feedback to encourage further growth. This exchange of feedback was both challenging and supportive for the participants.

When asked how intrapersonal reflection influenced their growth, only a few participants recalled engaging in specific reflective exercises after the competition. Most of the intrapersonal reflection took place throughout the program, in the debriefs following each activity. The debriefs provided team members with the opportunity to exchange feedback and gain different perspectives about how they performed their roles and collectively as a team. Some participants reported that they did not initially see the value or interest in the debrief process. Others communicated the discomfort they felt in voicing their opinion or receiving feedback. However, all participants ultimately recognized the value of debriefing in contributing to individual and team growth.

By engaging in action learning, coaching, and intrapersonal reflection, the participants experienced a positive influence on their resilience. Some individuals

discovered they could demonstrate resilience; others felt more resilient after participating in the program.

In the time that has passed since they participated in the program, participants articulated various ways to exhibit resilience. They described adopting a structured approach to problem-solving, analytical thinking, creativity, and an appreciation for their growth when encountering challenges. Whether through the current pandemic or in the routine of everyday life, participants described challenges they encountered by choice and chance. Their experiences in the CLC influenced their ability to navigate these challenges, recognize the opportunity for growth, and adapt positively.

Limitations

The study was conducted using one specific leadership development program, which prevents the generalizability of the findings. Furthermore, the study participants were only representative of the most recent completed year of the program, 2019. However, the CLC was selected because of its unique format of utilizing a leadership simulation to provide participants with a realistic situation in which they find themselves when performing a leadership role. It was also selected because of the activities that it emphasizes that overlap with activities in resilience training. Participants from the 2019 program year were selected because of the strongest likelihood that they would be able to recall their experiences and describe the meaning of those experiences. The study could be broadened to include other leadership development programs and participants from other years, but the findings may or may not support this study.

The scope of the study is limited. Only 15 individuals were interviewed for this study, and the researcher was not selective of who contributed beyond only reaching out to 2019 program participants. While some participants did not have much exposure to leadership development, others had much experience serving in a leadership role. Therefore, their development may be reflective of leadership experiences outside of their involvement in the CLC. One participant was not a member of the traditional-aged college student population because the researcher did not specify this as a qualification for participating in the study during her outreach.

Additionally, most of the participants appear to be female, though the researcher did not ask the participants to identify their gender. The participants volunteered to partake in this study, which means that they had favorable experiences with the CLC and want to attribute more of their growth to the program than might have occurred. They might also have responded to the survey and interview questions with self-report bias.

Because their resilience was not measured before participating in the CLC, it is hard to determine if the program had a measurable influence on their resilience. The year 2020 has presented many challenges that may have positively or negatively influenced individual resilience. In general, the passage of time since participating in the CLC might influence individuals' meaning of their experiences. The opportunity to utilize a resilience scale in a similar study would be implemented more effectively before participating and again after completing the program. However, due to COVID-19, the format of future CLC competitions will look quite different than they did in previous years, rendering the intentions of this research study impossible.

Recommendations for Future Research

The limitations presented by conducting research during a pandemic led to several recommendations for further research. Instead of only focusing on the 2019 program year, the study could be expanded by doing a survey and interview with each participant before starting the program and then follow up with a survey and interview after completing the program, perhaps even interviewing them a third time six months after the program concluded. This research design allows a researcher to understand an individual's perceived level of resilience prior to interacting with the CLC and any potential changes after participating. To provide an additional perspective in consideration of self-report bias, it would be beneficial to also interview the coaches of each team and gain their insight into each participant.

The study could be applied to other leadership development programs for college students containing the elements of action learning, coaching, and intrapersonal reflection to determine if the format of the CLC's challenging yet supportive leadership simulations influences individual resilience. Furthermore, it might be helpful to recruit only individuals who have never participated in leadership development programs before engaging in their respective programs. Therefore, the researcher would have a clearer idea of whether the program was influential on individual resilience.

