Creating an Effective Educational Environment for Adult Learners: A Qualitative, Multi-Case Study of Off-Campus Center Administrator's Use of Invitational Leadership

Carolyn P. McKnight, Ed.D.
University of Kansas
Barbara N. Martin, Ed.D.
University of Central Missouri

Abstract

This study was designed to examine off-campus centers and their administrators in creating an effective learning environment for adult learners using a new innovative leadership theory, invitational, which is a holistic approach that nurtures the belief everyone is intrinsically motivated and it is the leaders' responsibility to unleash their true potential (Purkey & Siegel, 2003). Data analysis revealed three emerging themes: 1) Passionate Partnership, 2) Motivational Inspiration and 3) Organic Nous of Affinity. Implications of the study concluded preparatory programs should incorporate the aspects of optimism and intentionality as essential leadership characteristics when training leaders, and adult market-driven educational needs should drive programs and services offered at an off-campus center.

While institutions of higher education have always had a mission to conduct research and offer educational programming to improve and enrich the lives of its stakeholders, continuing education has provided the opportunity to extend that knowledge and research to audiences that otherwise would not have benefited from it, and they provide educational efforts not confined to traditional departments (Schejbal & Wilson, 2008). The role of continuing education is to offer courses, services, and learning opportunities beyond the main campus learning environment (Armstrong, 2001; Kaplan, 2004; Shoemaker, 2008). Consequently, off-campus centers, as part of continuing education, have evolved from a being a trend to an important component of an institution's outreach mission (Gabor & Heggan, 1995). The mission of most off-campus centers is to serve an adult audience that works full-time and take classes at night, which is contrary to the main campus that is designed for the more traditional 18-24 year old, full-time student (O'Neill, 2005; Shoemaker, 2008; Thelin, 2004). Although missions for off-campus centers can be similar, providing a uniformed description is problematic, because each type of institution can approach its off-campus center in a unique format (The Higher Learning Commission, 2011; Manzo, 1997). Creating a learning environment conducive for the off-campus learner can sometimes be difficult as many of the resources are provided through the host institution, which historically has functioned for traditional students (Flora & Hirt, 2008; Giancola, Munz, & Trares, 2008; Morey, 2004). Of foremost concern is the perception by peer faculty who teach on the main campus that

courses being taught at off-campus centers are inferior to the quality of instruction delivered at the home institution (Gabor & Heggan, 1995). As Shoemaker (2008) noted, "When referring to quality, there is an underlining environment that depicts 'separate but not equal'" (p. 22). Therefore, when faced with these many concerns, leadership of off-campus centers becomes an important component to its success (Flora & Hirt, 2008). Administrators of off-campus centers have the extensive task of proving their value and worth to both its main campuses and the community where the off-campus facility resides (Flora & Hirt, 2008). As leaders, off-campus center administrators have to be flexible by first creating an atmosphere that mimics the invitation on the main campus, but also be willing to engage community members as part of the educational environment (Gabor & Heggan, 1995). Moreover, these leaders serve changing demographics of students and must be willing to accommodate their needs within the off-campus center (Pappas & Jerman, 2004).

However, although off-campus centers have become an important niche within higher education, little research has been conducted on their descriptions, learning environments, quality of instruction, and the leadership style of their administrators (Flora & Hirt, 2008; Gabor & Heggan, 1995). This lack of research presented the basis for studying off-campus centers and their administrators in an attempt to better understand their importance and significance within higher education (Flora & Hirt, 2008) by examining the ambiguity of off-campus centers in their description, environment, and quality of instruction (Aslanian, 2007; Gabor & Heggan, 1995; Pappas & Jerman, 2004; Sperling & Tucker, 1997). Moreover, the examination of leadership for off-campus centers should be approached differently than through the historical educational leadership theory (Flora & Hirt, 2008; Schejbal & Wilson, 2008). We postulate that these administrators should embrace an encompassing approach of influencing, collaborating, and engaging with a variety of stakeholders (Flora & Hirt, 2008; Gabor & Heggan, 1995). Since these administrators often engage in multiple social and contextual situations with their employees, colleagues, students, and local community members, leadership of off-campus centers should be approached differently than previous theories utilized in higher education (Edelson, 1999; Heifetz & Linsky, 2002). An innovative leadership theory, invitational, provides a holistic approach which inherently assumes that every person is motivated, and to unleash a person's potential, the leader's role is to create an inviting environment in both professional and personal contexts (Novak & Purkey, 2001; Purkey & Siegel, 2003).

The goal of this study is to examine if invitational leadership characteristics have any impact on the off-campus center's environment and services (Asbill, 2006; Novak & Rocca, 2006). The following questions guided this inquiry:
1.   How do off-campus administrators use invitational leadership characteristics in

creating an educational environment comparable to their main campus as perceived by students, faculty, and staff?

2.   How are the Five Ps—people, places, policies, programs, and processes—of invitational leadership significant to the educational environment of the adult learner?

Conceptual Framework

When analyzing off-campus center administrators, invitational leadership emerged as a suitable theory to study their leadership characteristics since the theory considers that everyone is motivated and it is the leader's responsibility to unleash their potential (Novak & Purkey, 2001; Purkey & Novak, 2008). As a leadership practice, invitational leaders engage with others and invite them to collaborate on initiatives for shared benefit (Novak & Purkey, 2001). As Purkey and Siegel (2003) stated, "[S]uccessful leaders take a strong, personal interest in their associates and get results through respectful relationships" (pp. 7-8), while welcoming change and diversity of opinions among the participants as an opportunity to grow and learn as an organization. Unlike other theories, such as educational or adult and continuing education leadership, invitational theory provides a template of the essential leadership characteristics and its application within all realms of a leader's life (Novak & Purkey, 2001; Purkey & Siegel, 2003). Although these theories were not considered for the study, both assisted the researcher in delineating the colossal theoretical framework of leadership to the concise invitational leadership theory as a conceptual framework.

Educational leadership, known to be a broad, overarching theory, has the purpose to develop innovative and effective leaders in managing the changing landscapes of higher education organizational structures (Bolman & Deal, 2008; Nixon, 1996). This theory is rooted in the philosophical ideals of Taylor's (1947) managerial principles of leading an organization from a hierarchical perspective. Recent theorists contend educational leadership should embrace an entrepreneurial approach of engaging and collaborating new initiatives, which could be appropriate when studying off-campus center administrators (Gronn & Ribbins, 1996; Rich, 2006; Whetten & Cameron, 1985). However, the teaching and learning aspects of educational leadership does not provide the holistic approach needed when studying the position of an off-campus center administrator (Bush, 2003; Flora & Hirt, 2008; Nixon, 1996).

Adult and continuing education leadership has similar managerial origins of educational leadership although it differs in its focus on the non-traditional educational delivery processes and a specific type of student, the adult learner (Donaldson, 1992; Edelson, 1992; Shoemaker, 2008). This theory embraces an entrepreneurial approach, where leaders expect changes and foster a sense of collaboration among team members to compete a goal or objective (Edelson, 1992). Nevertheless, even though it is innovative

leadership theory, adult and continuing education remained guided by managerial theory and lack the moral perspectives to consider it an encompassing approach to leadership (Donaldson, 1992). While both of the discussed theories are successful approaches to developing educational leaders, a more holistic approach was chosen for this study because we contend that leadership is not a series of events, but rather it encompasses all aspects of a person's life (Purkey & Novak, 2008; Purkey & Siegel, 2003).

The intention of invitational leadership theory is to view leadership as a holistic and dynamic model, which embraces leaders that pursue a more purposeful life and to "invite their colleagues, family, friends, loved ones, and community to do the same" (Purkey & Siegel, 2003, p. 3). Consequently, invitational leadership differs from educational leadership and adult and continuing education theories by being a more holistic approach to leadership through the four principles of respect, trust, optimism, and intentionality that "encourages leaders to pursue more joyful and more meaningful personal and professional lives" (Purkey & Siegel, 2003, p. 3). As a result, Purkey and Siegel (2003) defined the four principles of invitational leadership:

Respect -   Believing all people are valuable and should be treated in a caring manner.
Trust -   Possessing confidence and predictability of others' abilities and integrity.
Optimism -   Understanding that human potential is untapped and that every person is "capable of self-direction and should be treated accordingly" (p. 15).
Intention -   Implying leaders have "a choice and a desire to be respectful, trustworthy, and optimistic" (p. 20).