Taylor remarked on the influence of having an all-female team in regards to the strength of their team-dynamic and their ability to engage in honest, constructive feedback. Iris described how influential her coach was on her individual development because Iris viewed her coach as a strong female leader. While this study did not seek to determine the influence of gender as a moderating variable between leadership

development activities and individual resilience, there is an opportunity for future research to examine its influence among peers as well as between coaches and participants.

Another recommendation would be to design a longitudinal study in which participants were interviewed prior to participating, at the conclusion of the program, and then a few years later when they have had an opportunity to apply what they learned. Many of the participants described how they adopted an analytical and creative approach to problem-solving, but it would be helpful to know if they were able to continue utilizing these techniques years after participating. Additionally, participants spoke about how they saw value in exchanging constructive feedback because it assisted their development. A longitudinal study could investigate whether individuals continue engaging in feedback opportunities and what actions they take to receive that feedback.

The findings of the phenomenological study also provide recommendations for future research. Participants emphasized the value they associated with their team experience. When describing the program as a whole, individuals highlighted the team experiences that influenced their individual growth. While this study focused on individual resilience, participants described instances of collective resilience. Future research can explore the influence of teams or communities on individual and collective resilience. Another recommendation would be to study more individualized leadership programs and their influence on individual resilience versus team-oriented leadership development programs.

The Resiliency Scale for Young Adults (Prince-Embury et al., 2017) provides additional research opportunities. The subscales within the three factors coincide with

competencies that allow leaders to adapt quickly and encourage organizations to embrace change upon encountering challenges (Holmber, Larsson, & Backstrom, 2016; Leonard, 2017; Lunsford & Brown, 2017). A quantitative study could be conducted with individuals who participated in the CLC and individuals who did not participate with a more detailed analysis of the three factors and ten subscales. The study could be designed with a pre-test and two post-tests. One could be conducted immediately after the program concluded, and another after some time had passed to measure any change in competencies.

Additional research is needed as it pertains to leadership development programs and influencing individual resilience. A year and a half after participating in the CLC, the participants described how they adapted positively personally and within leadership positions; they demonstrated flexibility, developed creative solutions and took steps outside of their comfort zone to continue growing. This phenomenological study contributed to the field of literature on leadership development activities within challenging and supportive simulations that influence individual resilience; more research is needed as leaders continue to encounter novel challenges, such as the current pandemic. While further research is recommended, the findings of the study informed recommendations for practice.

Recommendations for Practice

The following recommendations are informed by the interview responses and themes identified through data analysis. The recommendations are supported by current literature regarding leadership and resilience development in traditional-aged college students. The following recommendations for leadership development programs are

considered: action learning and simulations, small-group format, constructive feedback, and team dynamic.

Action Learning and Simulations

While the CLC provided a structured, informative curriculum that included thirteen leadership acronyms, and the participants talked about how much the acronyms were a part of their preparation for the competition, they could not recall most of the acronyms a year and a half after participating. The two terms that left a lasting impression were emphasized as part of the activities: T.E.A.M.S. and S.O.L.V.E. Participants described the meaning these terms had when applied to their experiences during the training sessions and competition. T.E.A.M.S. served as a reminder that a team working together was just as important as achieving an activity's objective. S.O.L.V.E. provided the participants with a step-by-step problem-solving process to follow when approaching a challenge. After completing the program, many participants applied these concepts (sometimes directly, sometimes indirectly) to group interactions, leadership positions, and individual interactions with challenges.

Integrating action learning and simulations into leadership development activities provides individuals with an opportunity to practice competencies in a safe environment and a stronger likelihood of future competency application (Baron & Parent, 2015; Lacerenza et al., 2017; Murphy & Johnson, 2011; Strickland & Welsh, 2018). While some leadership development programs already integrate these development tools, it is recommended that more leadership development programs incorporate these elements so that participants will be more likely to retain what they learn, feel empowered enough to continue pursuing leadership opportunities, and apply the competencies to the leadership

positions. Ideally, individuals who participate in action learning and simulations during leadership development programs are more likely to demonstrate leadership competencies and protective factors indicative of resilience.