These principles take the form of an inviting stance which is applied to the total environment, known as the Five Ps: people, places, policies, programs, and processes (Novak & Purkey, 2001, p.12). These Five Ps represent all aspects of a leader's personal relationships and physical surroundings, including connections with family, friends, colleagues, and customers as well as the physical environment of home and work (Frye, Kisselburgh, & Butts, 2007). Below is a more comprehensive description of each of these areas:

People -   The most important aspect for leadership is developing relationships, because people maintain positive patterns through interpersonal communication (Novak & Purkey, 2001). Invitational leaders accomplish these relationships through focusing on a communal environment and having a commitment to employees, students, and

	colleagues (Purkey & Siegel, 2003). In doing so, they exhibit the principles of respect and trust (Purkey & Siegel, 2003).
Places -	"Places are powerful, and they can influence the performance and satisfaction of all who inhabit the school" (Novak & Purkey, 2001, p. 17). The physical environment should represent intentionality in it being functional, attractive, and clean. The effect of a positive setting improves the level of "morale, satisfaction, productivity, creativity, and customer service" (Purkey & Siegel, 2003, p. 118).
Policies -	Policies consist of the written and unwritten "directives, codes, and rules" used to regulate schools (Novak & Purkey, 2001, p. 17). Similar to places, policies represent the ideas and feeling of the people who create them. Inside the environment of an off-campus center setting, policies should be made with the principles of optimism and intentionality in mind (Asbill, 2006).
Programs -	Programs should be designed to "work for the benefit of everyone and…encourage active engagement with significant content" (Novak & Purkey, 2001, p. 18). An important aspect is to make sure the programs do not portray elitist, sexist, or other discriminating features that could affect the purpose of the program (Novak & Purkey, 2001; Purkey & Siegel, 2003; Stanley, Juhnke, & Purkey, 2004). Furthermore, programs should convey respect and trust and should be created through a collaborative decision-making process (Ouchi, 1981).
Processes -	Purkey and Siegel (2003) contend that "process is the bottom line in Invitational Leadership for it reveals how the other four 'Ps' fit together to support a culture of respect, trust, optimism, and intentionality" (p. 132). The invitational leader establishes these processes through a collaborative effort between faculty, students, and staff (Chan, 2006; Novak & Purkey, 2001). Administrators of off-campus centers are immersed within their communities personally and professionally, therefore these leaders should be aware of their inviting stances (Novak & Purkey, 2001; Purkey & Siegel, 2003). Invitational leadership also recognizes the different types of inviting stances leaders can choose to utilize (Day, Harris, & Hadfield, 2001; Novak & Purkey, 2001; Purkey & Siegel, 2003). These include:
Intentional uninviting –	The most toxic form of leadership where the leader purposely embarrasses or discourages individuals by design (Novak & Purkey, 2001, p. 20; Purkey & Siegel, 2003, p. 53).

Unintentional disinviting –	The leader unknowingly creates a negative environment, including engaging in careless and inappropriate behavior (Novak & Purkey, 2001, p. 21; Purkey & Siegel, 2003, p. 57).
Unintentional inviting –	Sometimes known as the born leaders, these individuals possess leadership characteristics, but without a plan (Novak & Purkey, 2001, p. 22; Purkey & Siegel, 2003, p. 65).
Intentional inviting –	The leader chooses appropriate behaviors and conducts careful planning to act accordingly (Novak & Purkey, 2001, p. 23; Purkey & Siegel, 2003, pp. 67-68).

Of course, the goal for a leader is to be inviting, but Purkey and Siegel (2003) contend, "Intentionality allows invitational leaders to achieve direction, purpose, and skill in their actions" (p. 67).

Method
In formulating the design and methodology for this study, the researchers took into account the goals, purpose, and research questions of the study. In doing so, a qualitative, multi-case study emerged to address the problem of practice or phenomena of off-campus center administrators and invitational leadership (Creswell, 2007). In selecting participants a criterion-based sampling method was used (Merriam, 1988) resulting in three administrators (n=3) chosen for the study who have worked at an off-campus center for over three years in a leadership role. Also considered was the fact that their institutions are considered as Master's Colleges and Universities or "institutions that awarded at least 50 master's degrees and fewer than 20 doctoral degrees" (Carnegie Foundation, 2011). To complete the participant selection, three supervisors (n=3), two faculty persons (n=6) along with two focus groups, one of staff and one of students (n=22) were selected from each location.

Settings
The chosen institutions were designated as public and were located within three different Midwestern states within the United States. Accordingly, the three main campuses were located in smaller cities or towns, with their off-campus centers located in larger metropolitan area or suburbs. A description of each off-campus center setting is provided with pseudonym.

Site 1: Payola University – Metro Center.
Situated in a building with direct access from a major interstate, the first location is easily accessible for adult students with a large sign visible from the building indicating the location. The Metro Center resides on the fourth floor of a multi-use building with other companies, such as technology businesses, accountants, and another university. When

entering the glass building, the students are greeted by a large lobby and a sign directing them to use the elevator to access the site. When exiting the elevator, students are greeted by a front-desk person and information posted for the students including degree options (doctorate, specialist, masters, and bachelors) for potential students.

The front desk person is wearing the school's t-shirt letting the student or visitor know that she or he has reached the right place. In addition, the entry way has a large open area behind it where students can either go left or right to get to the classrooms. The site has 18 classrooms configured in over 26,000 square feet with classrooms ranging from 14 to 75 chairs. These rooms have chairs and tables that are on wheels to move and configure in different formats. To accommodate students coming from work, the site has a lounge with a soda and food machine for students to eat and relax before classes start. The center's atmosphere is similar to an office space, rather than the traditional campus classrooms. The cushioned chairs and large tables also provide ample space for students who might attend long class periods (i.e., three hours at night).

Site 2: Rutners University – Adult Learning Center.
The Adult Learning Center is located in a suburb of a metropolitan city. As a public institution its mission is to offer graduate courses within the area. The Adult Learning Center competes with a small private liberal arts college and an extension site of a small private liberal arts college from a different state. The site location is embedded within a high school campus in a building located within walking distance of the main high school. The center has a welcoming environment with a large sign indicating students have located the center. When walking through the front doors, signage directs students to the elevators where the Adult Learning Center occupies the top two floors of a four-floor building. Entering the elevator, several posters and signs provide a sense of the university's spirit and, throughout the entire site, pictures of the main campus are displayed providing a sense of connection to the main university.

Upon reading the Center, a person is met by a friendly face to answer any questions or direct a person to the appropriate place. The third floor mostly has office space and locations for instructors to make copies or store material. It also has a room dedicated to technology, where students and faculty can check out a laptop for their entire educational experience. The classrooms on this and the fourth floor are large and conducive for adult learning with rooms that include two-person tables and relaxing chairs. The entire off-campus center occupies 18,950 square feet of space and has 13 classrooms ranging in capacity size from 15-30 people. The fourth floor has a large lounge with a plasma television where the students can relax, eat, or study. A vending machine is provided, or the students can bring in their own food. Each room has emergency directions and instructions posted near the door.

Site 3: Williams University - Education Center.
The Education Center is located within a thriving suburb of a metropolitan city. Situated within a building that resides in a multi-building complex, the Education Center is difficult to find because outside signage is not visible. However, plans for a sign were underway when the researcher visited the location. Within the building, the Education Center occupies most of the space on the first floor with two other business tenants. The main office area is within an office suite, and has a small reception area when entering the site. When entering the office space, it is easy to see that the space is inhabited by a university as pictures of their school and mascot don the walls. This area has small offices for the administrator, recruiter, and one faculty member. It also has a small conference room, break room for faculty, small bookstore, and a desk for the graduate assistant. To access the classrooms and another faculty office, students enter from the main entryway of the building. The site currently occupies 9,500 square feet and has six classrooms. All of the classrooms are large and able to hold up to 30 students with comfortable tables and chairs. Although this campus does not currently have a lounge for students to eat or relax, a room was under construction to provide this type of service.

Instrumentation Protocol
The process of collecting data, interviewing individuals, and conducting focus groups were used to present the thoughts, behaviors and feelings of the participants that could not be observed (Krueger & Casey, 2009). To triangulate the data, the researchers further observed, analyzed promotional material, and reviewed historical information (Creswell, 2007; Gillham; 2000; Merriam, 2002).

Semi-structured interviews (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003) were conducted consisting of open-ended questions with each off-campus leader, their supervisor, and two faculty members. Focus groups were conducted with the administrators' staff and one student group from each of the three off-campus locations to gain a "range of opinions of people across several groups" within a naturalistic setting (Krueger & Casey, 2009, p. 7). The interview and focus group questions were taken from the two research questions that guided the study (Stake, 2010), and were aligned within the framework of invitational leadership (Day, Harris, & Hadfield, 2001; Novak & Purkey, 2001; Purkey & Siegel, 2003) and other related literature (DePree, 2010; Greenleaf, 2002). Examples of questions asked of the off-campus leaders include the following: As an off-campus administrator how do you attempt to build a sense of trust among your staff, faculty, and students? How is this different from building respect and trust with your main campus colleagues? The faculty and students were asked similar questions about how off-campus administrators built trust and respect within the learning environment.