Small-group Format

The CLC intentionally limits the teams to six participants so that each person can play a critical role in the problem-solving process, exchange meaningful feedback, and receive individualized coaching throughout the program. This is supported by literature regarding the influence of individualized coaching (Jones et al., 2016) and the impact of individualized resilience training (Forbes & Fikretoglu, 2018; Lester et al., 2018; Vanhove et al., 2016). Participants described how strong of a bond they felt with their teammates; this bond facilitated their ability to exhibit vulnerability, trust and push themselves beyond their perceived limitations to help their team reach its potential. Furthermore, with only six team members, participants had to determine how to effectively utilize each other's strengths and weaknesses to achieve specific objectives in a wide variety of activities.

The small-group format also facilitated the development of interpersonal skills. Participants described how their teammates were different from their friends outside of the program; they appreciated the diversity of backgrounds, personalities, and strengths among their teammates. A team of six people provided an intimacy that allowed the team to strengthen its connection but also revealed the challenges of working on a team. When conflict occurred, it was handled directly at the risk of it interfering with the team dynamic. Confronting conflict in the program's safe environment helped the participants become more comfortable with confrontation in ensuing interactions.

The small group format and the debrief following each activity contributed to the comfort participants felt giving and receiving constructive feedback. The small group format also allowed coaches to provide each team member with specific, meaningful feedback delivered in a way that was easier for each person to digest based on their personality. Because of the safe environment established by their coaches and the support they felt from their teammates and coaches, participants were able to see the significance of participating in a feedback process (King & Santana, 2010). Because participants valued their teammates and coaches, they integrated the feedback into their individual development, not only for their growth but also for their team's betterment.

Ten participants described how they integrated a feedback process into leadership positions they obtained after participating in the CLC. They viewed feedback as a critical component of growth for individuals and their collective organizations. Not only did participating in the CLC increase their level of comfort with feedback, it seemed to increase their confidence in facilitating the feedback process for others. Some participants described the additional step of integrating constructive feedback and taking action to communicate value for the feedback received.

By providing opportunities to receive constructive feedback from coaches and exchange feedback between teammates, individuals can have more meaningful experiences in leadership development programs (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2016; Lacerenza et al., 2017). Exchanging feedback allows each participant to take ownership of their role in the team dynamic and receive an outside perspective from coaches and teammates. They may feel encouraged to integrate this feedback into their own development. Moreover, they may feel inspired to integrate this feedback process into future leadership positions.

Team Dynamic

While leadership development programs tend to focus on developing competencies in individuals in the hopes that they will pursue leadership opportunities, the avenue through which these competencies seem to have more meaning is through a team-based program. While people can learn about leadership competencies in isolation, there seems to be value in providing individuals with an opportunity to practice these competencies in a safe environment with their peers. Through their interview responses, participants emphasized the experiences they shared with their teammates.

The CLC communicated the value of collaboration by attributing half of each activity's potential points to the team's process. While there was a designated leader for each activity, every member needed to be active in the team's efforts to achieve the objective. Coaches also played a role in strengthening the team dynamic by facilitating discussions on trust, constructive feedback, and encouraging team camaraderie. After each activity, the debrief process provided an opportunity for the team to discuss its overall performance and the role individual members played in relation to the team's efforts.

Through interacting with their teammates and coaches, the participants were able to reflect and identify areas of growth that they gained from the CLC. They learned about their capabilities, and they learned how to interact with others. The team dynamic encouraged them to trust in and collaborate with diverse individuals (who in some instances exhibited strong personalities), engage in a servant leadership mentality, and persevere through challenging situations. This coincides with the literature on the ability to demonstrate resilience in leadership positions. Interpersonal skills, such as

communicating openly, developing a trusting environment, and collaborating influence a leader's ability to exhibit resilience (Forster and Duchek, 2017).