Data Analysis

Using a social constructivist lens, this qualitative multi-case study examined off-campus administrators through the conceptual frame of the characteristics of invitational leadership (Creswell, 2007). In addition, through the use of several analysis components of a multi-case study approach, the researchers were hopeful that "issue-relevant meanings will emerge" (Creswell, 2007, p. 163). Consequently, the concurrent nested model allowed the researchers to examine multiple levels so that the interview/focus group data, observation data, and document analysis were collected separately but the analysis and interpretation were combined to "seek convergence among the results" (Creswell, 2007, pp. 221 - 222). Analysis was conducted via an iterative process that identified common themes and triangulated multiple data sources (Huberman & Miles, 2002).

While there are several methods used to analyze qualitative multi-case studies (Creswell, 2007; Mertens, 2005), for this inquiry, cross-case analysis served as a systematic technique of searching for natural generalizations from the data (Creswell, 2007; Yin, 1989). The researchers first described the context of each individual case, and then created a cross-case analysis of the data collected from off-campus centers (Creswell, 2007). Taking into account the researcher's connection with the participants, the resultant themes provided relevant information for administrators in their use of invitational leadership characteristics.

Results

Through the process of collecting, analyzing, and synthesizing data, consistent themes emerged to provide the researcher a thick description of the phenomena (Creswell, 2007; Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Mertens, 2005). These themes included, 1) Passionate Partnership, 2) Motivational Inspiration and 3) Organic Nous of Affinity. These themes provide an understanding of the invitational leadership practices of the participant administrators and the resultant educational learning environments of off-campus centers from the perceptions of students, faculty and staff.

Passionate Partnership

There was an overwhelming sense of teamwork between the administrators and their staff. When discussing collaboration, two prominent characteristics, respect and trust, were noted by all of the participants as key components between the leader and staff in fostering a feeling of group effort and support. Respect was regarded by the participants as an extremely important characteristic for leaders to possess. More specifically, this is described as an individual who displays respect, treats others with consideration, and basically, as one staff member noted, treats others "the way you want to be treated." On the other hand, trust "is established in predictable patterns of action, as opposed

to a single act" (Purkey & Siegel, 2003, p. 12). Each of the university employees interviewed responded positively to how their administrator is a trustful leader. As one supervisor stated, if "somebody says they are going to do something and they don't do it, there is breaking trust immediately and I have never seen that with my off campus leader." Another supervisor provided a perspective on how trust relates to the off-campus administrator establishing credibility when he noted that "it is a very critical relationship with the department and the faculty, and he has been able to build his own trust and reputation through his consistency and fair dealing." Trust and respect of the administrators provided the framework of shared leadership and partnership between the stakeholders within these off campus settings creating an effective learning environment.

Additionally, teamwork and collaboration were evident in how stakeholders were engaged in the responsibilities of the decision-making process. The off-campus leaders all shared a belief that new ideas were welcome and one stated, "I always tell my staff you can do anything as long as it's not illegal, doesn't hurt somebody." Students also felt they had a voice in the decision-making process as they noted they were invited to take surveys and to be on advisory committees.

Motivational Inspiration
In the majority of the interviews, the off campus leaders were portrayed as being affirming leaders with a can-do attitude that led to accomplishing new challenges and the ability to inspire others to achieve. This sense of optimistic leadership provided a feeling of connectedness by the participants. As one faculty member described her leader, "Well, I think one way she does that is by having a very positive attitude herself towards the area and towards the faculty that she serves and the students that she serves and, in addition, I never heard her talk about not being able to make something happen."
One supervisor summarized, "His comments and personal demeanor, I think, is a large part of his leadership, he is approachable, and he always has a positive outlook on things." In delving further into what contributes to the motivational influence the participants experience at the off-campus center location and about their administrator, concepts of optimism and intentionality were expressed as contributing factors.

Organic Nous of Affinity
A significant number of participants indicated how the administrators at the off-campus centers strived to provide students, faculty, and staff a sense of affinity or connectedness. One leader remarked on having students and faculty feel comfortable at their site stating, "It is very important . . . that they need to know that this is their facility and their home and that we want them to feel comfortable." This sense of belonging contributes to individuals wanting to attend and teach at the center, which optimally leads to a successful learning atmosphere (Asbill, 2006). Since the administrators embrace a philosophy of

serving people as a norm at the center, excellent customer service is a necessity. As one student noted, "They're excellent in customer service, and the centers are very engaging."

An off-campus center administrator should possess the characteristics of trust and respect to create an effective learning environment. If a leader lacked one or both of these characteristics, it was determined within this inquiry that the participants would become indifferent and less enthusiastic about participating in the leader's vision or goals. From the perspective of invitational theorists, respect is the most significant component for a leader to demonstrate; however, from the findings, it is suggested that trust is as equally important characteristic (Purkey & Siegel, 2003). Similarly, it was found that the off campus leaders were intentional when they demonstrated such acts as engaging in relationships with stakeholders, conducting meetings, and working with colleagues on their main campuses. When leading a quasi-autonomous operation within a larger organizational structure, it was imperative these administrators demonstrate intentional leadership to provide an inviting environment, because as Novak and Purkey (2001) state, "[E]ducators are never neutral…everything and everybody in and around schools add to or subtract from the educative process" (p. 15).

Discussion

A thick description of the phenomena of invitational leadership (Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Mertens, 2005) emerged through the process of collecting data. Accordingly, the following conclusions were derived from the findings of this study related to on off-campus centers and their administrators in creating an effective learning environment through the lens of invitational leadership.

Passionate Partnership

It can be concluded from the data that an off-campus center administrator should possess the characteristics of trust and respect in order to create an effective learning environment that nurtures teamwork and collaboration. If a leader lacked one or both of these characteristics, it was determined within the research that the participants would become indifferent and less committed or enthusiastic towards their positional responsibilities or participation with the vision or goals of the off-campus center. From the perspective of invitational theorists, respect is the most significant component for a leader to demonstrate; however, from the findings, it can be concluded trust is as equally important characteristic (Purkey & Siegel, 2003). Although optimism and intentionality were considered desired characteristics for off-campus center administrators, it was evident from the interviews and focus groups that the participants highly regarded individuals whom they trust and respect.

Evolved from the above finding of respect and trust, the intense collaboration that administrators' conducted with a variety of their stakeholders was indicated throughout the interviews and focus groups and resulted in teamwork and partnerships. Accounts of the administrators involving faculty, staff, and students within the decision-making process were recorded. In addition, the administrators created a web of participation among the staff members through distributing and sharing responsibilities at the center. In essence, the participation in the decision-making process and cooperation of facilitating role functions provided a sense of transparency, creating an inviting environment for all stakeholders. When asked what the most important characteristic of a leader was, one staff member stated, "Can I add transparency?" This aspect of transparency is woven throughout the environment if the administrator is consistently viewed as a leader that is respected and trusted from all of the customers of the center, including other university colleagues (i.e., faculty and administration) who primarily reside on the main campus. As a supervisor noted, "As a leader you are watched 100% of the time and 1% [when] you might make a mistake is almost too much, so literally, you are always being judged by all stakeholders, whether it is staff, faculty and students, or people who aren't engaged in it." Therefore, this research concludes that the administrator serves as a key component in connecting the university's academics, faculty, and resources to a population of students that might not have had the opportunity to engage in advanced learning. Figure 1 shows the partnership among the administrator and staff to the university and their primary audience, the adult learner, as revealed using Wordle (Feinberg, 2013). This produced the visual display of the most commonly used phrases and words, and in this instance, mirrored the conclusion that these participants engaged in noteworthy conversation about personal goals and vision, along with trust and respect.

Figure 1. The Leadership of the Off-Campus Administrator (http://www.wordle.net/)

The administrator facilitated the connection between the university, students, and off-campus centers through inviting leadership. In considering invitational leadership as the driving force for the environments to continue to evolve, the aspects of trust and respect between the entities enables the mechanisms to rotate consistently in all situations. Thus, it can be concluded that an administrator should embrace these leadership characteristics throughout all aspects of his or her personal and professional life (Purkey & Siegel, 2003).