Conclusion

This phenomenological study explored the influence of specific leadership development activities of action learning, coaching, and intrapersonal reflection within the context of challenging and supportive simulations on individual resilience. It added to the current literature on college student leadership and resilience development and provided recommendations for future research and practices. Participants described how they were inspired to test their own perceived limitations due to the program's safe environment. They shifted their perspective of failure to view an experience as an opportunity for growth. Participating in the CLC facilitated a comfortability with discomfort which led individuals to pursue new and challenging experiences after the program concluded. Due to the strong connection they felt with their teammates, individuals held themselves accountable to their growth and their contributions to the team. They felt comfortable engaging in feedback and demonstrating vulnerability. Through the emphasis of a team dynamic, participants experienced growth pertaining to emotional intelligence, confidence in their abilities, and their ability to interact and collaborate with diverse individuals.

This study's results contributed to an understanding of how leadership development activities within the CLC influence its participants beyond the intention of teaching the concrete skills and strategies of effective leadership. The study shed light on aspects of the CLC that were most meaningful to participants regarding their leadership and resilience development and how the program design was such that individuals felt a

balance of challenge and support. By examining the influence of action learning, coaching, and intrapersonal reflection on resilience, higher education institutions gained a greater understanding of potential ways to develop individuals' resilience. For colleges and universities already providing specific resilience training opportunities, leadership development programs can represent another way to develop students' resilience. Furthermore, this study provided insight into pedagogical approaches to development of resilience in leaders.

Organizations can benefit from students who experience leadership development programs with action learning, coaching, and intrapersonal reflection because students will enter the workforce possessing leadership competencies, including resilience. If college students participate in leadership development during college, they are more likely to pursue leadership development opportunities (Avolio, 2016; Murphy & Johnson, 2016) and demonstrate leadership competencies in the workplace (Lunsford & Brown, 2017; Murphy & Johnson, 2011; Rosch & Villanueva, 2016). Additionally, if college students engage in opportunities to strengthen their resilience through leadership development programs, they may be better equipped to overcome complex challenges.

The participants described the positive influence the CLC had on their ability to demonstrate resilience. They shared the integration of a problem-solving framework and their ability to approach novel and challenging situations with an analytical process. A year and a half after participating in the CLC and amid a pandemic, individuals recounted experiences in which they exhibited creativity and flexibility. The challenges the participants have encountered and their ability to adapt positively emphasizes the

importance of examining the influence of leadership development activities on an individual's inclination and ability to demonstrate resilience.

Appendix A: Interview Questions

- What do you recall of your experience with The Collegiate Leadership Competition (including preparation, actual competition, and post competition activities)?
- The Collegiate Leadership Competition utilizes *action learning* as experienced through the problem-solving activities, coaching ,and intrapersonal reflection to encourage growth. Please speak to these elements regarding their influence on your individual growth.
- What skills, abilities, or knowledge have you gained from your experience with The Collegiate Leadership Competition?
- Since your experience with The Collegiate Leadership Competition, how have you been able to apply these skills, abilities, or knowledge?
- In what ways have recent events impacted and/or influenced the abilities, skills and knowledge learned in your Collegiate Leadership Competition experience?
- What influence is your experience with The Collegiate Leadership Competition having on your day-to-day life?
- Tell me about how The Collegiate Leadership Competition affected your ability to be resilient.

Appendix B: Resiliency Scale for Young Adults (RSYA) (Prince-Embury et al., 2017)

Here is a list of things that happen to people, and that people think, feel, or do. Read each sentence carefully, and choose the one answer (Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, or Almost Always) that tells about you best. Please try to answer every question.

THERE ARE NO RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWERS.