Motivational Inspiration
The administrators within this study all displayed an inspiring attitude when engaging with stakeholders, even when presented with a difficult situation. From the results, it can be concluded these administrators would be considered intentionally inviting, where the leader embraces the four characteristics of trust, respect, optimism, and intentionality (Purkey & Siegel, 2003, p. 67). Through the perceptions of the study's participants, the leaders, when presented with requests or new initiatives, demonstrated a willingness to engage in these challenges. The characteristic of optimism is a key component of being a leader because change is a necessary step for personal and professional enrichment instead of perceived as a threat (Purkey & Siegel, 2003). The administrators are intentional when they demonstrated such acts as engaging in relationships with

stakeholders, conducting meetings, and working with colleagues on their main campuses. When leading a quasi-autonomous operation within a larger organizational structure, it is imperative that these administrators demonstrate intentional leadership to provide an inviting environment.

As mentioned throughout the data, although these leaders foster a positive way of life and have created an environment that is inviting at the off-campus center, their connection with their main campus colleagues have aspects of having an unilateral relationship. This is similar to Flora and Hirt's (2008) research on the job satisfaction of higher education center administrators. Illustrated in Figure 2 is the relationship between the administrator and the main campus.

Figure 2: Represents the Relationship between the Main Campus and Off-Campus Centers
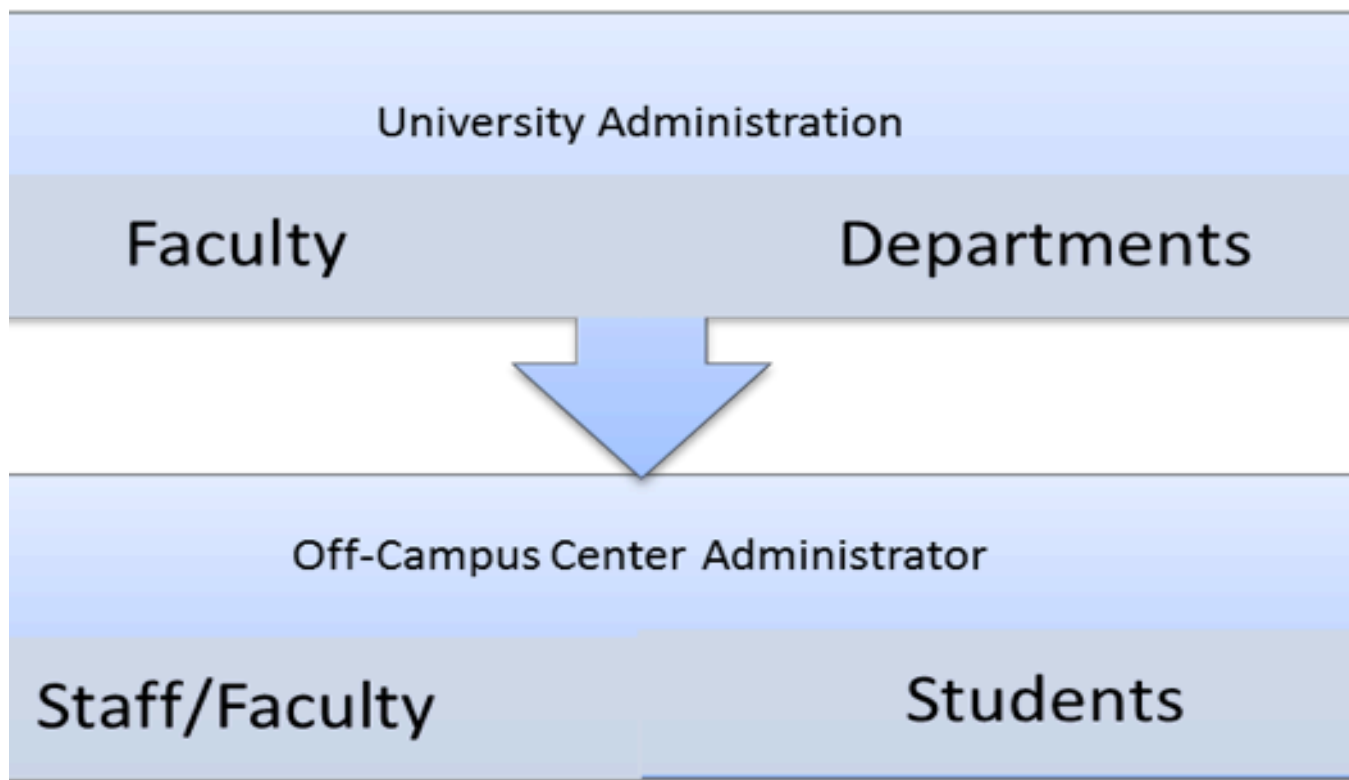
The administrator and staff do have connective interrelationships with their main campus colleagues. This was further illustrated by several participants who confirmed the administrator was impactful in working with main campus colleagues to deliver programs and courses to the off-campus center and dissolve misconceptions with main campus faculty about instruction and learning at a distant location. However, a caveat exists as well, because outside of their job duties, the administrators' motivational inspiration is not equally represented between the main institution and the off-campus center.

Organic Nous of Affinity

The Organic Nous of Affinity was portrayed by the participants as they believed they were accepted and belonged at the off-campus center. Analyzing the data, it became apparent from the research how each administrator attended to the five environments, which provides an application progression for the four characteristics to create a holistic approach to leadership (Asbill, 2006; Novak & Purkey, 2001; Purkey & Siegel, 2003). Examples of kindness, caring, and excellent customer service demonstrated how the administrators and their staff attended to the aspect of people. As indicated in the findings, the centers were sometimes described as being nicer than the main campus learning environment in the enactment of procedures and policies, as well as in personal interactions. Although the participants sometimes were of the opinion that it was necessary to provide reasons for the difference, the environments were effective for learning. Subsequently, when analyzing policies, there seemed to be no difference or just slight differences from the main campus, and this usually was the result of the center proximity or relationship with the centers' landlord. In regard to programs, students believed that there were similar services and resources as on the main campus, with just a few exceptions (e.g., books, lounge, etc.). Within the finding of the final P, processes, describing the culture or the synergy between the characteristics and the other four P's, several participants revealed that the atmosphere of the center provided a learning community for adult learners. Displayed in Figure 3 are the Five P's in relation to off-campus centers:

Figure 3: Representation of the Off-Campus Center's Five Environments

Pappas and Jerman (2004) noted that it is essential to identify the diverse needs of the adult learner when creating an educational environment and to create learning environments seeking to meet those needs. Consequently, it can be concluded from this research study, that these off-campus center leaders, when using invitational leadership, focused on the adult learner when leading their centers. Although the centers were not identical to their main campus with the vast number of degree programs offered or the extensive services provided, students and staff consider the off-campus environment as comparable to their main campus, when considering the Five P's of invitational leadership.

Implications for Practice

To create an effective learning environment, these findings suggest that off-campus center administrators' use of invitational leadership characteristics are essential and result in a myriad of implications for practice. One implication would be for universities to emphasize the tenets of invitational leadership within their internal preparatory training programs for developing leaders. Since administrators in higher education can be discovered and promoted from different backgrounds other than having a degree(s) in higher education administration, it is vital that higher education institutions incorporate invitational leadership characteristics when cultivating and developing aspiring leaders. A subsequent implication would be for universities to include the off-campus administrator as a team member at administrative meetings that involve leaders from across the campus. This would assist in bridging any communication or other breaches that may exist and would enhance transparency between the two entities. Since all three administrators in this inquiry were perceived as being leaders in their communities and were regarded as innovative thinkers, they could bring new ideas and initiatives to their main university. Therefore, it is imperative that universities recognize the value of these off-campus centers as part of their core mission and position their administrators into their institutional administrative teams (e.g., dean's council, academic council, etc.).

The final implication addresses the process of how new programs and services are offered at off-campus centers. In the case of all three centers, the departments drove the decisions of what was being offered as educational opportunities for the students. The professional bureaucracy engrained at universities hinders the nimbleness of off-campus center administrators who need to be responsive to a growing market of adult learners. For the future, universities would be well-positioned to incorporate a model of extending programs that are market driven within metropolitan areas and reverse the longstanding organization structure that exists on institutions campuses.

In summary, to create an effective learning environment, especially one off of the main campus location, a leader must exhibit the characteristics of an invitational leader. The

leader must be intentional in demonstrating trust, respect, and optimism in daily actions. By doing so, the physical setting will be enhanced by the ethos of a partnership between all stakeholders that is affirming in trust and respect, resulting in all stakeholders being passionate about the vision and goals of the organization. This partnership is further enhanced by the inspiration provided by the inviting leader that motivates stakeholders to be engaged in all aspects of the organization. Similarly, these leaders foster a learning environment that is both positive and inviting to all participants, resulting in the majority of stakeholders feeling they belonged. Attending to the five P's of invitational leadership (people, policy, places, processes and programs) further enhanced this belief by stakeholders. Ultimately, if a leader seeks an inclusive learning environment, one that creates a climate of encouragement and belonging, then the theory and practice of invitational leadership is one to consider.

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