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always
0	1	2	3	4

1. I always try and look on the bright side.	0	1	2	3	4
2. People say that I am easy to upset.	0	1	2	3	5
3. My life will be happy.	0	1	2	3	4
4. I can forgive my family if they upset me.	0	1	2	3	4
5. I can make major changes in my life when I need to.	0	1	2	3	4
6. My feelings are easily hurt.	0	1	2	3	4
7. When I get upset, I stay upset for about a week.	0	1	2	3	4
8. If I have a problem, I can solve it.	0	1	2	3	4
9. People know who I really am.	0	1	2	3	4
10. I like people.	0	1	2	3	4
11. If something bad happens, I can ask my friends for help.	0	1	2	3	4
12. I can get so upset that I can't stand how I feel.	0	1	2	3	4
13. There are people who will help me if something bad happens.	0	1	2	3	4
14. I welcome changes in my life as chances to grow.	0	1	2	3	4
15. I do things well.	0	1	2	3	4
16. I find meaning in hardships that come my way.	0	1	2	3	4
17. I can let others see my real feelings.	0	1	2	3	4
18. When I get upset, I react without thinking.	0	1	2	3	4

19. I can overcome life crises that come my way.	0	1	2	3	4
20. I look for the 'good' in life.	0	1	2	3	4
21. I view obstacles as challenges to overcome.	0	1	2	3	4
22. I can meet new people easily.	0	1	2	3	4
23. I welcome changes to my life.	0	1	2	3	4
24. I can trust others.	0	1	2	3	4
25. I can make up with friends after a fight.	0	1	2	3	4
26. I can ask for help when I need to.	0	1	2	3	4
27. When I am upset, I make mistakes.	0	1	2	3	4
28. I feel I'm in control of my life.	0	1	2	3	4
29. When I get upset, I stay upset for the whole day.	0	1	2	3	4
30. If people let me down, I can forgive them.	0	1	2	3	4
31. If I get upset or angry, there is someone I can talk to.	0	1	2	3	4
32. I get so upset that I lose control.	0	1	2	3	4
33. I can be myself around others.	0	1	2	3	4
34. When I get upset, I don't think clearly.	0	1	2	3	4
35. I am good at figuring things out.	0	1	2	3	4
36. When I am upset, I do things that I later feel bad about.	0	1	2	3	4
37. I get very upset when things don't go my way.	0	1	2	3	4
38. I don't hold grudges against those who upset or hurt me.	0	1	2	3	4
39. When I get upset, I stay upset for about a month.	0	1	2	3	4
40. I can make friends easily.	0	1	2	3	4
41. My family or friends will help me if something bad happens to me.	0	1	2	3	4
42. When I get upset, I stay upset for several days.	0	1	2	3	4
43. People accept me for who I really am.	0	1	2	3	4
44. I feel calm with people.	0	1	2	3	4

45. When I am upset, it is hard for me to recover.	0	1	2	3	4
46. No matter what happens, things will be all right.	0	1	2	3	4
47. It is easy for me to get upset.	0	1	2	3	4
48. People like me.	0	1	2	3	4
49. I am able to resolve conflicts with others.	0	1	2	3	4
50. I try to be positive.	0	1	2	3	4

Scoring for the Resiliency Scales for Young Adults (RSYA)

Sandra Prince-Embury Donald H. Saklofske David W. Nordstokke

Global Scale Subscale	Items	Subscale Total	Global Scale Total Score	Global Scale Average score
<u><i>Sense of Mastery</i></u>				
Optimism	1 3 20 46 50			
	_____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ = _____			
Self-Efficacy	8 15 19 28 35		+	
	_____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ = _____			
Adaptability	5 14 16 21 23		+	
	_____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ = _____			
				_____ / 3 = _____
<u><i>Sense of Relatedness</i></u>				
Trust	9 17 24 33 43			
	_____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ = _____			
Access to support	11 13 26 31 41		+	
	_____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ = _____			
Comfort with others	10 22 40 44 48		+	
	_____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ = _____			
Tolerance	4 25 30 38 49		+	
	_____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ = _____			
				_____ / 4 = _____
<u><i>Emotional Reactivity</i></u>				
Sensitivity	2 6 12 37 47			
	_____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ = _____			
Recovery	7 29 39 42 45		+	
	_____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ = _____			
Impairment	18 27 32 34 36		+	
	_____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ = _____			
				_____ / 3 = _____

1. Record item responses for each item.
2. Add item response scores for each subscale.
2. Add subscale scores for each global Score
3. Average Scale Score: divide global scale score by number of subscales for that global scale.

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